

Press Release
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Talk by Karal Ann Marling

Canajoharie Moderne: The Puzzle of the Circus

At the Arkell Museum at Canajoharie on Saturday, August 6, 2016 at 2:00 PM

Karal Ann Marling, award-winning author, is presenting an illustrated talk, ***Canajoharie Moderne: The Puzzle of the Circus***, at the Arkell Museum at Canajoharie on Saturday, August 6th at 2:00 pm. This talk about the Beech-Nut miniature circus and American artists' interest in circus is free with regular museum admission. A reception follows the talk.

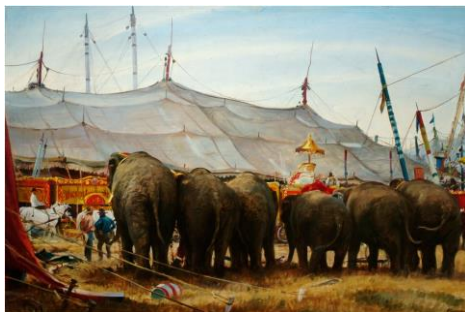
Karal Ann Marling now resides in Rochester, New York where she was born. She obtained her B.A. degree in art history from the University of Toronto in 1967 and her Ph.D. in art history from Bryn Mawr in 1971. She joined the faculty of Case Western Reserve University that year as Assistant Professor of Art History. In 1974 she moved to Minnesota to take the position of Professor of Art and American studies where she taught courses on American art history including one course called "The Art of Walt Disney in American Culture." Her books explore American art and culture and have intriguing titles such as *George Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture, 1876-198*, *As Seen on TV: The Visual Culture of Everyday Life in the 1950s*, *Wall to Wall America: A Cultural History of Post-Office Murals in the Great Depression*, and *Designs on the Heart: The Homemade Art of Grandma Moses*.

Dr. Marling has, for a long time, had an interest in and fascination with the American circus. This led to her writing an essay for the exhibition publication *Images from The World Between: The Circus in 20th Century America* in 2001. In 2006, Dr. Marling, was invited to the Canajoharie Library (prior to the construction of the Arkell Museum) to talk with staff about Beech-Nut marketing in the 1930s and view a 16mm film of the 1939 New York World's Fair. The film included a lengthy segment showing the miniature Circus in the Beech-Nut pavilion. Marling's extensive knowledge about this fascinating display led the museum's chief curator, Diane Forsberg, to seek out material for the permanent collection and the exhibition ***Circus Circus*** which is currently on view at the Arkell Museum. The exhibition includes a section of the film and photographs of the display that was at the 1939 World's Fair. The exhibition also

features circus cars and animals from the Beech-Nut miniature circus that traveled across the country in busses to promote Beech-Nut gum and candy from 1936-38. Noted artist/illustrators of the time, including Norman Rockwell, were hired by Beech-Nut to create circus themed advertisements, and the exhibition includes an original Rockwell painting used in one of these ads. This exhibition, *Circus Circus*, is sponsored by the Beech-Nut Nutrition Company.

Visitors are encouraged to come to the Arkell Museum before the talk to view the exhibition *Circus Circus*. Permanent and changing exhibitions at the Arkell Museum include American paintings by Winslow Homer, George Inness, American Impressionists, and The Eight. Mohawk Valley history and Beech-Nut Packaging Company advertising are also featured in exhibitions. The Arkell Museum is open Tuesday-Friday 10:00 am-5:00 pm, Saturday –Sunday 12:00 -5:00 pm. The Arkell Museum is located half way between Albany and Utica — just three blocks from exit 29 on the New York State Thruway (I-90). For information call 518-673-2314 or visit www.arkellmuseum.org.

Sample images from the exhibition are shown below. To obtain tiff or jpg images contact dforsberg@arkellmuseum.org



Ogden Pleissner (1905-1983)
Circus Comes to Rawlins, Wyoming, 1939



Miniature Sample Girls on Peppermint Gum Float, c. 1936
Photograph, Gift of Beech-Nut Nutrition Corp., 1996



Beech-Nut Circus Elephant, c. 1936
Rubber, wood composite, copper-alloy, silk, and fabric



Beech-Nut Circus Car with costumed people, c. 1936
Photograph, Arkell Museum, Gift of Beech-Nut Nutrition Corp., 1996