

Press Release

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Contact: Diane Forsberg, Deputy Director & Chief Curator 518-673-2314 ext 113

**Sleigh Bells, Green Fields and Falling Leaves:
Four seasons of American Landscape Painting
at the Arkell Museum at Canajoharie
November 1, 2008 to February 7, 2009**

(Canajoharie, NY) Experience America's four seasons of snow, fall colors and green fields depicted in paintings from the Arkell Museum's permanent collection. The exhibition includes autumn paintings by Willard Metcalf and Alexander Wyant, winter scenes painted by E. W. Redfield, Walter Launt Palmer and Grandma Moses, and summer and spring landscapes by George Inness and William Glackens.



George Inness, *The Rainbow*

Early 19th century landscapes were often wilderness views, and summer was the season most often depicted. Winter was not commonly depicted by American landscape painters until the mid 19th century when Currier & Ives lithographic prints brought four season landscapes to a wide and appreciative American audience. By the end of the 19th century, many American artists were painting landscape views of New England that portrayed not just the greens of summer and occasionally the colors of autumn, but also snow-white winter views. The importance of the specific time of year was emphasized with titles such as *Winter Twilight*, *Brooding Hills in June* and *Autumn Afternoon*. American painters, like American poets, began to perceive America's autumn and winter as distinctly different from the European experience of these seasons.

Four of the paintings in this exhibition were just recently conserved at the Williamstown Art Conservation Center. The Walter Launt Palmer painting, *Morning Light*, was dramatically transformed by the conservation that revealed the artist's original bright white, blue and pink sunlit dappled snow path scene. Arkell Foundation's Tonalist painting *Black Birch Rock* by J. Alden Weir was also cleaned and repaired

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Two other paintings were conserved with grant funding from the Lower Hudson Conference. These include Thomas Doughty's *Summer Pastoral*, c. 1838 and Ernest Redfield's *Sleigh Bells*, c. 1920. The Doughty and Redfield paintings represent two very different approaches to American landscape painting separated by almost 100 years. Thomas Doughty was one of the first American artists to earn a living painting landscapes and he is a member of the first generation of Hudson River School. *Summer Pastoral* is believed to be a view painted near Kingston, NY. Ernest Redfield was the leader of the colony of artists in Pennsylvania known as the New Hope Impressionists. Redfield also painted in the Mohawk Valley in New York. He painted in a modified Impressionist style and is best known today for his snow scenes.

The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie completed a major addition in September 2007 which included new galleries, classroom and program spaces. Permanent exhibitions include paintings by Winslow Homer, American Impressionists, and The Eight. Mohawk Valley history and Beech-Nut Packaging Company advertising are also featured in exhibitions. The museum presents concerts, films, family activities, and school programs. The Arkell Museum is open Monday-Friday 10:00 am-5:00 pm, Saturday –Sunday 12:30 -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.

Digital images are available to the media for the following works that were recently conserved at the Williamstown Art Conservation Center. Please contact Diane Forsberg dforsberg@sals.edu or Holly Fiedler hfiedler@sals.edu for any of the following images:

Thomas Doughty (1793-1856), *Summer Pastoral*, c. 1838 oil on canvas

Ernest Redfield (1869-1965), *Sleigh Bells*, c. 1920 oil on canvas

Walter Launt Palmer (1854-1932), *Morning Light*, 1926, oil on canvas