

The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Reflections on Water

in American Painting

The Phelan Collection

Presented by Exhibits Development Group

Exhibition at the Arkell Museum at Canajoharie

June 19-September 26, 2010

(Canajoharie, NY) *Reflections on Water in American Painting* will open its national tour at The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie, N.Y. on June 19, 2010 and run through October 3, 2010.

Ranging in date from 1828 to 1945, the exhibition opens with the earliest form of American maritime painting – the grand academic-style portraits of graceful sailing ships – and includes waterscapes from the sea to the lakes and rivers of the American heartland, light-flooded impressionist visions of quaint New England seaside towns, and modernist renderings of industrial waterfronts and everyday life on the water.

The underlying theme of the exhibition reflects changes in American attitudes towards our most important resource – from the endless supply of water and land the first settlers found and the dominant role ships played in fostering growth and trade . . . to the popularity of second homes and beaches and the change in port facilities from picturesque to industrial in the 20th century. It subtly raises the question of what will happen to this resource in the 21st century.

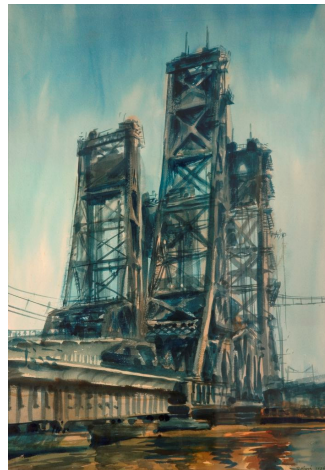
Reflections on Water in American Painting is drawn from the collections of Arthur J. Phelan, well known for his paintings depicting life in the American West. Phelan began

collecting nautical paintings in the 1960s. Highlights of his collection and the exhibition include James Bard's meticulously drawn Hudson River steamboat, Frank Benson's marshland with more than 30 rising ducks, William Trost Richards' breaking waves, William Merritt Chase's intense study of the Arno River, and Reginald Marsh's cathedral-like rendering of a New Jersey railway bridge.

"I have built a number of collections that started with a chance acquisition of an artwork that reminded me of something in my past," says Phelan. "This group of maritime and coastal scenes arises from time spent at my family's summer home in Connecticut. Our house, between New London and the Connecticut River, was on the water. During World War II, I sailed small sloops at the point where Long Island Sound empties into the Atlantic and where large commercial sailing ships occasionally still passed by. Later, while at Yale [B.A. and M.A. in American history], I was never far from the Sound." Many of the works in this exhibition have already been exhibited, at the St. Louis Art Museum, MO; Griswold Museum, Old Lyme, CT; Dixon Museum and Gardens, Memphis, TN; National Academy of Design Museum, New York City; North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh; U.S. Treasury and Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve, Washington, DC.



Anton Fischer, *Summer Seas*, 1945



Reginald Marsh *Lift Bridge, Jersey Marshes*, 1936

A complete checklist of the exhibition and more images are available by contacting dforsberg@sals.edu.

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Exhibits Development Group, headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota, is committed to initiating and promoting international cultural and intellectual exchange by bringing high-quality traveling exhibitions of art, science, and history to a broad and diverse audience. For more information, please visit EDG's website at www.exhibitsdevelopmentgroup.com.

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's May-December hours are Monday-Friday 10:00 am-5:00 pm, Saturday –Sunday 1:00 -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 and related programs call 518-673-2314 or visit www.arkellmuseum.org.