

**SHELBURNE  
MUSEUM**

FALL

20  
23







## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR THOMAS DENENBERG

The 2023 season has been marked by a number of important milestones, the first of which was a return to seven-day-a-week operation, boosting the number of visitors engaging with and experiencing all that we have to offer at Shelburne Museum to pre-pandemic levels!

In June, we opened the special exhibition *Built from the Earth: Pueblo Pottery from the Anthony and Teresa Perry Collection* and continued our collaboration with Tribal leaders, scholars, and culture bearers focused on the Native American collection at the Museum, a process that emphasizes our relationships to source communities and continues to shift perspectives when it comes to the definition of American art.

A decade after the Pizzagalli Center for Art and Education opened its doors creating world class galleries and dedicated classroom and gathering spaces, we are poised to build on the success of the PCAE with a new center devoted to Indigenous art. The Perry Center for Native American Art will be a national resource for the study and care of Indigenous art that will reimagine the Museum's role in presenting American art and material culture.

The Native American Initiative is part of a larger effort to continue to build a resilient and sustainable Shelburne Museum. Endowing staff positions is another step. We recently endowed our fourth position at the Museum, the Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen Curator of American Decorative Arts, in honor of Alice "Nonnie" Frelinghuysen, a longstanding and devoted Trustee and leading scholar in the field.

The Frelinghuysen curatorship joins the John Wilmerding Directorship, the Stiller Family Foundation Director of Education, and the Francie and John Downing Senior

Curator of American Art, which together represent nearly \$10 million in new endowment for the institution and ensures the Museum will continue to attract top-level professionals interested in topnotch exhibitions and educational programming.

Wrapping up the season means we turn our attention to Winter Lights, a seven-week event between Thanksgiving weekend and January 5, that, in its third year, is already proving to be a holiday tradition. Last year we welcomed 40,000 visitors of all ages, and look forward to hosting even more this year with extra nights in early January and new light installations. Personally, I'm looking forward to seeing the Locomotive 220 bedecked in lights for the first time!

Before snow flies, I'm hoping you will get the chance to take in our temporary, special exhibitions one last time before they close and that you'll mark your calendar for Winter Lights. See you on the grounds!

Sincerely yours,

Thomas Denenberg, PhD  
*John Wilmerding Director & CEO*



John Atherton, *Pine Tree*, 1938. Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in. Museum purchase. 2023-6. Photography by Andy Duback.

John Atherton's *Pine Tree* (1938) combines elements of surrealism, magic realism, and tromp l'oeil to create a moody, mysterious composition. At first glance, the lonely, trompe l'oeil landscape featuring flat, angular buildings in grey and earth tones appears to be "thumbtacked" on three corners to a pine board. A blown-out wood frame building sits ominously in the foreground: the structure's crumbling foundation, fractured siding, and inside-out views of window moldings and a tall brick chimney stack evoke some kind of cataclysmic destruction. At the center of the composition is an arched doorway or window with a view toward a lone pine tree.

On one level, this illusionistic scene places the artist into conversation with his peers. After serving in the U.S. Navy during World War I, Atherton attended art school in California. In 1929 he moved to New York City to work as a commercial illustrator for companies like General Motors, Shell Oil, and Dole. In the 1930s Atherton began exhibiting works at the prestigious Julian Levy Gallery alongside peers like Max Ernst, Frida Kahlo, and Joseph Cornell.

He eventually became known for sharply rendered, highly symbolic, and often bleak scenes—the kinds of themes that were a favorite of the "magical realists" and surrealist artists in America. The strong, graphic sense of *Pine Tree* helps us understand how the artist was transitioning from the commercial illustration to the world of fine art painting. Late in his career, Atherton moved to Arlington, Vermont, where he was inspired by the Battenkill River to write and illustrate *The Fly and the Fish* (1951).

When we consider that *Pine Tree* is dated 1938, the composition can also be understood as a meditation on a tumultuous period in global history with the rise of Fascism and the coming global conflict. It seems likely that this haunting scene is a prescient expression of the growing fears and anxieties that many people felt on the eve of World War II.

Katie Wood Kirchoff, *Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen Curator of American Decorative Arts*

# Curator of American Decorative Arts Endowment Named in Honor of Long-time Trustee



Trustee Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen speaks at a dinner celebrating the endowment of the Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen Curator of American Decorative Arts.

Shelburne Museum has endowed its curatorship of American Decorative Arts in honor of long-time Trustee Alice “Nonnie” Cooney Frelinghuysen, marking the fourth position to be endowed at the Museum.

“Establishing this important position in Nonnie’s honor is in thankful recognition of her years of exemplary service as a Trustee of Shelburne Museum as well as her extraordinary career as a leading curator in the field of American Decorative Arts,” said Thomas Denenberg, *John Wilmerding Director & CEO of Shelburne Museum*. “It gives us great pleasure to acknowledge Nonnie’s myriad contributions to the field. I am particularly touched by the large community of supporters and donors who came together to make this position a reality in such generous fashion.”

The establishment of this endowed curatorship is notable as one of the only named in honor of a living curator and one of the few named for a woman in the field. Frelinghuysen thanked the many benefactors who established the endowed chair in her honor.

“I am deeply honored to have this curatorship established in my name at Shelburne Museum, an institution that holds a special significance to me. I am touched by the generosity of the many donors and friends of Shelburne who made this endowment possible,” Frelinghuysen said.

Philippe de Montebello, former Director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, who also spoke at the dinner celebrating the new position, praised Shelburne Museum for recognizing Frelinghuysen in a way that places scholarship in the foreground.



Philippe de Montebello, former Director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art with Trustee Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen.



From left, Curator Katie Wood Kirchhoff, Trustee Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, and Director Tom Denenberg. Kirchhoff is the first Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen Curator of American Decorative Arts at Shelburne Museum.

“This endowed chair is a testament to the remarkable contributions and achievements of Nonnie Frelinghuysen, whose dedication to the decorative arts and unwavering commitment to curatorial excellence have left an indelible mark on The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the museum field as a whole,” he said.

Frelinghuysen has been actively involved in the field of decorative arts for more than 40 years, rising from Assistant Curator to Associate Curator and subsequently holding an endowed chair at The Metropolitan Museum of Art for the last two decades. Frelinghuysen has curated numerous major exhibitions while concurrently authoring publications of record. She is a leading authority on Louis Comfort Tiffany, Herter Brothers and American glass, porcelain and art pottery.

Her writing has won awards from the American Ceramic Circle, the Victoria Society of America, and the New York State Historical Association. In addition to serving on the Shelburne Museum Board of Trustees for 28 years, she has been a member of several professional advisory committees and boards including the Board of Trustees of Princeton University, the American Ceramic Circle, and the Editorial Board of *Ceramics in America*.

Other endowed positions at the Museum are: John Wilmerding Director & CEO Thomas Denenberg, Stiller Family Foundation Director of Education Jason Vrooman, Francie and John Downing Senior Curator of American Art Kory W. Rogers.



# Conservation Corner

When most people think of art conservation, they think of the hands-on stabilization, cleaning, and restoration. However, my work also involves monitoring the spaces that house objects in our collections. This includes monitoring the temperature and relative humidity in exhibition and storage spaces, documenting the condition of the objects in our care, and working with the Building Preservation team to understand how each building's structure influences what environmental guidelines are appropriate to each.

We recently were awarded grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to support closer examinations of conditions in two buildings.

The NEH Sustaining Cultural Heritage Planning grant facilitated working with consultants Jeremy Linden, Linden Preservation, and Daniel Dupras, Engineering Services of Vermont, to examine structures and mechanical systems in the Webb Gallery and Electra Havemeyer Webb Memorial Building to help us identify issues and design appropriate new mechanical systems for each. In August, the consultants came to the Museum and suggested some enhancements to our monitoring program and other steps that need to be taken before updated and suitable mechanical systems are designed.

The IMLS Museums for America grant allows us to look at another source of deterioration we seek to control—light exposure. To protect works from fading and light degra-

ation, past conservators developed lighting guidelines informed by what they knew about material light sensitivity and available research on how people see. With more knowledge, conservators now have a more nuanced understanding of how materials respond to light and our visitors' ability to perceive color and detail under various conditions.

Considering this new information and to plan for enhancing the visitor's experience in the Memorial Building, the IMLS grant enables us to hire a preventive conservator for two years to undertake a longitudinal light level survey, document the current condition of the decorative arts objects on view there, and work with Museum staff to plan for updates to the environmental systems in the building. The information gathered will help us design fixtures to replace older halogen bi-pin fixtures used to illuminate the paintings, develop new lighting protocols that, ideally, will improve the visitor's experience, and ensure the safety of the collection while changes are made to the environmental systems.

Support from NEH and IMLS along with the generosity of our many donors is crucial to ensuring the Museum meets its vital conservation mission, which, extends beyond the 100,000 objects in our collection to include 39 buildings and dozens of storage spaces, and is an ongoing and evolving process.

Nancie Ravenel, Director of Collections & Conservation



Consultants examining the exterior of the Electra Havemeyer Webb Memorial Building as part of grant-funded work focused on the condition of the popular exhibition building along with Webb Gallery.



Visitors admire Impressionist paintings on view in Electra Havemeyer Webb Memorial Building.



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE  
HUMANITIES



# Winter Lights at Shelburne Museum

A spectacular holiday tradition—Winter Lights!

Winter Lights delights visitors of all ages with imaginatively and wondrously decorated iconic structures and gardens throughout the campus. The 220-foot steamboat *Ticonderoga* and its companion 1871 Lighthouse as well as the magical Beach Woods and beautiful Bostwick Garden are a few of the 18 special installations festooned with thousands of lights that make for a breathtaking tour of the Museum campus.

New this season: See the Locomotive 220 and the Grand Isle Rail Car all bedecked in lights! Wednesday evening drive through! And new dates in January!

5 – 8 p.m. Adults: \$15; Children (ages 3-17): \$10; Children (ages 0-2): Free

Friday, November 24 – Sunday, November 26

Thursday, November 30 – Sunday, December 3

**Thursday, December 7 – Ice Bar at Winter Lights, special event**

Friday, December 8 – Sunday, December 10

**Thursday, December 14 – Member Night!**

Friday, December 15 – Sunday, December 17

Thursday, December 21 – Saturday, December 23

Tuesday, December 26 – Monday, January 1

Thursday, January 4 – Saturday, January 6

## New! Drive Through Wednesday Evenings

5:30 – 8 p.m. November 29, December 6, December 13, and December 20; \$65 per car, reservations required. Please see web site for details.

Presenting Sponsors



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## Ice Bar at Winter Lights

What do you get when you mix Winter Lights with spirits? Ice Bar at Winter Lights! The perfect night out with a twist that's sure to spark the holiday spirit! This special evening of merriment features outdoor bars stocked with local spirits, wine, and beer along with snacks to savor from local food trucks, all within the magical wonderland of Winter Lights.

Tickets: \$75 for Members; \$85 for the general public through November 24. On November 25 tickets are \$80 for Members; \$90 for the general public. Walk up tickets purchased on the night of the event are \$90 for Members and \$100 for the general public. All tickets include tokens for food from local food trucks and drinks at the bars. Must be 21 or older.

Thursday, December 7 from 5:30 – 9 p.m.

Reserve your tickets today!  
<https://shelburnemuseum.org/visit/winter-lights>

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# 2023 Events

## Openings



Artists Cas Holman (left) and Karen Hewitt with Director Tom Denenberg and Senior Curator Kory Rogers (far right) outside the *Object/s of Play: The Work of Cas Holman & Karen Hewitt* exhibition.



Guests from Friends of Dog Mountain at the Member reception for *Pet Friendly: The Art of Stephen Huneck*.



(above) Member Judy Manchester and Trustee Susan Sim at the opening of *Built from the Earth: Pueblo Pottery from the Anthony and Teresa Perry Collection*.



Guests at the opening of *Built from the Earth: Pueblo Pottery from the Anthony and Teresa Perry Collection*.

(right) Collectors Nancy Mladenoff (left) and J.J. Muphy (far right) with Director Tom Denenberg and Member Wright Hartman at a reception at Shaker Shed honoring the collectors and the children's textile collection they gifted to the Museum.



Director Tom Denenberg with Member and long-time volunteer Ducky Donath.

## Garden Stroll

Members and guests attended the annual Garden Stroll at the Brick House to tour the spectacular peony gardens in full bloom in June.





## Dinner by the Lake

Guests enjoyed a special evening at the Brick House in July. The sun came out just in time for a spectacular sunset over Lake Champlain. Thank you to corporate sponsors Caledonia Spirits and PC Construction.



## Curatorship Celebration



Jean Phifer with Trustees Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, Christine Stiller, and Scott Wise.



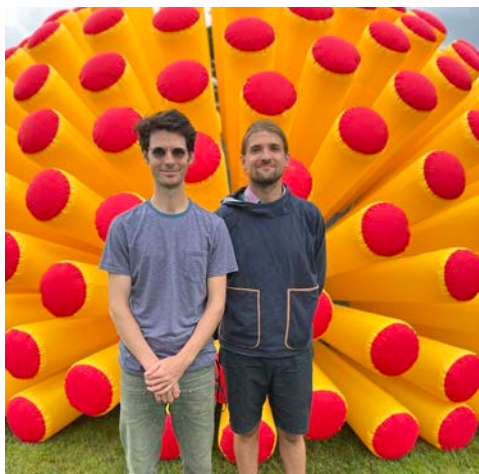
Trustee Marna Davis with Barrie Wigmore and Chuck Davis.



Trustees Scott Wise and Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen with former Metropolitan Museum Director Philippe de Montebello, and Director Tom Denenberg.



## Education Events



Matthew Muller (left) and August Lehrecke with the Pneuhaus studio team in front of the inflatable sculpture titled *Currents*.



Free First Friday Eve visitors enjoy a scoop from the Lake Champlain Chocolates ice cream truck.



Visitors experience a Mindful Yoga class alfresco on the grounds. The classes include close contemplation of works in the collection.



Artist Karen Hewitt gives a gallery talk in the Pizzagalli Center for Art and Education, where her work was on view in the exhibition *Object/s of Play: The Work of Cas Holman & Karen Hewitt*.

## Consider **Shelburne Museum** in Your Legacy Giving

A planned gift is a meaningful and enduring way to support the Museum's mission. Legacy givers become members of the Electra Havemeyer Webb Legacy Society in recognition of their generosity and lasting impact on the Museum. Benefits include invitations to select special events, lectures, openings, and receptions, along with recognition in the Museum's annual report of gifts.

To learn more about how your planned gift can have a lasting impact please visit [shelburnemuseum.plannedgiving.org](http://shelburnemuseum.plannedgiving.org) or contact us at [development@shelburnemuseum.org](mailto:development@shelburnemuseum.org) or 802-985-0880.



Mary Cassatt, *Louise Havemeyer and Her Daughter Electra*, 1895. Pastel on wove paper, 24 x 30 1/2 in. Museum purchase. 1996-46. Photography by Bruce Schwarz.



## Get Ready to Bid!

### The Holiday Auction Extravaganza Returns

Shelburne Museum's holiday fundraising virtual auction is back! Auction items range from favorites from the Museum Store, one-of-a-kind experiences on the Museum grounds, and a variety of items from local Vermont businesses.

The auction supports Shelburne Museum's multifaceted mission to provide collections stewardship, deliver educational programming, mount world-class exhibitions, and foster engagement within the community.

The auction opens on Sunday, November 5 at 8 a.m. and runs through 6 p.m. on Sunday, November 12.

**Let the bidding begin!**

Visit [shelburnemuseum.org](https://shelburnemuseum.org) for details.



## All Aboard! The Railroad in American Art, 1840-1955

Embark on a journey through American history as *All Aboard!* explores the captivating world of trains in American visual culture during the transformative period of industrialization from 1840 to 1955.

*All Aboard!* illuminates the railroad's influence on American art history, from its emergence as a technological marvel in the 19th century to its role in industry and urbanization, and its eventual embrace by artists exploring its modernist potential. The exhibition also delves into the portrayal of rail workers, passengers, and the social dynamics of train travel, all while acknowledging the railroad's role in the disruption of Indigenous cultures and its contribution to wealth inequality.

On view from June 21 to October 13, 2024.

Organized by Shelburne Museum, Dixon Gallery and Gardens and Joslyn Art Museum.

Kory W. Rogers, *Francie and John Wilmerding Senior*  
Curator of American Art



Charles Louis Heyde, *Steam Train in North Williston, Vermont, 1850*. Oil on canvas, 20 9/16 x 35 3/16 in. Gift of Edith Hopkins Walker. 1959-49.1. Photography by Andy Duback.



SHELBURNE MUSEUM  
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#### HOURS

**Through October 22, 2023**  
Daily 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**Winter Lights**  
November 24 – January 6,  
Thursday – Sunday 5 – 8 p.m.

See website for details.



[shelburnemuseum.org](http://shelburnemuseum.org)

#### Talk to us

Need more information?  
Looking to get involved?  
Membership Office:  
(802) 985-0923



## Be a Philanthropist!

*Every* gift to Shelburne Museum's Annual Fund contributes to building a financial foundation of support enabling the institution to thrive. Did you know that Annual Fund gifts account for more than 10 percent of the Museum's overall budget? Your participation in Annual Fund is vital to assuring that the Museum carries out its multivalent mission to: mount world-class exhibitions, engage the community through accessible educational programs, continue critical collections care, and maintain buildings, grounds and gardens.

Please consider a gift to the Annual Fund today. Give online at [shelburnemuseum.org/join-support](http://shelburnemuseum.org/join-support) or by mail at PO Box 10, Shelburne VT 05482. For more information email us at [development@shelburnemuseum.org](mailto:development@shelburnemuseum.org) or phone us at 802-985-0880.