



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Shelburne Museum Celebrates America's 250th Anniversary with
Self-Guided Tour Exploring Patriotism in American Art



SHELBURNE, Vt. (June 18, 2026)—To mark the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Shelburne Museum invites visitors to explore the many ways artists and makers have shaped the story of America through a special self-guided experience, *America 250 at Shelburne Museum*, on view through October 25.

Drawing from the museum's renowned collection of American art, folk art, and material culture, the tour highlights paintings, sculptures, textiles, and decorative arts that symbolize, idealize, and mythologize the nation's origins and identity. Spanning works from the 18th through the early 20th centuries, the featured objects reveal how generations of Americans have celebrated their history, values, and aspirations through creative expression.



America the Beautiful: Portraits, Landscapes, and Genre Paintings

Highlights key works that celebrate the people, places, and events of American history. Installed throughout the gallery, the exhibition features portraits of notable figures by major artists, sweeping views of the nation's diverse landscapes, and scenes of everyday life and cultural moments that together reflect the richness and complexity of the American experience.



By the People, for the People: Patriotic Folk Sculpture

Explores a rich array of utilitarian and decorative objects, from ship carvings and weathervanes to tavern signs. These three-dimensional works reflect a deep-rooted sense of national pride, honoring heroic figures such as General George Washington and personifying inspiring symbols like Liberty and the bald eagle. Created by largely self-taught artists, these objects embody an earnest, imaginative

patriotism that is as varied and spirited as the nation they celebrate.



A Patchwork Nation: Patriotic and Log Cabin Quilts

Presents a selection of bedcovers from the museum's collection adorned with bald eagles, stars and stripes, and abstract patterns drawn from distinctly American experiences. The exhibition in the west gallery highlights the many variations of the Log Cabin pattern, a motif often linked to the origin stories of two U.S. presidents, underscoring

how textiles can convey both national identity and enduring cultural mythologies.

Together, these objects reveal how artists and makers have contributed to a

shared visual language of American identity, offering visitors a deeper understanding of the nation's history through the objects that helped shape it.

Special America 250 programs:

July 4th: Vermont Symphony Orchestra Celebrates America 250

Gates open at 5:30 p.m. for picnicking; concert begins at 7:30 p.m.

Featuring beloved favorites like Morton Gould's *American Salute* (based on "When Johnny Comes Marching Home"), Aaron Copland's *Hoe-Down from Rodeo*, a lively selection of music by John Williams and John Philip Sousa, and more. For tickets, visit <https://shelburnemuseum.org/event/vermont-symphony-orchestra-america-250/>

Folk Nation: Crafting American Identities

Friday, August 7, 5:30 p.m.

Free for members or with museum admission

Join Dr. Emelie Gevalt, Deborah Davenport and Stewart Stender Deputy Director & Chief Curatorial & Program Officer at the American Folk Art Museum, for a lively discussion of craftsmanship, historical memory, and identity through the lens of the American Folk Art Museum collections and 2026 exhibitions.

The Painter's Fire: A Forgotten History of the Artists Who Championed the American Revolution

Saturday, September 19, 4:00 p.m.

Free for members or with museum admission

Join us as Dr. Zara Anishanslin, from the University of Delaware, discusses art in the colonial era, with an emphasis on portraiture. She shares how artists armed with paint, canvas, and wax played an integral role in forging revolutionary ideals.

America 250 at Shelburne Museum is included with museum admission and is on view through October 25, 2026. For more details, visit www.shelburnemuseum.org/exhibition/america-250-at-shelburne-museum/

Image captions:

1) Unidentified maker, *George Washington on Horseback*, early 19th century. Carved and painted wood, leather, and brass, 21 1/2 x 21 x 7 in. Collection of Shelburne Museum, museum purchase, 1950, acquired from Mary Allis.1961-1.232. Photography by Andy Duback.

2) John Singleton Copley, *John Scollay*, ca. 1760. Oil on canvas, 36 1/4 x 29 3/4 in. Collection of Shelburne Museum, museum purchase, acquired from Harry Shaw Newman, The Old Print Shop. 1959-275. Photography by Andy Duback.

3) Unidentified maker, *Eagle on Uncle Sam's Hat*, ca.1860–70. Carved and painted wood, 24 x 11 x 23 1/4 in. Collection of Shelburne Museum, museum purchase. 1965-251. Photography by Andy Duback.

4) Unidentified maker, *Pieced Red, White, and Blue Star of Bethlehem Medallion Quilt*, 1900. Cotton, 78 5/8 x 80 in. Collection of Shelburne Museum, gift of John Wilmerding. 2013-20.13.

High-resolution images available [HERE](#).

About Shelburne Museum

Founded in 1947 by trailblazing folk art collector Electra Havemeyer Webb (1888–1960), Shelburne Museum in Shelburne, Vermont, is the largest art and history museum in northern New England and Vermont's foremost public resource for visual art and material culture. The Museum's 45-acre campus is comprised of 39 buildings including the Pizzagalli Center for Art and Education

and Webb Gallery featuring important American paintings by Andrew Wyeth, Winslow Homer, Anna Mary Robertson “Grandma” Moses, John Singleton Copley and many more. Construction is underway for the Perry Center for Native American Art, designed in partnership with Indigenous voices and devoted to the stewardship and exhibition of the Native American art in the museum’s care, scheduled to open in 2027. For more information, please visit shelburnemuseum.org.

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