

CAPE ANN MUSEUM

ART HISTORY CULTURE

Homer at the Beach: A Marine Painter's Journey, 1869-1880

An Exploration of the Earliest Marine Works of Winslow Homer

On view: August 3 to December 1, 2019



Winslow Homer (1836–1910), *Children on the Beach*, 1873. Oil on canvas, 12 3/4" x 16 3/4". Private collection.

GLOUCESTER, MASS. (June 2019) – This summer, the Cape Ann Museum will exhibit 51 original works by renowned American artist Winslow Homer. The exhibition, *Homer at the Beach: A Marine Painter's Journey, 1869-1880*, will be the first close examination of the formation of this great artist as a marine painter. The exhibition will include loans from more than 50 public and private collections and will be on view from August 3 to December 1, 2019. The Cape Ann Museum will be its sole venue.

In 1869, Winslow Homer (1836–1910) exhibited his first picture of the sea. He was an ambitious New York illustrator—not yet recognized as an artist—and freshly back from France. Over the next 11 years, Homer's journey would take him to a variety of marine destinations, from New Jersey to Maine, but especially—and repeatedly—to Gloucester and other parts of Cape Ann.

It was on Cape Ann that Homer made his first watercolors and where he first developed an identity as a marine artist. And it was in Gloucester in 1880, at the end of these 11 years, where he enjoyed the most productive season of his life, composing more than 100 watercolors of astonishing beauty. Homer's journey forever changed his life and the art of America.

This exhibition will include a remarkable variety of works by Homer and a broad range of period objects to reveal new aspects of the artist's oeuvre, for the first time placing these paintings, drawings and even ceramic work in their rich geographic, cultural and historical settings, on the 150th anniversary of Homer's first paintings of the sea. Period clothing, ship models, and historic photographs and prints will add context to the work. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue with 150 full color images and essays by prominent scholar John Wilmerding and by William R. Cross, curator of the exhibition.

As a companion to *Homer at the Beach*, the Cape Ann Museum will also display an exhibition by nationally renowned photographer Steve Rosenthal. Rosenthal has spent the last year walking in Winslow Homer's footsteps, exploring the sites that inspired Homer and capturing them through the lens of his camera. Rosenthal's exhibition will allow visitors to explore changes in the local landscape over the past 150 years and how it has stayed the same. Rosenthal will present a gallery talk on Saturday, October 19 at 9:30 a.m. A full schedule of related programming for *Homer at the Beach* appears below and will include a lecture series beginning on August 17 and a scholarly symposium to be held during the weekend of October 5, 2019. Companion walking tours and sailing experiences are also planned to add to the understanding of Homer's work.

Homer at the Beach is curated by William R. Cross, a consultant to art and history museums and Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture. He has many years of leadership experience serving clients and managing teams in the investment management industry and serving museums and other non-profits. He has authored more than 200 articles and lectures, generally related to art, architecture and local history, and has a special passion for placing art in context, unveiling beauty and narrative meaning embedded – and often hidden – in objects. A graduate of Yale (B.A.) and Harvard (M.B.A.), Cross lives in Manchester, Mass.

Homer at the Beach: A Marine Painter's Journey, 1869-1880 at the Cape Ann Museum will run concurrently with *Winslow Homer: Eyewitness* at the Harvard University Art Museums, a complementary exhibition opening August 31st.

This exhibition has been supported by The Mr. and Mrs. Raymond J. Horowitz Foundation for the Arts, Inc., as well as by four leadership gifts from generous individuals, and by 50 additional sponsors at varying levels who have collectively made this initiative possible.

Cape Ann has long been recognized as one of this country's oldest and most important art colonies and the collection of the Cape Ann Museum contains examples of works by many of the artists who came to Cape Ann, including Marsden Hartley, Cecilia Beaux, Edward Hopper and John Sloan. At the heart of the Museum's holdings is the single largest collection of works by early 19th century artist Fitz Henry Lane (1804-1865). A native of Gloucester, Lane worked as a lithographer and a painter and his works on display at the Cape Ann Museum capture the town's busy seaport in its heyday. The Cape Ann Museum is dedicated to illuminating the diversity of life on Cape Ann by collecting, preserving and presenting the interconnected stories of art and industry during the past 400 years. As such, the *Homer at the Beach: A Marine Painter's Journey, 1869-1880* exhibition represents an important moment for the Museum as it seeks to build greater audiences and awareness for the institution regionally, nationally and internationally as the Museum anticipates its 150th anniversary in 2023.

Cape Ann Museum – *Homer at the Beach*

Related Programs

Visit capeannmuseum.org for ticket information

LECTURE SERIES

Saturday, August 17, 10:30 a.m.

Elizabeth Block, Metropolitan Museum of Art The Cape Ann Museum and Historic New England invite you to take a fresh look at Winslow Homer's seaside paintings. Elizabeth Block, Senior Editor at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, presents Homer's paintings within the context of women's bathing, dress, and hair practices of the early 1870s and as an extension of the artist's early magazine illustrations. (This program will be held at Coolidge Point: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Center, 9 Coolidge Point, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Mass.)

Winslow Homer: Picturing the Tropics

Thursday, August 29 at 7:00 p.m.

Dana Byrd, Bowdoin College The artist Winslow Homer (1836-1910) is beloved for his moody representations of crashing surf against the rocky Maine coastline. The artist, however, was no recluse. He enjoyed traveling for pleasure and painting new subjects. During the last decades of his life, with box camera and painting kit in hand, Homer visited a number of tourist locales, among them the Bahamas, Cuba and Florida. This talk will explore Homer's varied depictions of the tropics, to revisit this important yet little addressed aspect of his oeuvre.

Homer's Wine-Dark Seas

Saturday, September 14 at 2:00 p.m.

Marc Simpson, independent scholar From 1873 to at least 1905, Winslow Homer made watercolors that figure among the most glorious of his achievements. "You will see," he said, "in the future I will live by my watercolors"—and this has proven to be the case. But even in the context of these remarkable accomplishments, his views of sunsets and fireworks done in Gloucester in the summer of 1880 stand out. Consideration of them, and of a small cluster of later works, prompts reflections on both Homer's spirituality and his heroism. These in turn, especially in the context of comparisons that have been made between Homer and his colleague James McNeill Whistler, raise questions about how we write art history.

Winslow Homer and the North Sea

Saturday, November 16 at 2:00 p.m.

Elizabeth Athens, University of Connecticut This talk examines the influence of Homer's time in Cullercoats, England, on his portrayal of the sea. While his earlier works cast the coast more benignly as a place for leisure or industry, his later canvases present the sea as a site of struggle between humanity and the natural world.

SYMPOSIUM

Winslow Homer: New Insights

Saturday, October 5

This full-day symposium will include presentation of scholarly papers, lunch and a closing panel discussion followed by a reception. Participants will include: Henry Adams (*Ruth Coulter Heede Professor of Art History, Case Western Reserve University*); Kathleen Foster (*Robert L. McNeil, Jr. Curator of American Art and Director, Center for American Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art*); Ethan Lasser (incoming *John Moors Cabot Chair, Art of the Americas, MFA Boston*); Martha Tedeschi (*Elizabeth and John Moors Cabot Director, Harvard Art Museums*); and Sylvia Yount (*Lawrence A. Fleischman Curator In Charge, The American Wing, The Metropolitan Museum of Art*). Papers will be presented by: Adam Greenhalgh (*National Gallery of Art*); Diana Greenwold (*Portland Museum of Art*); Judith Walsh (*Buffalo State College*); Asma Naeem (*Baltimore Museum of Art*); Ross Barrett (*Boston University*); Melissa Trafton (*University of New Hampshire*).

SAILS

Homer Sunset Sail

Wednesday, August 7 at 6:00 p.m.

All aboard the Schooner *Ardelle* for a sunset cruise in Gloucester Harbor. Enjoy tales of Winslow Homer's time on Ten Pound Island and beyond. Wine, beer and snacks included. \$60 CAM Members; \$75 nonmembers. Advanced tickets required.

Homer Sunset Sail

Sunday, August 25 at 6:00 p.m.

All aboard the Schooner *Thomas E. Lannon* for a sunset cruise in Gloucester Harbor. Enjoy tales of Winslow Homer's time on Ten Pound Island and beyond. Wine, beer and snacks included. \$60 CAM Members; \$75 nonmembers. Advanced tickets required.

WALKING TOURS

Homer in the City

Discover the geographical, cultural and historical setting where Winslow Homer lived and painted in the late 19th century. Offered on August 11, 18 & 24; also throughout the fall, dates TBD. \$10 for CAM members; \$20 nonmembers (includes Museum admission). Registration required.

The Cape Ann Museum has been in existence since the 1870s, working to preserve and celebrate the history and culture of the area and to keep it relevant to today's audiences. Spanning 44,000 square feet, the Museum is one of the major cultural institutions on Boston's North Shore welcoming more than 25,000 local, national and international visitors each year to its exhibitions and programs. In addition to fine art, the Museum's collections include decorative art, textiles, artifacts from the maritime and granite industries, two historic homes, a Library & Archives and a sculpture park in the heart of downtown Gloucester. Visit capeannmuseum.org for details.

The Museum is located at 27 Pleasant Street in Gloucester. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sundays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$12.00 adults, \$10.00 Cape Ann residents, seniors and students. Youth (under 18) and Museum members are free. For more information please call: (978)283-0455 x10. Additional information can be found online at www.capeannmuseum.org.

For a detailed media fact sheet please visit www.capeannmuseum.org/press.

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