CAPE ANN Museum

Leon Doucette becomes Cape Ann Museum's *Curator of the Collections*, bringing vast local knowledge to the role

Leon Doucette (left) with Milton Avery's Harbor at Night, *1932. The Phillips Collection. The painting was on loan for the recent* Avery, Gottlieb & Rothko: By the Sea *exhibition that closed Sept. 27 and is moving onto the Phillips Collection in Washington D.C. through January 2027.*

GLOUCESTER, MA (October 2026) — The Cape Ann Museum (CAM) is pleased to announce the promotion of Assistant Curator Leon Doucette to Curator of the Collections. A Gloucester native and acclaimed artist, Doucette has been a key member of CAM's Curatorial Department since 2011, working alongside Henrietta Gates & Heaton Robertson Chief Curator Martha Oaks. In his new role, Doucette will oversee the management, interpretation, and ongoing development of the Museum's permanent collection.

“Leon Doucette is an invaluable colleague and an extraordinary steward of Cape Ann’s stories,” said Museum Director Oliver Barker. “His deep knowledge of the Museum’s vast and growing collections—from paintings, photographs, textiles, drawings, and sculpture to maritime history and other significant artifacts—gives him a rare ability to see the connections among the people, places, objects, and stories that have shaped this community. His understanding of Cape Ann’s long history—from its granite industry and enduring fishing traditions to the generations of artists who have been drawn to Gloucester and the surrounding region—is matched by an exceptional artistic eye and an unrivaled commitment to preserving and sharing this place. Leon understands what makes Cape Ann singularly unique, and he brings that insight and passion to everything he does. We are thrilled that he will assume a larger role in curating and interpreting the Museum’s collection in support of our mission to preserve, illuminate, engage, and celebrate this remarkable community and the people and stories that make it home.”

Doucette holds a degree from the New Hampshire Institute of Art, where he studied art and art history. Influenced by late-19th century French ateliers, his formal training emphasized observational drawing, painting, lithography, and figure sculpture.

Upon returning to Gloucester in 2011, Doucette joined CAM as a Curatorial Assistant. His passion for local history quickly allowed him to forge meaningful connections between the Museum’s holdings and the cultural heritage of the surrounding area.

Since then, as the Museum grew, Doucette’s curatorial responsibilities expanded. Working closely with Oaks, he developed a deep understanding of Cape Ann’s multifaceted history and gained an ever-greater appreciation for the richness and breadth of the Museum’s collections, and for its capacity to illuminate the lives and experiences of the people who have called the area home.

“It has been immensely rewarding to watch Leon assume vital leadership in shaping our major exhibitions, including those on Edward Hopper, Milton Avery, Adolph Gottlieb, and Mark Rothko,” Oaks said. “CAM is extraordinarily fortunate to have him step into the role of Curator of the Collections, bringing his knowledge, vision, and dedication to our institution.” Oaks announced her retirement earlier this year, and the Museum’s leadership is currently conducting a national search for her successor as Chief Curator.

In 2021, Doucette was appointed the Museum’s Assistant Curator, continuing a deep commitment to research, interpretation, and storytelling for the Museum and the broader community. Colleagues and visitors alike appreciate his ability to ground historical narratives in contemporary experiences, helping audiences see themselves in the stories of the past.

Working closely with the rest of the Museum’s collections team and guest curators, Doucette has taken a leadership role in interpreting, arranging and installing CAM’s exhibitions over the past 15 years including milestone exhibitions *John Sloan: Gloucester Days* (2015), *Drawn from Nature & on Stone: The Lithographs of Fitz Henry Lane* (2018), *Homer at the Beach: A Marine Painter’s Journey* (2019), *Edward Hopper & Cape Ann: Illuminating an American Landscape* (2023), and most recently *Avery, Gottlieb & Rothko: By the Sea* (2026). In conjunction with *Avery, Gottlieb & Rothko: By the Sea* (2026), Doucette

assisted with organizing *A Concentric Circle*, an exhibition highlighting contemporary artists who lived and worked on Cape Ann during the same period. Watch Leon discuss the exhibition here.

As a longstanding member of the Museum's Collections Committee, Doucette has guided strategic growth of the Museum's collections and, in recent years, has helped lead the development of CAM's Contemporary Art Subcommittee.

In addition to his curatorial work, Doucette is an active civic contributor and practicing artist. He previously served on the City of Gloucester's Historical Commission, and as a juror for the North Shore Arts Association, Marblehead Arts Association, and Cape Ann Plein Air. His paintings and drawings have received prominent recognition, including gold medals from the Guild of Boston Artists and the Rockport Art Association & Museum as well as First Place in the Portrait Society of America's International Portrait Competition. He has also led drawing workshops at the Museum, teaching students observational drawing while working from CAM's sculpture collection right in the galleries.

The Cape Ann Museum, founded in 1875, exists to preserve and celebrate the history and culture of the region and to keep it relevant to today's audiences. Spanning 44,000 square feet, the Museum's Downtown campus is a major cultural institution on Boston's North Shore, welcoming thousands of local, national, and international visitors annually to its exhibitions, programs, and community-led events. In addition to fine art, the Museum's collections include decorative art, textiles, artifacts from the fisheries and granite industries, four historic structures, a Library & Archives, and a sculpture garden in the heart of downtown Gloucester.

The Cape Ann Museum's Downtown campus is located at 27 Pleasant Street in Gloucester and is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. General Admission is $20 for adults and $15 for Cape Ann residents and seniors. Youth (under 18), students with ID, and Museum members are free. Cape Ann residents receive free general admission on the second Saturday of each month.

The Cape Ann Museum Green (CAM Green), the Museum's campus off Grant Circle and Route 128 in Gloucester, is home to the 12,000-square-foot Janet & William Ellery James Center, built in 2020. The center includes a flexible exhibition and community programming space designed to reach broader audiences with new exhibits and public programs. CAM Green, which served as the Museum's base of operations during the renovations, features three historic structures—the White-Ellery House (1710), the Babson-Alling House (c. 1740), and an adjacent barn (c. 1740)—as well as a Contemporary Art Wetu (2023–2024) and a Mush8n (mi-shoon) (2023), an Eastern Woodlands boat. CAM Green is closed for the season and will reopen in Spring 2027.

More information can be found on capeannmuseum.org or please call (978)283-0455 x110.

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