

# EXHIBITIONS

## Telling Her Story: New Acquisitions

FEBRUARY 8 – JUNE 7, 2020

Presented by:

**BANK OF AMERICA** 

Every year the Albany Institute acquires hundreds of objects that relate to the arts, culture, and history of the upper Hudson Valley and Capital Region. To commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of women's suffrage in America in 2020, we are showcasing *Telling Her Story: Recent Acquisitions* presented by Bank of America, an exhibition of objects collected over the past four years that highlight women's lives.



Typewriter, Smith Corona, 1953-1957, metal,  
gift of Athena V. Lord and the Lord Family,  
2017.47.36

You will learn about Ann Eliza Bleecker who wrote poems about her life during the American Revolution, and about Ursula Garreau (Ursula of Switzerland®), an internationally known dress designer. A manual typewriter used by award-winning author and community activist Athena Vavuras Lord is displayed with the books she wrote for her four children about growing up in a Greek immigrant family in Albany and Cohoes. The exhibition also include works of art by contemporary artists Susan Hoffer, Dana Matthews, Victoria Palermo, and Estelle Yarinsky.

One of our most outstanding recent acquisitions is the photograph albums, scrapbooks, diaries, and alabaster bust of Albany-born Clara Harris Rathbone (1834-

1883), which remained with her descendants until 2019. In the 1860s, when her father Ira Harris was a United States Senator, Clara enjoyed an active social life in Washington, D.C. Her scrapbook included invitations, calling cards, tickets, theater programs, and correspondence. Today, Clara is famous because of one fateful night: she and her fiancé, Henry Rathbone, were guests of President Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd Lincoln and were seated in their booth at Ford's Theatre the night the President was shot. Clara's 1865 scrapbook includes annotated calling cards of physicians attending Lincoln. Perhaps the most poignant memento in the collection is her unfinished diary of 1883. Clara and her family were living in Germany when her husband Henry Rathbone murdered her on December 23rd of that year.

Another highlight among our recent acquisitions is the archive of Elaine Drooz (1925-1994). Known for her sparkling personality, sense of humor, and style, Elaine collected in scrapbooks the articles, photographs, telegrams, and letters related to her work as Women's Program Director at radio station WABY ("The Voice of Albany"). Her career exemplifies the improvisational character of local radio and television programming in her day. Beginning in 1948, Elaine was on the air with a variety of programs: *For Ladies Only*, *Swap Shop*, *The Psychologist's Notebook*, *Your Theater and Mine*, *The Bookmark*, *Mask and Wig*, and *Top o' the Morning*. She interviewed World War II heroes, authors, businessmen, and drama critics in the radio station on North Pearl Street and on location. She and her guests discussed topics as diverse as assisting European Displaced Persons after the war and the "Frigidinner," "a new single unit frozen dinner" in compartmentalized aluminum trays. In 1950, she moved to station WROW. In 1951, Elaine married Robert Friedman but continued to use her maiden name professionally. She was a leader of the Albany chapters of Hadassah and B'nai B'rith Women.

Additional items highlight women and their connections to the region's medical and scientific fields, explore historic clothing, and even share examples of how paper receipts and personal letters can help us learn about women's lives in the past. The exhibition is open through June 7, 2020.



Image: Clara Harris Rathbone (1834-1883),  
by John Goldin, Washington, D.C., c.1865,  
AIHA Purchase and Partial Gift of the Estate  
of the great-granddaughter of Clara Harris  
Rathbone, Bettina Rathbone Hartley Tierney  
and her children, by Philip Tierney

# EXHIBITIONS

## Recycled & Refashioned: The Art of Ruby Silvius

JANUARY 25 – JUNE 7, 2020

Artist Ruby Silvius begins her creative process with a cup of tea. For the past five years, Silvius has been painting and drawing on tea bags that have been steeped in hot water, emptied, and dried. The stained paper (and occasionally cloth) of the tea bags offers a distinctive canvas for her miniature paintings, which present a visual journal of her life and travels—a watercolor of breakfast or flowers encountered on a walk, a street scene of a French town, or a museum gallery and its art-loving crowds. Even before her experiment with tea bags, Silvius had been using recycled products in her art. She is particularly fond of pistachio shells and eggshells, which offer fragile surfaces for her imaginative and whimsical designs.

In 2019, Silvius took a step in another direction, making shoes from colorful scraps of salvaged paper. Her gorgeous footwear are enough to satisfy any shoe aficionado and even caught the attention of *Vogue Italia*, which featured her Gogo Dots Pumps (see right) made from scraps of handmade and banana leaf papers. As if paper shoes weren't enough, Silvius has also created kimonos and stylish dresses from printed tea bags, and, to go underneath, origami paper brassieres (her Oribrami series) constructed from recycled restaurant food wrappers and other rescued paper.

Fashion has informed much of Silvius's work and is featured alongside tea bags, egg shells, and other reclaimed items in the exhibition *Recycled & Refashioned: The Art of Ruby Silvius* that runs through June 7, 2020.



*Gogo Dots Pumps, Ruby Silvius, 2019, paper and cardboard, courtesy of Ruby Silvius*

## Painting the American Southwest: The Work of Otto Plaug

THROUGH JULY 5, 2020

In 1920, Saratoga County artist and designer Otto Plaug (1898–2000) made his first journey to the American Southwest at the suggestion of his friend and fellow artist Winold Reiss. Both were born and trained in Germany, and both brought to the United States a modernist style that emphasized bold, graphic lines and solid passages of color. During Plaug's excursion, he spent several months at the Laguna Pueblo in west central New Mexico, where he befriended several of the residents who sat for him for portraits. A few years later, in 1925, he returned to Laguna to paint the landscape. The nearly twenty works produced during that visit capture the desert's surprising array of colors and explore in tempera paint the time-eroded, geometric mesas that fill the terrain with rugged beauty.

Plaug's remarkable western portraits and landscapes had unfortunately been lost to history until art collector and researcher Albert B. Roberts rediscovered the aging artist in the 1990s. *Painting the American Southwest: The Work of Otto Plaug*, reintroduces Plaug's work by drawing from the large collection of paintings, sketches, photographs, and manuscript material that Roberts recently donated to the Albany Institute. Plaug will rejoin the ranks of Georgia O'Keeffe, Gustave Baumann, Robert Henri, Winold Reiss, and other well-known American modernists who found the American southwest a source of inspiration and astonishing beauty.



*Woman and Pueblo, Otto Plaug (1898-2000), 1921 or 1922, tempera on cardboard, promised gift of Albert B. Roberts*



## EXHIBITIONS



*San Giorgio and Moonlight*, Walter Launt Palmer (1854-1932), 1903, watercolor, gouache, and pastel on paper, Albany Institute of History & Art Purchase, 1967.10

### **A Brilliant Bit of Color: The Work of Walter Launt Palmer** THROUGH JUNE 7, 2020

### **The Hudson River School: Landscape Paintings from the Albany Institute** ONGOING

### **Ancient Egypt** ONGOING

## UPCOMING

### **2020 Exhibition by Artists of the Mohawk Hudson Region**

JUROR: SUSAN CROSS, SENIOR CURATOR OF VISUAL ARTS, MASS MOCA

Celebrating its eighty-fourth year, the 2020 Exhibition by Artists of the Mohawk-Hudson Region, hosted by the Albany Institute of History & Art, highlights the work of the best visual artists in the region. Established in 1936, this annual, juried exhibition pays tribute to the many talented artists working within a 100-mile radius of the Capital District. As one of the longest running regional art exhibitions in the country, it occupies a significant role in documenting contemporary art activity in the Upper Hudson Valley.

Information for the call for entries will be available through the museum's website starting in March. The exhibition will run July 1 through August 23, 2020.

## GALLERY TOURS



*Mount Etna*, Sarah Cole (1805-1857), c. 1846-1852, oil on canvas, 11 1/2 H x 17 1/2 W, Albany Institute of History & Art Purchase, 1964.41

### **Exhibition Highlights**

Most Saturdays and Sundays, 1PM | *Included with admission*  
Led by volunteer Docents

March 1, 7, 8, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29  
April 4, 5, 11, 18, 19, 25, 26

### **Junior Interpre-TOURS**

Saturdays, 10AM-12PM | *Included with admission*  
Led by youth volunteers

Enjoy a family-friendly gallery tour of the exhibitions led by our teen volunteers, the Junior Interpreters. These tours are a fun, engaging experience for visitors of all ages.

March 7, 21, 28 | April 4, 11, 18, 25

## MEMBERSHIP

### **Membership Month**



We're celebrating our members this March with Membership Month! During the month of March, Albany Institute Members will enjoy special perks at the museum.

Make Thursday the day to visit as an Albany Institute Member. Each Thursday, enjoy free coffee in the Museum Café and take 15% off on regular merchandise in the Museum Shop.

Not yet a member? Sign up online or call Ellie at (518) 463-4478 ext. 402.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## MARCH

### LECTURE

#### **People of K'awaika: Insights into the Cultural Landscapes of Otto Plaug's Paintings of Laguna Pueblo**

Sunday, March 1, 2PM | *Included with admission*

Dr. Gwendolyn Saul, Curator of Ethnography at the New York State Museum

Between September 1920 and May 1921, artist Otto Plaug lived in Laguna Pueblo territory, in what is now New Mexico. Over nine months, he produced vivid portraits of Laguna residents and the bright, dramatic, arid landscapes surrounding their homes. Join Gwen Saul for a discussion of the cultural and historical contexts behind the men and women in Plaug's portraits, the continuance of Laguna Pueblo culture, and a closer look at the representations of Pueblo life that appealed to the left-leaning painter Otto Plaug.



*Haschi, Laguna Woman, 1921, tempera on heavy paper; promised gift of Albert B. Roberts*

### FREE ADMISSION

#### **1st Friday Albany**

Friday, March 6, 5–8PM | *Free*

Enjoy free admission to the museum galleries as part of 1st Friday Albany. The Museum Shop and Museum Cafe will also be open. *New in 2020: The cafe is now serving wine, beer, and hard cider.*



### GALLERY TALK

#### **Recycled & Refashioned: The Art of Ruby Silvius**

Saturday, March 7, 2PM

*Included with admission*

Ruby Silvius, artist

Featured artist Ruby Silvius will share insights about her inspirations, creative processes, and artistic achievements.



*Ruby Silvius*

### ART PROGRAM

#### **Sketch Club**

Sunday, March 8, 2–4PM | *\$15 members, \$20 non-members*

See description in Programs section for registration information.

### ART WORKSHOPS

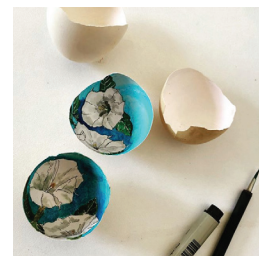
#### **Reclaimed Canvas with Artist Ruby Silvius**

Sunday, March 15 | *\$25 members, \$30 non-members*

Youth Workshop (ages 8+) 12:30–2PM

Adult Art Workshop 3–4:30PM

Take everyday objects and turn them into canvases for art with our featured artist on view, Ruby Silvius. Ruby's own artwork on recycled and reused materials is currently on view in the museum in the exhibition, *Recycled and Refashioned: The Art of Ruby Silvius*.



*Courtesy Ruby Silvius*

**Youth Workshop:** Participants will learn how to paint on tea bags and pistachio shells. After a brief demo, students can paint on the canvas of their choice.

**Adult Workshop:** Participants will learn how to paint on tea bags, cracked egg shells, and acorns. After a brief demo, students can paint on the canvas of their choice.

Registration is required and materials will be provided. Register online at [www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org).



*(detail) T.F. Toohey, 39 South Pearl Street, unidentified photographer, 1886, toned gelatin silver print, 8 H x 9 1/2 W, Albany Institute of History & Art Library, Main Photo Collection, DI 941*

### SPECIAL PROGRAM AT SPEAKEASY 518

#### **Last Night: A Prohibition-Style Party**

Thursday, March 26, 6–8PM | *\$55 members; \$60 non-members*

Age 21+ | RSVP online or call Ellie at (518) 463-4478 ext. 402.

Across the nation, one hundred years ago, Americans prepared for the beginning of the era of Prohibition by having one last drink. The dry years that were to follow were filled with bootleggers, booze runners, and clandestine gatherings. Join us at *Speakeasy 518* for a night of light refreshments, cash bar, expert guidance on crafting your own Prohibition-style cocktails, and an informal discussion of Albany's unique relationship to infamous gangster Legs Diamond. Period attire is encouraged! Details about *Speakeasy 518* available online.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## MEMBER EVENT

### Annual Meeting of the Membership

Monday, March 30 | *Free, but reservations required*

5:30PM Short Business Meeting | 6–7PM Reception

Museum Members are invited to join the Albany Institute Board of Trustees for a reception with light refreshments and a cash bar. Please RSVP to Ellie at (518) 463-4478 ext. 402 or email [burhanse@albanyinstitute.org](mailto:burhanse@albanyinstitute.org).

## APRIL

### FREE ADMISSION

#### 1st Friday Albany

Friday, April 3, 5–8PM | *Free*

Enjoy free admission to the museum galleries as part of 1st Friday Albany. The Museum Shop and Museum Cafe will also be open.

*New in 2020: The cafe is now serving wine, beer, and hard cider.*

### MUSEUM AFTER DARK (MAD) TOUR

#### Earth Rocks!

Friday, April 3, 6PM | *\$10 members, \$12 non-members*

In honor of Earth Day, join us for a hike through the museum looking at beautiful landscapes, hearing stories about environmental activism, and learning how artists draw inspiration from nature. Registration is required. Register online.

### FREE ADMISSION OPPORTUNITY

#### Museum Day

Saturday, April 4, 10AM–5PM

*Free admission for two with downloaded ticket*



Museum Day is an annual nationwide event hosted by Smithsonian Magazine in which participating museums across the country open their doors for free to anyone presenting a Museum Day ticket. The Museum Day downloaded ticket provides free admission for two. Visit [smithsonianmag.com/museumday](http://smithsonianmag.com/museumday).

### ART PROGRAM

#### Sketch Club

Sunday, April 5, 2–4PM | *\$15 members, \$20 non-members*

See description in Programs section for registration information.

### VACATION ART BREAK

#### Recycled & Refashioned

Ages 6–12

Tuesday, April 14–Thursday, April 16, 9AM–Noon

See Programs section for details and registration information.

## CREATIVE MOVEMENT WORKSHOP

### Ancient Egypt Creative Movement with the Ellen Sinopoli Dance Company

Friday, April 17, 1–2PM | *Included with admission*

Ages 6+

Move and stretch with the Ellen Sinopoli Dance Company as we learn about Ancient Egypt! We'll explore the shapes of hieroglyphs with our bodies and turn into ferocious lions like the half-human half-lion goddess Sekhmet whose likeness you can view in the museum's Ancient Egypt galleries.

## LECTURE

### As Odious and Immoral a Thing: Alexander Hamilton's True History with Slavery

Sunday, April 19, 2PM | *Included with admission*

Jessie Serfilippi, Schuyler Mansion State Historic Site

Generations of biographers have cast Hamilton as the "Abolitionist Founding Father," but under closer examination, evidence to the contrary is revealed. Schuyler Mansion State Historic Site historical interpreter Jessie Serfilippi will present her research on slavery within Hamilton's professional and personal life, including an in-depth look at Hamilton's history as an enslaver and the individuals he enslaved.

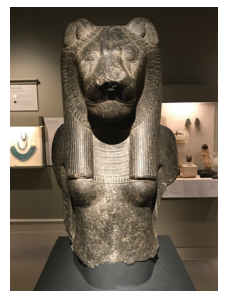
## SPECIAL EVENT

### Farewell to Sekhmet

Monday, April 20 | *Free for members, \$10 non-members*

5:30 – 6PM Lecture | 6–7:30PM Reception

In Egyptian mythology, Sekhmet is a warrior goddess often depicted as a lioness and seen as the protector of the pharaohs. Since 2013, a bust of Sekhmet has been on loan to the Albany Institute and on view in the Ancient Egypt galleries. It was one of dozens of black granite statues located at the temple of Mut at Karnak, the same complex where one of the Albany Institute's mummies, Ankhefenmut, resided as a priest and sculptor during his lifetime.



Join us in bidding a fond farewell to Sekhmet before she returns to the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology in California. Dr. Peter Lacovara, Director of the Ancient Egyptian Archaeology and Heritage Fund, will give a short presentation about Sekhmet. Then, we invite you to join us for a reception with light refreshments and a cash bar. RSVP to Ellie at [burhanse@albanyinstitute.org](mailto:burhanse@albanyinstitute.org) or (518) 463-4478, ext. 402.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## MEMBERS-ONLY TOUR & LUNCH

### **Recycle & Reuse: Tour of Mohawk Fine Paper Company**

Wednesday, April 22, 9–11AM | *Free for Albany Institute members*

Inspired by the exhibit *Recycled & Refashioned: The Art of Ruby Silvius*, we are hosting a special members-only tour of the Mohawk Fine Paper Company in Cohoes, New York. Mohawk cares about the environment and is committed to a sustainable future. They source pulp from sustainable forests, use recycled fiber, conserve water, and harness wind power for their mills' electrical energy. The company combines a legacy of the region's manufacturing with innovation to create a sustainable future. We will tour their facility and learn how recycled material becomes paper. Space is limited and reservations are required. Tour details and meeting place provided upon registration. No open-toed shoes permitted. To register, please call Ellie at (518) 463-4478, ext. 402.

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY

### **Earth Day Art with Ruby Silvius**

Wednesday, April 22, 12-2PM | *Free*

Featured artist Ruby Silvius will be at the museum to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. Visitors are encouraged to bring recycled materials for Ruby to paint on during this pop-up art event. Help us complete 50 works for Earth Day 2020!



## ADULT ART WORKSHOP

### **Paint & Learn: Twilight Landscape**

Thursday, April 23, 5:30–7:30PM | *\$30 members, \$35 non-members*

Join us for a guided painting experience while we take inspiration from the painting *Twilight*, a sunset landscape by Frederic Church currently on view in *The Hudson River School: Landscape Paintings from the Albany Institute* exhibition. Artist Noreen Powell will lead participants through the process of creating a sunset landscape. Space is limited and registration is required. Register online.

*Participants 21 and over may also purchase a ticket for a single-serve bottle of wine to be enjoyed with the program. An add on wine ticket option is available for \$5 per individual bottle.*

## SPECIAL PROGRAM

### **Tea & Culture: Chinese Tea Ceremony**

Saturday, April 25, 10:30AM–12PM

*\$10 members, \$12 non-members*

Join us in exploring China's unique history of tea and how it has influenced Chinese culture. Members of the East Asia Studies Department at the University at Albany will guide us through a thousand years of tea and history before performing a Chinese tea ceremony with special participant Ruby Silvius. Reservations encouraged. Register online or call Ellie at (518) 463-4478, ext. 402.

## LECTURE

### **Robert H. Pruyn: An Albany Yankee in the Tycoon's Court**

Sunday, April 26, 2PM | *Included with admission*

Susanna Fessler, Professor of East Asian Studies, University at Albany

Robert H. Pruyn (1815-1882), a "good Dutchman" of Albany, served as the second American foreign minister to Japan, 1861-1865. This was a time of Civil War in the United States, and a time of great civil unrest in Japan. Pruyn prided himself both on his diplomacy and his appreciation of Japanese culture. This talk will focus on some of the lesser-known details of his experience, as revealed in his many personal letters home, held in the archives of the Albany Institute of History & Art.

# ONGOING

## FAMILY PROGRAM

### **Art for All**

Saturdays 10AM–4:30PM | *Included with admission*

Bring your family to the museum and spend the day being creative. March's project will take inspiration from the artifacts of Ancient Egypt. In April, we'll create prints on recycled and reused materials to relate to the work of artist Ruby Silvius.



March 7, 14, 21, 28 | **Cat Mummies**

Learn more about ancient Egyptian cat and jackal mummies and create your own paper mummy models.

April 4, 11, 18, 25 | **Recycled Printmaking**

For this printmaking project, we will use recycled and reused materials to print our designs and as our canvases.

# PROGRAMS

## Sketch Club

Enjoy the tradition of sketching from original works of art in the museum's collection and special exhibitions. Artist Carol Coogan will offer insights on drawing techniques and observational skills and will be on hand for personal guidance as you complete your drawings. Basic drawing materials are provided and all skill levels are welcome. More details online.

Program Dates: March 8, April 5 | Sessions are held from 2–4PM

Cost: \$15 members, \$20 non-members | *Please note:* There is a minimum of four participants.

Space is limited and registration is required. Register online at [www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org).

*Sponsored in part by the Upstate Coalition for a Fairgame Arts Grant*



## VACATION ART BREAK

### Recycled & Refashioned (Ages 6-12)

Tuesday, April 14–Thursday, April 16 | 9AM–Noon

\$70 non-members; \$55 members

Come be inspired by *Recycled & Refashioned: The Art of Ruby Silvius*. In this three day drop-off program, students will discover Silvius' whimsical reuse of cast-off everyday objects and use unusual found objects for their own canvases. Young artists will take reused materials and experiment with origami/paper sculpture, book crafting, painting, and printmaking techniques. Tuition includes materials and museum admission. Registration is required and space is limited. Register online at [www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org).



## Art Connects

The Art Connects program is designed for people affected with early to mid-stage Alzheimer's and other cognitive deficits and their care givers. Visits to the museum to look at paintings, sculptures, and artifacts may rekindle memories and emotions and are special social occasions for men and women who live with this disease. We use our collections to renew and build social connections in which all can participate and enjoy. Art Connects does not require a background in art, nor does it rely on memory.



*Holding Back the Dark, Willie Marlowe, 1985, acrylic and mixed media on paper, 22 H x 30 W, Albany Institute of History & Art Purchase via the Contemporary Art Collections Fund, 1992.38.2*

Upcoming Dates: March 24, April 14, May 19

Sessions are held at 11AM and 2PM

There is no fee for this tour program, but registration is required. To register, call Patrick Stenshorn at (518) 463-4478 ext. 405 or by email [stenshornp@albanyinstitute.org](mailto:stenshornp@albanyinstitute.org).

## Art Connects Program Expansion

The Albany Institute recently received a 3-year Impact Grant

**THE TROY SAVINGS BANK**  
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

from the Troy Savings Bank Charitable Foundation to expand the Art Connects program for people affected with early to mid-stage Alzheimer's and other cognitive deficits. Currently, the program is hosted six times per year at the museum, usually in the spring and fall. With Impact Grant funding, the museum will launch the Art Connects Travel Program where educators will visit care facilities throughout the Capital Region. They will lead discussions about artwork from the museum's collection (represented by large-scale reproductions) and participants will create their own work of art based on their experience. The Art Connects Travel Program will improve the effectiveness of the current on-site program by making it easier for those who have trouble traveling to the museum to participate, offering programs year-round, and reaching a larger audience.



# ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

125 Washington Avenue, Albany, New York 12210  
(518) 463-4478 | [www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org)

## Galleries & Shop

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	10AM–5PM
Thursday	10AM–8PM*
Friday	10AM–5PM
Saturday	10AM–5PM
Sunday	12PM–5PM

## Cafe

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	10AM–3PM
Thursday	10AM–3PM
Friday	10AM–3PM**
Saturday	10AM–3PM
Sunday	12PM–5PM

## Admission

Members free | Adults \$10 | Seniors (62+) \$8 | Students with ID \$8  
Children 6-12 \$6 | Under 6 Free | \*\$5 per person admission from 5–8PM  
Admission discount information online | \*\*Extended hours 1st Friday



If you miss a spot in our parking lot, consider downloading the ParkAlbany app to help keep track of your onstreet parking meter during your visit.



Council on  
the Arts

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Cover image: Tea Shirts, Ruby Silvius, 2019, watercolor, ink, gouache on used tea bag, courtesy Ruby Silvius

## ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

MARCH—APRIL 2020

