

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 22, 2026

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ALBANY INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES TWO EXHIBITIONS THAT EXPAND PERSPECTIVES ON ART OF THE AMERICAS



Bailarines de la Danze de las Mascaritas, Asunción Nochixtlán, Oaxaca, Phyllis Galembo, 2022, Fujiflex print. Courtesy of the artist and Axis Gallery, NY & NJ.



Joseph Chauldait House on Bloomingdale Road, Eliza Pratt Greatorex, 1876, oil on canvas. Albany Institute of History & Art, gift of Ron Berg, 2024.12.1

ALBANY, N.Y. — The Albany Institute of History & Art will open two new exhibitions: ***Mexico Masks / Rituals: Photographs by Phyllis Galembo***, opening August 29, 2026, and ***Inspired Landscapes: Women of the Hudson River School***, opening August 22, 2026.

Since the 1980s, photographer Phyllis Galembo has documented ceremonial dress and masquerade traditions in communities around the globe. *Mexico Masks / Rituals* shifted her focus to Mexico, introducing viewers to the country's vibrant cultural heritage through striking large-scale portraits celebrating the artistry, symbolism, and enduring traditions of regional festivals and ritual celebrations. Several costumes from the artist's collection will also be on view, offering viewers the opportunity to experience the materiality in the extraordinarily detailed craftsmanship represented in Galembo's photographs.

Professor Emeritus of Studio Art at the University at Albany, Galembo presents her first solo exhibition in New York's Capital Region in nearly two decades.

Galembo is internationally recognized for her distinctive

photographic practice. A recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, which supported aspects of her work in Mexico, her photographs have been exhibited worldwide, including in the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013.

Presented concurrently with *Mexico Masks / Rituals* is *Inspired Landscapes: Women of the Hudson River School*, guest curated by Dr. Nancy Siegel. Drawn exclusively from the Albany Institute's permanent collection, the exhibition features recent acquisitions that expand the museum's holdings of works by women artists. It highlights the work of Susie M. Barstow (1836–1923), Julie Hart Beers (1835–1913), and Eliza Greatorex (1819–1897), three accomplished artists whose careers challenge the long-held perception that the Hudson River School was defined solely by male painters. The exhibition also includes selected works by artists such as Sarah Cole (1805–1857) and Ann Bell (c. 1814–1884), underscoring the Albany Institute's long history of collecting landscapes by women artists.

For almost two centuries, artists such as Thomas Cole, Asher B. Durand, and Frederic E. Church have come to personify the Hudson River School. However, by the mid-nineteenth century, increasing numbers of women achieved personal and financial success as professional artists, including Barstow, Beers, and Greateorex. Their visions of the New York landscape showcased picturesque qualities, a romantic sensibility, and well-balanced compositions earning them fame and prominence in their day. Working out of doors or from the comfort of their studios, they exhibited and sold their paintings competitively in the most prestigious academies and galleries. Barstow, Beers, and Greateorex are among the many women whose lives, careers, and creative practices necessitate a redefinition of who and what the Hudson River School was and is.

“These exhibitions challenge us to think more expansively about the art of the Americas,” said **Kayla Carlsen, Executive Director of the Albany Institute of History & Art**. “*Inspired Landscapes* reexamines who belongs within the story of the Hudson River School, while Phyllis Galembo’s photographs introduce audiences to the richness of contemporary cultural traditions in Mexico. Together, they demonstrate that the story of American art is broader, more interconnected, and more diverse than traditional narratives have often suggested.”

“I’ve never thought of this work as simply photographing masks,” said **Phyllis Galembo**. “It’s an opportunity to share these remarkable traditions with people who may never experience them firsthand. I hope viewers come away with a greater understanding of the artistry, generosity, and sense of community that the dress and celebrations embody.”

Guest curator **Nancy Siegel** said, “These paintings encourage us to reconsider what we think we know about the Hudson River School. By centering artists like Susie Barstow, Julie Hart Beers, and Eliza Greateorex, the exhibition broadens the story of America’s first major artistic movement and reveals a richer, more inclusive history of American landscape painting.”

Mexico Masks / Rituals: Photographs by Phyllis Galembo is on view August 29, 2026, through January 3, 2027. *Inspired Landscapes: Women of the Hudson River School* is on view August 22, 2026, through January 3, 2027. Throughout the exhibitions, the Albany Institute will present a range of public programs, including an exhibition reception on September 18 at 5:00pm, a lecture by Nancy Siegel on September 19 at 2:00 pm, and an artist talk by Phyllis Galembo on October 18 at 2:00 pm. Additional programs include tours, music performances, and artmaking activities for all ages that further explore the themes of artistic tradition, cultural identity, and the evolving narrative of American art.

For more information, visit albanyinstitute.org.

Phyllis Galembo is an American photographer whose remarkable career photographing ritual dress and masquerade from around the globe expresses a phenomenal range of political, artistic, theatrical, social, and religious meanings. She is renowned for her six photographic monographs from Africa, the Caribbean, and Mexico. Galembo's interest in performative masking can be viewed as a conceptual project with contemporary appeal throughout the art world, as well as in the specialized fields of fashion and textiles, performance, and anthropology, among others.

Phyllis Galembo has had solo exhibitions at the International Center for Photography (ICP), New York, the Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., the Boca Rotan Museum of Art, Florida, the Tang Museum, and the American Museum of Natural History, New York, among others. In 2013, a series of her photographs was included in the 2013 Venice Biennale exhibition, *The Encyclopedic Palace*, curated by Massimiliano Gioni and Cindy Sherman. Her exhibition *Dressed for Thrills*, organized by The Museum of FIT, toured at the Albany Institute of History and Art in 2004.

Her photographs are in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, International Center for Photography (ICP), Philadelphia Museum of Art, Houston Museum of Art, New York Public Library, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Yale University Art Gallery, Library of Congress, and the Albany Institute, among others. Her work has been widely reviewed and published in print and other media. She was a Guggenheim Fellow in 2014, received a Senior Fulbright Research Award for her work in Nigeria, and has also received awards from the New York Council for the Arts (NYSCA), and the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA), most recently in 2016. Phyllis Galembo is a Professor Emeritus at the University at Albany, State Univ. of New York, department of Art and Art History. She is represented by Axis Gallery, NY & NJ.

Nancy Siegel is Professor of Art History and Culinary History at Towson University and specializes in American landscape studies, underrepresented women artists of the 19th century, print culture, and culinary history of the 18th and 19th centuries. Her book, *Political Appetites: The Power of Food in Revolutionary America* (2026) complements the documentary *Feeding the American Revolution* (WMHT) for which she served as the host and content developer. She provides historical cooking demonstrations and lectures widely on landscape and culinary histories in addition to serving as a culinary consultant for museums and non-profit institutions. She also led the seminar "Culinary Culture: The Politics of American Foodways, 1765-1900" for the Center for Historic American Visual Culture at the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA.

Her book *Susie M. Barstow: Redefining the Hudson River School* complemented the highly acclaimed 2023-2024 touring exhibition she co-curating for the Thomas Cole National Historic Site, *Women Reframe American Landscape: Susie Barstow & Her Circle/Contemporary Practices*. This exhibit built upon her 2010 co-curated exhibition, *Remember the Ladies: Women of the Hudson River School*. Dr. Siegel has also authored/edited publications such as *The Cultured Canvas: New Perspectives on American Landscape Painting*; *River Views of the Hudson River*

School; Within the Landscape: Essays on Nineteenth-Century American Art and Culture; Along the Juniata: Thomas Cole and the Dissemination of American Landscape Imagery; and The Morans: The Artistry of a Nineteenth-Century Family of Painter-Etchers. Her work has also appeared in *Gastronomica*, *The Burlington Magazine*, and *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*.

She has been the recipient of numerous research grants and fellowships including: the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library; the Omohundro Institute of Early American History & Culture- Georgian Papers Programme Fellowship at Windsor Castle, Windsor, UK; The Library Company/British Academy; Terra Foundation for American Art; New England Regional Fellowship Consortium; Harvard University's Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Massachusetts Historical Society, Connecticut Historical Society, Historic Deerfield; the Smithsonian American Art Museum; the American Antiquarian Society; Yale University; Winterthur Museum & Country Estate; the Massachusetts Historical Society; the Culinary Historians of Chicago; the New York Public Library; the Tavolozza Foundation, and the Furthermore Foundation.

ABOUT THE ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

Founded in 1791, the Albany Institute of History & Art is New York's oldest museum. Its collections document the Hudson Valley as a crossroads of culture, influencing the art and history of the region, the state, and the nation. With more than 25,000 objects in the collection and one million documents in the research library, it is a resource for the region. Permanent exhibitions include one of the largest collections of Hudson River School paintings, a history of Ancient Egypt, and other fine art, ceramics, and furniture, as well as rotating temporary exhibitions.

Mexico Masks / Rituals: Photographs by Phyllis Galembo

August 29, 2026 – January 3, 2027

The following images may be used by the media solely for purposes of publicity related to the exhibition at the Albany Institute of History & Art. Images may not be altered and must be accompanied by the captions noted below. Access image files via [Dropbox](#).

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Bailarines de la Danze de las Mascaritas, Asunción Nochixtlán, Oaxaca, Phyllis Galembo, 2022, Fujiflex print, 20 x 50 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Axis Gallery, NY & NJ.



Huehuentones, Huautla de Jiménez, Oaxaca, Phyllis Galembo, 2023, Fujiflex print, 30 x 30 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Axis Gallery, NY & NJ.



Huehues, San Dionisio Yauhquemehcan, Tlaxcala, Phyllis Galembo, 2019, Fujiflex print, 50 x 50 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Axis Gallery, NY & NJ.



Paixtles, Tuxpan, Jalisco, Phyllis Galembo, 2017, Fujiflex print, 50 x 50 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Axis Gallery, NY & NJ.



Costaludo y Tilichudo, Baile de Golpe, San Bartolo Tutotepec, Hidalgo, Phyllis Galembo, 2023, Fujiflex print, 50 x 50 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Axis Gallery, NY & NJ.

Inspired Landscapes: Women of the Hudson River School

August 22, 2026 – January 3, 2027

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Joseph Chauldait House on Bloomingdale Road, Eliza Pratt Greatorex, 1876, oil on canvas. Albany Institute of History & Art, gift of Ron Berg, 2024.12.1



Sunlit Stream in the Forest with Artist, Susie M. Barstow, c1870s, oil on canvas. Albany Institute of History & Art, gift of the Barstow Family Trust, 2023.29.184



A View of Catskill Mountain House, Sarah Cole, 1848, oil on canvas. Albany Institute of History & Art Purchase, 1964.40