ALBANY INSTITUTE
OF HISTORY & ART

PRESS RELEASE

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ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART PRESENTS *ALBANY, C. 1776*, BRINGING REVOLUTIONARY-ERA ALBANY TO LIFE

Opening November 4, the exhibition draws on the museum's collections to illuminate life in Revolutionary-era Albany, accompanied by public programs celebrating America 250.

ALBANY, NY — As the nation commemorates the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Albany Institute of History & Art presents *Albany, c. 1776*, an exhibition exploring everyday life in Albany and Upstate New York during the Revolutionary era. As Philip Schuyler and his Patriot allies fought for "the cause of American Liberty," Albany played an important role in the struggle for American independence. Drawing upon objects, works of art, and rare documents from the museum's collection, the exhibition offers a glimpse into life in the region during this pivotal period in American history. *Albany, c. 1776* will be on view November 4, 2026, through May 2027.

"The 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence offers an important opportunity to reflect on the nation's founding and the many people and communities whose experiences shaped its history," said Kayla Carlsen, Executive Director of the Albany Institute of History & Art. "As one of the oldest museums in the country, the Albany Institute has a meaningful connection to this history. Through our collections, we can bring the story of Revolutionary-era Albany to life and encourage visitors to consider how the events of 250 years ago continue to resonate today."

The Albany Institute's own history is closely connected to the nation's founding. Established in 1791, just fifteen years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the museum traces its origins to the Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, Arts, and Manufactures, the first scientific organization in New York State. Its first president, Robert R. Livingston, served on the Committee of Five charged with drafting the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and later administered the presidential oath of office to George Washington in 1789.

"Objects have a remarkable ability to tell stories that might otherwise be overlooked in the historical record," said Diane Shewchuk, Douglas Lloyd Cohn Director of Curatorial Affairs and Chief Curator at the Albany Institute of History & Art. "By drawing on our collections, this exhibition offers a closer look at the region's divided loyalties, its role in the struggle for independence, and the everyday experiences of people whose lives were shaped by the Revolution."

Opening Reception and Public Programs

Albany, c. 1776 will be accompanied by a series of educational and public programs designed to engage audiences of all ages with the history of the American Revolution and its enduring legacy.

The museum will host a free opening reception on Friday, November 6, from 5–7PM, as part of Albany's First Friday. Visitors are invited to explore the exhibition and celebrate its opening.

On Wednesday, November 11, from 10AM–5PM, the Albany Institute will offer a Family Free Day in observance of Veterans Day, featuring free museum admission, family activities, and storytelling inspired by the exhibition, including *Stories from the Longhouse* on the customs and beliefs of the Haudenosaunee people with Perry Ground and *The Origin of Yankee Doodle & Tales from Revolutionary Albany* with Jonathan Kruk.

On Saturday, November 21, at 2PM, historian Dr. Nancy Siegel will present a lecture and book signing for *Political Appetites: The Power of Food in Revolutionary America*, free with museum admission. The program will be followed by a ticketed LiberTea Party, inviting guests to experience the foods, drinks, and traditions of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Albany. The afternoon will feature Liberty Tea, historic fare, and period music performed by the Musicians of Ma'alwyck.

Additional programming will include *Spirit of 1776*, a multi-day series of events exploring Revolutionary-era history, along with youth and family programs, scholarly lectures, book talks, teacher professional development, school programs supporting social studies curricula, and citizenship test preparation using the museum's collections.

For exhibition information, program details, and tickets, visit www.albanyinstitute.org.

About the Albany Institute of History & Art

Founded in 1791, Albany Institute of History & Art is New York's oldest museum, with one of the largest collections of Hudson River School paintings, more than 25,000 objects, and over one million documents that demonstrate how the region's history and culture are integral to the nation's founding, development, and identity. This vibrant, dynamic center in the heart of the state's capital welcomes thousands of visitors and researchers each year from around the world.

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PRESS IMAGES

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.

Please contact Marisa Espe Denniston, Director of Communications & Visitor Experience, at espem@albanyinstitute.org or 518-463-4478 x408 for all media-related inquiries.



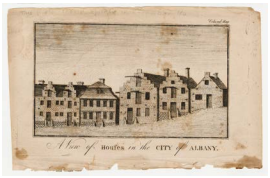
Colonel Richard Varick (1753–1831)
Ralph Earl (1751–1801), 1787
Oil on canvas
Albany Institute of History & Art, bequest of Sarah Walsh DeWitt, 1924.1.16



Hannah Maley (Mrs. John C.) Cuyler (1769–1828)
Unidentified artist, c. 1790
Oil on canvas
Albany Institute of History & Art Purchase, 1944.6



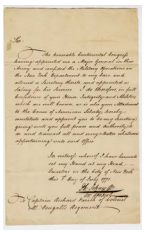
Elkanah Watson (1758–1842)
Ezra Ames (1768–1836), c. 1809
Oil on canvas
Albany Institute of History & Art, gift of the Albany Gallery of Fine Arts, 1900.5.1



A View of Houses in the City of Albany
Unidentified artist
From "Description of the City of Albany," in the *Columbian Magazine*
Philadelphia: W. Spotswood, 1789
Albany Institute of History & Art, SpC 974.743



Side Chair
Unidentified maker, New York City , c. 1765
Mahogany, sweet gum
Albany Institute of History & Art, gift of Miss Emily Watkinson Rankin and Edward Elmendorf Rankin in memory of their mother, Catherine Bogart Putnam (Mrs. Edward W.) Rankin, 1955.56



Richard Varick's Appointment as Philip Schuyler's Secretary July 1, 1775
Albany Institute of History & Art, CX555 / F1