

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

Albany Institute of History & Art

125 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12210

T: (518) 463-4478; F: (518) 462-1522

www.albanyinstitute.org

www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute

www.twitter.com/albanyinstitute

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 13, 2015

CONTACT:

Erika Sanger
Director of Education
sangere@albanyinstitute.org
(518) 463-4478 ext 404

Aine Leader-Nagy
Marketing Associate
leader.nagya@albanyinstitute.org
(518) 463-4478 ext 408

ALBANY INSTITUTE TO HOST WILLIAM KENNEDY & MICHAEL OATMAN FOR DISCUSSION ABOUT CREATIVITY

*This program coincides with the exhibition **The Capital Region in 50 Objects***

ALBANY, NY— The Albany Institute of History & Art is pleased to host William Kennedy and Michael Oatman for a discussion “About Creativity” on Sunday, October 18, 2015 at 2pm. Kennedy, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, and Oatman, an artist, curator, and professor at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, are highly regarded for their creativity and their contributions to the Capital Region’s rich art and literary environment. Kennedy and Oatman will talk about the creative process and how they have used the Capital Region as inspiration and basis for their work. This program is **free with museum admission** and open to the public. Tickets for seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis on October 18.

This event is part of a series of programs that coincide with The Capital Region in 50 Objects exhibition, which opened in September.

William Kennedy’s LC Smith and Corona typewriter is one of the fifty objects currently on view at the museum. Kennedy is known for incorporating the characteristics of Albany and its people into his writings. He used this typewriter in the 1960s to write his first novel, *Ink Truck*, as well as later works.

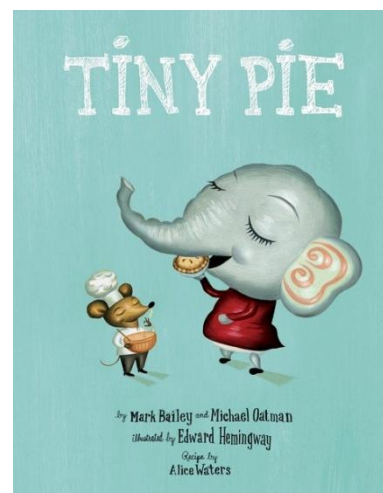


In Albany, Kennedy found inspiration for his novels, which he refers to as the “Albany Cycle.” The books *O’ Albany!*, *Legs*, and *Billy Phelan’s Greatest Game* are a few of Kennedy’s “Albany Cycle.” Kennedy’s most successful work was his 1979 publication, *Ironweed*, which won a

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

Pulitzer Prize and was turned into a feature film starring Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep. In 1983, Kennedy founded the New York State Writer's Institute at the University at Albany. Today, this organization promotes the art of writing and imagination for students and the general public.

Troy-based artist **Michael Oatman** is known for his installation work and collages. He received his BFA in Printing from the Rhode Island School of Design and his MFA in Painting from the University at Albany. Oatman has exhibited his work widely in the United States and abroad. He is currently a professor at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and has taught at Vermont College and the College of Saint Rose. His collage *The Birds* was the Albany Institute of History & Art Purchase Prize from the 2003 Exhibition of Artists of the Mohawk-Hudson Region and is part of the museum's permanent collection. In 2013, Oatman published his first children's book with Mark Bailey and Edward Hemingway called *Tiny Pie*.



About The Capital Region in 50 Objects:

It's not often that you see a video game and a chamber pot together in an exhibition. It's even more unusual when both are highlighted as historic artifacts. But the Capital Region of New York has such a varied history that this pairing, along with forty-eight other items, will come together at the Albany Institute of History & Art to tell their stories in *The Capital Region in 50 Objects*. This collaborative exhibition was developed in partnership with area historic organizations and public input. *The Capital Region in 50 Objects* will run through April 3, 2016.

Each region of the country has its own distinctive history that sets it apart from others. The Capital Region of New York—consisting of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady counties—is no different.

"The Capital Region in 50 Objects is modeled on similar undertakings in the United States and Great Britain," says Albany Institute's Executive Director Tammis Groft. "In 2011, the British Museum and the BBC partnered together on a project to tell a history of the world in 100 objects and then the *New York Times* presented a feature called 'A History of New York in 50 Objects'."

"We wanted to use this very approachable format and organize an exhibition where people could come and see selected objects in person," says Groft. She continues, "As we thought about this type of exhibition, we asked ourselves: What is it that gives the Capital Region its identity? What historic events, people, ideas, and objects have shaped its character? And, even more challenging, it is possible to symbolize the Capital Region's distinctiveness in fifty objects?"

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

The Capital Region in 50 Objects represents over three years of outreach, research, and collaboration. The Albany Institute sent surveys to nearly sixty museums and cultural organizations throughout the region. Through partnership with the *Times Union*, the Institute was also able to ask readers to submit their ideas based on themes such as Arts, Sports, & Entertainment; Science & Technology; Politics; Industry, Commerce, & Transportation; Life & Society. Then, after reviewing the responses, a committee worked to select fifty topics to represent a diverse history of the region. Topics range from Uncle Sam and Henry Johnson to WGY and early radio and television broadcasting, the Saratoga Race Track, Emma Willard, and Antarctic flights.

Numerous museums, historical societies, business entities, and private individuals worked with the Albany Institute of History & Art to assemble fifty objects that tell an amazing story of the Capital Region over the past four hundred years. Some of the objects in the exhibition are immediately recognizable as Capital Region icons, such as Albany's beloved Nipper, the RCA dog that looks down from this rooftop perch on Broadway in downtown Albany. Other objects, such as the Witenagemot oak peace tree from the Knickerbocker Historical Society in Schaghticoke, may be little known to visitors, but the old oak tree represents a profoundly important event that took place in 1676 with the formalization of a peace treaty among English colonists, Mohawks, Mohicans, and Hoosacs, all of whom inhabited the area around the junction of the Hudson and Hoosick Rivers.

"The exhibition represents the voice of our region— how all of us who live and work here see our own history and identity. And it's a fantastic way to share that history with others," says Albany Institute's Chief Curator Doug McCombs.

In addition, the Albany Institute will host a variety of related special events, family programs, guest lecturers, and more so that the public will be able to connect to the exhibition content in numerous ways.

The Albany Institute of History & Art wants to thank the participants and supporters that influenced and made possible *The Capital Region in 50 Objects*, including the *Times Union*, the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York Council for the Humanities, the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, Matthew Bender IV, and Dr. and Mrs. Lawrence R. Marwill.

Object lenders include: Albany Pine Bush Preserve; Bernard Brown; Nancy E. Carey; Dudley Observatory; Emma Dickson and the Rapp Road Historical Association; Emma Willard School; Empire State Aerosciences Museum; Empire State Plaza Art Collection, New York State Office of General Services; Vince Forte, Jr.; Grafton Community Library; Hudson-Mohawk Industrial Gateway; Iroquois Indian Museum; William Kennedy; Knickerbocker Historical Society; Manchester Metropolitan University Library, UK; Jack McEneny; MiSci

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

(Museum of Innovation and Science); National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame; New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center; New York State Museum; Old Stone Fort Museum; Port of Albany; Rensselaer County Historical Society; Saratoga National Historical Park; Schenectady Historical Society; Vicarious Visions; and Stewart Wagner.

Image lenders include: Emma Dickson and the Rapp Road Historical Association; Fort Orange Club; Gary Gold; David and Ruth Hoffman; William Kennedy; Metropolitan Museum of Art; MiSci (Museum of Innovation and Science); New York State Library; New York State Museum; Tom Nelson; Rensselaer County Historical Society; Len Tantillo; Underground Railroad History Project; and Vicarious Visions.

The Albany Institute of History & Art is located at 125 Washington Avenue in Albany, New York. Free parking is available in the museum's lot at the corner of Elk and Dove Streets. The museum is open Wednesday-Saturday 10AM-5PM, Thursdays until 8PM*, and Sunday Noon-5PM. On Tuesdays, the museum is open to registered groups only. The museum is closed on Mondays and some holidays. Admission is free for Institute members; \$10/adults; \$8/seniors; \$8/students with ID; \$6/children 6-12; FREE/children under 6. *AIHA now offers free admission on Thursdays from 5PM-8PM.

For more information, visit www.albanyinstitute.org or call (518) 463-4478.

* * * * *

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 35,000 objects and one million documents in the library, it is an important resource for the region, giving our community a sense of the part the Hudson Valley played in the American story, and our own place in history. Permanent and temporary exhibitions are open year-round and create a sense of place, allowing visitors to meet the people who helped shape this region. Among the museum's best-known and most-loved collections are the 19th century Hudson River School landscape paintings by artists like Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, the 19th century sculpture collections, and, of course, the famous Albany Mummies that came to the museum in 1909 and have been on view ever since. For more information, please visit www.albanyinstitute.org and be sure to follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute) and Twitter (@AlbanyInstitute).

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

SAMPLE IMAGES



TOP: Albany Billiard Factory, Stephen Schreiber Jr.,
c. 1900, Gelatin silver print, 9 ½ H x 7 ½ W,
mounted, 11 ¾ H x 13 ¾ W, Albany Institute of
History & Art, Main Photograph Collection

RIGHT: Hyatt Billiard Balls, Albany Billiard Ball
Company, c. 1940-60, Celluloid Balls, 2 ¼" diam.,
Box 9 ¾" x 9 ¾" x 2 ½", Albany Institute of History &
Art, gift of Mrs. Richard C. Rockwell, 1994.45.8



ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART



TOP: *Congress Spring, Saratoga, N.Y.*, Hatch & Co., 111 Broadway, N.Y., c.1875, Chromo Lithograph, ht.15 1/16" x w.19 3/4", Albany Institute of History & Art, Gift of FleetBoston Financial Corporation, 2000.13.5

RIGHT: *Saratoga Vichy Carbonated Water Six Pack*, c. 1900, Paper, ink, glass and water, H 8" x W. 4 3/4" x L. 7", Albany Institute of History & Art, gift of June Price, 2012.2.7



ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART



TOP: Tulip Festival Street Scrubbers, Unidentified photographer, c. 1955, Gelatin silver print, ht. 6 1/2" x w. 8 1/2", Albany Institute of History & Art Library, Morris Gerber Collection

RIGHT: Tulip Queen Crown, Designed by Christoph Hajo, Created by George Righthand, 1948, Brass, copper, rabbit fur and ermine tail, 7" x 6 1/4", Albany Institute of History & Art, gift of Katherine G. Herrick, (Mrs. D) Cady, 1985.2.1



ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

EXHIBITION LECTURES, FAMILY PROGRAMS, SPECIAL EVENTS

ONGOING

PUBLIC PROGRAM— **GALLERY TALKS**

SATURDAYS, SUNDAYS, and SPECIAL HOLIDAYS | 1 PM

Enjoy a docent-led tour of the Albany Institute's exhibitions. Schedule is subject to change, please call (518) 463-4478 to confirm. **Free with museum admission**

October 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 24, 31

FAMILY PROGRAM—**Art for All**

MOST SATURDAYS | 10 AM–4:30PM

Bring your family to the museum and spend the day being creative. Activities are inspired by the current exhibitions and include techniques like painting, sculpture, collage, and more! **Free with museum admission**

October 3, 17, 24, 31



OCTOBER

SPECIAL EVENT- **1791 Club: See and Taste the History of the Capital Region**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14 | 5:30PM

After-hours exploration of The Capital Region in 50 Objects leads to exploration of cocktails at a local restaurant. Register online at albanyinstitute.org. **\$10 per person; food and drink on your own**

50 OBJECTS PROGRAM— **About Creativity**

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18 | 2PM

William Kennedy, Pulitzer Prize-winning author

Michael Oatman, artist, curator, and professor, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Join us for this very special informal discussion between two of our region's most noted creative people. Seating is limited; tickets available on the day of the event on a first come, first served basis.

Free with museum admission

50 OBJECTS SPECIAL EVENT— **New York History Trivia Night**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28 | 6PM

Think you and your friends know something about New York history? Join us for an exciting trivia challenge and test your game! We will include questions from the new I Know New York Trivia Game. Prizes will be awarded. Tickets: \$25 per person; \$20 members (includes refreshments) Teams may include up to four people. Interested in playing but not yet part of a team? Sign up as a single (or a double) and we'll add you to a team for the night! Space is limited and pre-registration is suggested. This event is sponsored by Keeler Motor Car Company. **\$25 per person; \$20 members**