

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

Albany Institute of History & Art

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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALBANY MUSEUM TO HOST FESTIVE, FUN, AND FREE THANKSGIVING WEEKEND

Friday, November 27 from 10am-5pm

Saturday, November 28 from 10am-5pm

Sunday, November 29 from Noon-5pm

ALBANY, NEW YORK- The Albany Institute of History & Art will be decorated and ready to welcome locals and out-of-area guests to the museum for “Home for the Holidays” this Thanksgiving weekend. The museum, which in the past has hosted holiday-themed events such as the beloved Festival of Trees, rekindled that holiday spirit in 2014 with a three-day extravaganza of holiday programs, specialty vendors, and of course, trees. This year, the **free admission** weekend is once again packed with festive activities that will appeal to the entire family.

“Home for the Holidays is a great way to spend time with friends and family,” says the museum’s Executive Director Tammis Groft. “The museum’s decorations offer a wonderful backdrop for family photographs, the art studio is a fun space to get creative, the museum shop has a fantastic selection of gifts, and the exhibitions and programs help connect visitors with the history of the Capital Region and the museum. Plus, Crisan Bakery on Lark Street will host a pop-up café this weekend so there will also be tasty treats to share with each other.”

Groft continues, “Thanksgiving weekend is a time when people want something fun and festive to do and we invite everyone to enjoy the start of the holiday season at the museum.”

Scheduled activities include opportunities to: visit with a live reindeer (Friday and Saturday) *Sponsored by Capital Wines and Liquor*; take photographs with Santa (Friday and Saturday); make handmade cards in the art studio; shop for fun, old-fashioned toys, handmade ornaments, crafts and gifts made by area artisans in our museum holiday shop; discover decorated trees and mantelpieces; savor exquisite treats from Crisan Bakery; hear great holiday lectures and presentations; explore the current exhibitions, including The Capital Region in 50 Objects and Masterworks: 225 Years of Collecting; and even see America's first commercially produced Christmas card, on loan and on view in The Capital Region in 50 Objects exhibit!

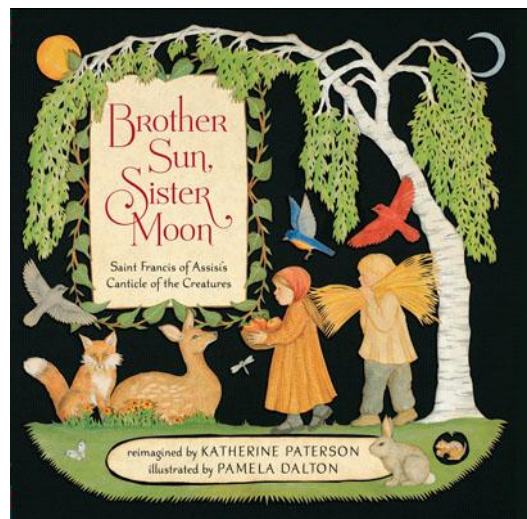
The museum will also host special programs and lectures that complement the holiday theme.

Throughout the weekend, guests will be able to admire a special exhibition by Pamela Dalton called

Scherenschnitte: Traditional Paper Cutting Artwork.

These highly detailed works are cut by hand and reflect artwork that was popular in this region almost two hundred years ago. According to Dalton, she was introduced to the cut paper art of Hans Christian Andersen while she lived in Denmark:

"I was mystified and smitten. I experimented with the craft until my pieces stopped falling apart! Now, after more than 35 years, I think I have the hang of it. I like to say I'm making something out of nothing. I choose themes that represent life here in rural upstate New York. Often included in my work are the Brown Swiss cows of Hawthorne Valley Farm which graze in the pasture behind my studio. The craft was popular in this country in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. I try to reflect that historic period in my compositions."



On **Saturday, November 28 from 1-4pm**, Dalton will be at the Albany Institute for a demonstration of her work and she will also be available to sign copies of her books, *Brother Sun, Sister Moon* and *The Story of Christmas*.

On **Sunday, November 29 at 2PM** there will be a lecture titled: **The World of Richard H. Pease of Albany and the Story of America's First Christmas Card**. Thomas Nelson will discuss Richard Pease's mid-nineteenth century retail empire in Albany and its impact on the way we experience the holiday season today. Pease was the first to use Santa Claus in an advertisement in 1842, and the first in America to print and distribute Christmas cards (c.1850). Nelson will also trace the origins of some of our more popular holiday icons and traditions, and relate how some matured or were even created in New York's Hudson Valley and Capital Region. In addition to the lecture, there will be a display of Pease and Albany related Christmas 19th and early 20th century ephemera: cards, holiday music published in Albany, gifts sold by Pease in his store and other Albany stores through the years, etc.

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Nelson has been with the Albany Institute for 33 years and has curated several exhibitions and published articles on 19th century and contemporary art for a variety of institutions. He has been researching the Pease family for the past three

Special activity schedule (please check www.albanyinstitute.org for updates):

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27: 10AM–5PM

- **Crisan's Pop Up Cafe:** 10AM–5PM
- **Make Your Own Holiday Cards** (Drop-in Art Making Session): 10AM–4:30PM
- **Live Reindeer** on lawn near Washington Avenue: 12PM–4PM
- **Photographs with Santa:** 12PM–4PM
- **Gallery Talk:** 1PM



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28: 10AM–5PM

- **Crisan's Pop Up Cafe:** 10AM–5PM
- **Make Your Own Holiday Cards** (Drop-in Art Making Session): 10AM–4:30PM
- **Live Reindeer** on lawn near Washington Avenue: 11:30AM–3:30PM
- **Photographs with Santa:** 12PM–4PM
- **Gallery Talk:** 1PM
- **Book signing & demonstration** with guest exhibitor Pamela Dalton: 1–4PM
- **Musical performance** in the galleries: 2PM

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29: 10AM–5PM

- **Crisan's Pop Up Cafe:** Noon–5PM
- **Make Your Own Holiday Cards** (Drop-in Art Making Session): Noon–4:30PM
- **Gallery Talk:** 1PM
- **Lecture** The World of Richard H. Pease of Albany and the Story of America's First Christmas Card: 2PM

The Albany Institute would like to thank the businesses that have contributed items for raffle baskets that will be available at Home for the Holidays, including: **Albany Symphony, Slidin' Dirty, Rumors Salon & Spa, Jack's Oyster House, Sky Zone, Nagengast Flowers, Troy Music Academy, Spillin' the Beans Coffeehouse & Bistro, Illium Café, Psychadelicatessen, Krause's Candy, The Shop, and Pfeils Hardware.**

For more information about the Home for the Holidays Free Thanksgiving weekend, please visit the museum's website: www.albanyinstitute.org [Schedule is subject to change.] The Albany Institute of History & Art is located at 125 Washington Avenue in Albany, New York. There is limited parking available in the museum's lot, located at the corner of Dove and Elk Streets in Albany (just behind the museum). There is also on street parking available. 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. Over 25,000 people visit the Albany Institute of History & Art every year, enjoying the collections, workshops, school programs, and lectures, helping to build an understanding of the history and culture of our 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).

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