



## Albany Institute of History & Art

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# NEWS

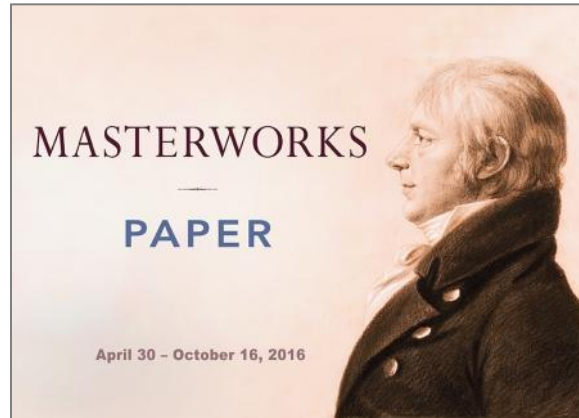
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## EXHIBITION OFFERS RARE VIEW OF DELICATE PAPER COLLECTIONS

**Masterworks: Paper is open through October 16, 2016**



ALBANY, NY--The Albany Institute of History & Art continues celebrating its 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the new exhibition, Masterworks: Paper, on view through October 16. This exhibition showcases more than 150 rarely seen items from the Albany Institute's library and museum collections that span more than three centuries. Sharing in common the medium of paper and close ties to Albany and the Capital Region, the objects in Masterworks: Paper illustrate diverse and eclectic themes, and tell stories that represent the personal and intimate as well as the historical and panoramic.

Much like a scrapbook, *Masterworks: Paper* is arranged in sixteen thematic sections filled with treasures in various media applied to or made with paper. The exhibition includes printed books and ephemera, watercolors, photographs, engravings, architectural drawings, pastels, maps, manuscripts, and letters and even some three-dimensional objects made of paper. The works on view colorfully illustrate topics ranging from people, places, and politics to water and weather, to fiction, farming, and families.

“We’ve taken some liberties with the definition of ‘masterwork,’” notes curator Diane Shewchuk in explaining how the objects were selected. “We wanted to highlight some of the Albany Institute’s more interesting pieces that are rarely on view, due to their sensitivity to light. Sometimes the subject of the piece is the masterwork, like the Erie Canal or the Delaware and Hudson Company building; sometimes the author or artist is the master; sometimes it’s a combination of both. And sometimes we just wanted to share with you something especially distinctive, such as an 1804 quillwork tea caddy or a poem written by Thomas Cole for his wife Maria.”

“These fragile, organic items are always kept in the dark for preservation purposes, and most are simply masterworks of survival,” adds Sandra Markham, the Institute’s former librarian who lent her expertise and helped curate the show. “But this exhibition beautifully showcases the great depth of the Institute’s collections, and we had a lot of fun putting it together. Where else this summer will you encounter a cross-section of a sheep, an enormous freehand penmanship eagle, a family tree resembling a hydra, or a lock of Red Jacket’s hair mounted on paper by a now-forgotten local poet? I see it as more than an exhibition—it’s an anniversary party!”

*Masterworks: Paper* includes drawings by the well-loved Albany artists Dorothy Lathrop, Walter Launt Palmer, Edward Lamson Henry, James Eights, and Will Hicok Low, and works by American masters including James Abbott McNeill Whistler, Thomas Hart Benton, Rockwell Kent, Ellsworth Kelly, and Jacob Lawrence. Hudson River School is represented by its masters Thomas Cole, Asher B. Durand, Jasper Cropsey, and William Hart. Regional contemporary art is featured in the exhibition with works by artists such as Richard Callner, Don Nice, Nancy Lawton, Harold Lohner, and Gayle Johnson.

Letters of special interest include a thank-you letter George Washington wrote in 1782 to Albany’s mayor, Abraham Ten Broeck and city officials following his first visit to Albany, and an 1804 letter from Thomas Jefferson to New York State’s Surveyor General, Simeon DeWitt.

Three-dimensional objects include a nineteenth-century Chinese “Fan of a Thousand Faces,” a cut-paper silhouette of Henry Hudson’s *Half Moon* made c. 1940-50 by Ugo Mochi, and examples of nineteenth-century bandboxes.

A selection of posters, interior sketches and renderings related to the New York Central System and the Delaware and Hudson Railway reflect the Albany Institute's extensive railroad history collections.

Works from the eighteenth century include portraits of several Native American leaders of the time, including the Seneca chief Sagoyewatha, known as "Red Jacket," who helped the British during the Revolutionary War; the Mohawk military and political leader Joseph Brant; and four leaders of the Iroquois Alliance who visited Queen Anne's court in London in 1710 with a contingent of British military leaders to seek military assistance and Christian missionaries.

Each object in Masterworks: Paper tells a multi-layered story of its maker, its subject, its time, and its place. Together these works illustrate the richness of the Albany Institute's collections, and offer many entry points to explore and discover the works themselves—and to appreciate the medium of paper, so ubiquitous, yet so often taken for granted.

Special guided tours of Masterworks: Paper will be held on Friday, August 5 from 5-8PM and on Thursday, August 18 at 6PM. These tours are free and open to the public. Additional programming may be available this fall. Check [www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org) for more information.

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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 exhibition galleries, Museum Shop, and the new Crisan Café at the Albany Institute are open Wednesday 10am-5pm, Thursday 10am-8pm, Friday 10am-5pm, Saturday 10am-5pm, and Sunday noon-5pm. In addition, the café and museum shop are open Tuesdays from 10am-5pm. The Research Library is open on Thursdays from 1pm-4:30pm and by appointment.

Current admission rates are \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors and students with ID, \$6 for children aged 6-12, and free for children under 6. Albany Institute members are admitted for free. There is no charge to visit the café or museum shop. The museum offers free admission to the galleries on Thursdays from 5pm-8pm and on the First Fridays of the month from 5pm-8pm. In addition, in 2016 admission will be \$2.25 on Saturdays as part of the museum's 225 anniversary celebration. To learn about other discounts and free admission days, please refer to the Visit section of [www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org).

For more information, visit [www.albanyinstitute.org](http://www.albanyinstitute.org) or call (518) 463-4478.

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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 19<sup>th</sup> century Hudson River School landscape paintings by artists like Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, the 19<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.albanyinstitute.org) and be sure to follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute](https://www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute)) and Twitter (@AlbanyInstitute).

## SELECTION OF ITEMS ON VIEW

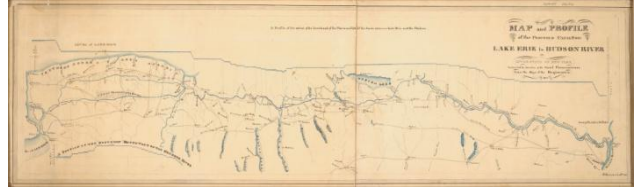
### Water on Paper

#### Map and Profile of the Proposed Canal from Lake Erie to Hudson River

E. Brinckerhoff

Ink and watercolor on paper mounted on linen, 1817

Library, Map 211



After years of public debate, legislation, and land surveys, the Erie Canal that Stephen Van Rensselaer III supported was approved, and construction began in 1817. The canal eventually linked the Hudson River at Albany with Lake Erie near Buffalo. The canal opened trade between the rich farmlands of the west and the growing commercial port of New York City. The hand-drawn map, dated 1817, shows the proposed route of the canal and the multitude of locks needed to overcome differences in elevation. The otherwise unidentified E. Brinckerhoff who drew and colored the map most likely copied an engraved map that accompanied the official reports of the Canal Commission.

### Landscapes on Paper

#### Button Wood Tree / May 16<sup>th</sup> 1823

Thomas Cole (1801–1848)

Ink over pencil on paper, 1823

Gift of Florence Cole Vincent, 1958.28.36

Thomas Cole—the English-born artist who eventually made his home in Catskill, New York, and ranged widely over the entire Hudson Valley— was an inveterate draftsman who produced all types of drawings in a wide variety of media. As the founder of the Hudson River School of painting, he had an enormous influence on the drawing practice of subsequent American landscape artists.



*Button Wood Tree* is the earliest dated drawing from nature by Cole, and was made in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on the banks of the Monongahela River.

## Travel on Paper

### Half Moon

Ugo Mochi (1889-1977)

Cut paper silhouette, c. 1940-50

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Dalton Stapleton, 1985.10

Ugo Mochi was an internationally recognized artist and illustrator best known for his intricate “shadows in outline,” which he cut using a lithographer’s knife. Mochi’s *Half Moon* is a perfect example of technical skill and nautical accuracy, and differs from other examples of his work because he used white paper instead of black.



This silhouette depicts the *Half Moon*, the Dutch East India Company vessel that, in 1609, English explorer Henry Hudson sailed into what is now New York Harbor and as far as present-day Albany up the river that now bears his name.

A native of Florence, Italy, Ugo Mochi immigrated to New York City in 1928, finally settling in New Rochelle where he maintained a home studio. His career spanned eight decades and his work is included in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle. Mochi considered his masterpiece to be the fourteen enormous panels he cut for New York’s American Museum of Natural History.

## Skill with Paper

### Tea Caddy

S. Forman

Mahogany and bronze powder with panels of paper filigree, 1804

Gift of the estate of Marjorie Doyle Rockwell, 1995.30.13

This hexagonal-shaped tea caddy is decorated with panels of paper filigree in geometric shapes depicting stylized flowers and leaves. Known as “filigree” or “quilling,” this style of rolled paper decoration was a popular ladies’ pastime as far back as the medieval period. The process



involved cutting tinted papers into thin strips, rolling them tightly around a quill or similar implement, then releasing the paper to form swirls and coils that could be manipulated and worked into patterns. The paper coils were glued down in a mosaic fashion. Handbooks and patterns were published and cabinetmakers made forms like this hinged box that could be decorated at home. Inset into the top of this caddy is a name and date "S. Forman, Troy, January 1, 1804." We don't know if that was the maker or the lucky recipient who may have received this as a New Year's Day gift.

## People on Paper

### Red Jacket (Sagoyewatha) (about 1750-1830)

Henry Inman (1801-1846)

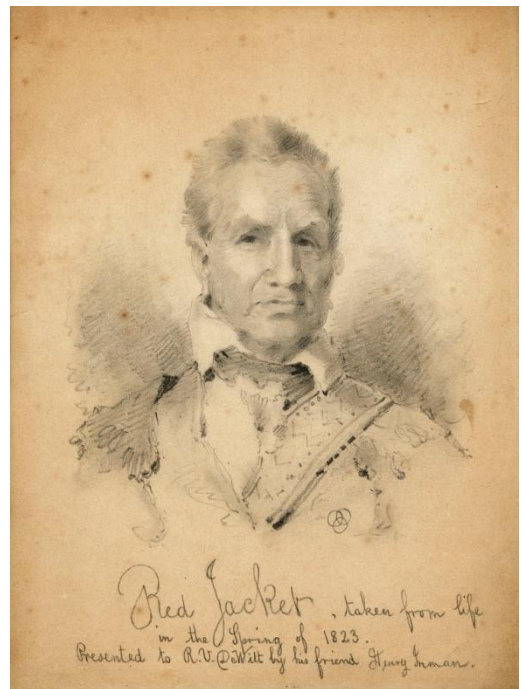
Pencil on paper, 1823

Bequest of Sarah Walsh DeWitt, 1924.1.19

Seneca chief Sagoyewatha was born near what is now Geneva, New York, and was revered for his impressive oratorical skills and his role as a negotiator between his own tribe and the American government. He was popularly known as "Red Jacket" after the red coat he was given by the British, who employed him as a messenger during the Revolutionary War. The jacket was replaced many times during his life.

This intimate portrait was a bequest of Sarah Walsh DeWitt whose father, Richard Varick DeWitt was the original owner. In June 1845, DeWitt recorded the occasion on which this portrait was created:

This sketch was made at the Tontine Coffee House New York by Henry Inman at the present time the most reputed Portrait Painter of America – Seeing the celebrated chief, Red Jacket passing thru Wall Street, He followed him to the T. C.H. & induced him to give him half an hours sitting which was sufficient for this original sketch. Mr. Inman – when I was in one day at his studio presented the sketch to me – It is unique & seems to convey more accurately than any Picture I have seen, the intellectual character of this Celebrated man.





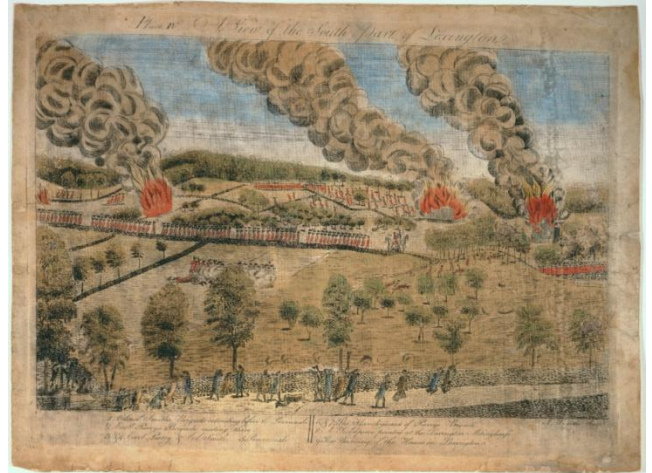
## Americana on Paper

### View of the South Part of Lexington. Plate IV

Amos Doolittle (1754-1832) after Ralph Earl (1751-1801)

Hand-colored engraving on paper, 1775

Gift of Dr. Bela J. Ward and H. Judd Ward, 1920.2.4



This print is part of a set of four views of the Battles of Lexington and Concord that have been described as “far exceeding in rarity and of greater historical importance than” the famous *Boston Massacre* by Paul Revere. They were engraved by Amos Doolittle of New Haven, Connecticut, and member of the Governor’s Second Company of Guards, who visited the sites with the New Haven painter Ralph Earl just ten days after the battles had taken place. Earl made sketches from which Doolittle made his engravings upon return to New Haven.

In Plate IV, Earl and Doolittle used continuous narrative to fit as many incidents as possible into one picture. In the middle ground the two British commanders meet on horseback. In the foreground Minutemen are shown firing on the British troops. On a hill in the middle right ground is one of the British cannons. The most riveting image is the columns of smoke rising from the burning houses of three Lexington families.

## Art on Paper

### String Bean Leaves II (Haricot Vert II)

Ellsworth Kelly (1923-2015)

Transfer lithograph on BFK Rives paper, 1965-66

Purchase, 1985.22.1

Ellsworth Kelly was an internationally renowned American painter, sculptor, and graphic artist who lived and worked in Spencertown, New York. With his works, he redefined abstract art and earned his place among the most important artists of the last fifty years. He was best known for his large-scale paintings and sculptures of geometric shapes and intense colors. This lithograph is characteristic of Kelly’s drawings and prints based on direct observation of nature. Most of these depict plants, and almost all use outline to articulate form.

*String Bean Leaves II* is one of the most succinct of Kelly’s plant drawings, using only nine lines to depict the three leaves. This print was one of twenty-eight prints from *Suite of Plant Lithographs* done from 1964 to 1966.

