

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

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NEWS

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ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART TO RE-OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ON SATURDAY, JULY 25, 2020

The museum, located in downtown Albany, New York, has new health and safety measures in place and a slate of new and extended exhibitions planned for the summer and early fall.

ALBANY, NEW YORK— The Albany Institute of History & Art, which closed in early spring in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, will re-open its doors to the public on Saturday, July 25, 2020. The museum will re-open with new protocols in place to help create a safe and welcoming environment for visitors, such as mandatory masks for all staff and visitors, plus social distancing and hand-sanitizing stations throughout the museum site. In addition, visitors are strongly encouraged to purchase timed tickets in advance, as a way to manage crowd size and expedite the check-in process once at the museum. The Albany Institute galleries and Museum Shop will be open Wednesday through Saturday 10AM-5PM and Sunday 12PM-5PM. The Museum Café will be open for take-out only Wednesday through Saturday 10AM-3PM and Sunday 12PM-5PM. (No tickets are required to visit the shop or café). Up-to-date information, a link to purchase advance tickets, and a list of frequently asked questions is available on the museum's website: www.albanyinstitute.org.



San Marco, Walter Launt Palmer (1854-1932), c. 1895, oil on canvas, gift of Beatrice Palmer, 1942.34.33

The museum, which is part of New York's Phase 4 Re-Opening and was eligible to re-open on July 1, took additional time to prepare to welcome the public back on site. Facility improvements included upgrading faucets in restrooms; installing plexiglass shields at point-of-sale and information desks; and adding hand sanitizing stations, signage, and social distancing markers. In accordance with guidelines from the CDC

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and the New York State Department of Health, the museum has enhanced cleaning procedures in place. Occupancy limits are posted throughout the museum galleries and public spaces, with reminders to visitors to wear a mask and practice social distancing. Several public spaces, such as the Art Studio and the Museum Explorer's Gallery are temporarily closed, and the museum's Research Library is open by appointment only. The Museum Café will offer take-out options to customers and while there is no indoor seating available, the museum has added some outdoor seating near the museum's sculpture garden for guests to enjoy.

"We look forward to re-opening to the public this summer," says Albany Institute Board President F. Michael Tucker, "and our patrons can be assured that we are taking their safety seriously. Our tremendous staff has adapted to lots of changes these past few months and we know so many other organizations and businesses have been doing the same thing. We are excited to be able to welcome visitors again and share with them our incredible collection and programming focused on the arts and culture of New York's Upper Hudson Valley."

Several of the Albany Institute's spring exhibitions have been extended into the summer. Executive Director Tammis Groft was happy to give audiences more time with topics they have shown interest in exploring. "Right before we closed, we opened dynamic exhibitions that featured topics such as recycling and the environment, creativity and resourcefulness, and women's experiences in the Capital Region as artists, entrepreneurs, scientists, workers, and community members," says Groft. "We want to be able to share these exhibitions as long as we can as a way to encourage and facilitate discussions and reflections about these themes among our visitors."

A new addition sure to get visitor attention is a case of recent artwork by featured artist Ruby Silvius, in her exhibition *Recycled & Refashioned: The Art of Ruby Silvius*. Over a fourteen-day self-isolation period during the coronavirus pandemic this spring, Silvius created fourteen pieces for what she later called her COVID Blue Series. Inspired by Picasso during his Blue Period, this series uses found materials around her house/yard as canvases and all works are in monochromatic shades of blue.

Two exhibitions *Telling Her Story: New Acquisitions presented by Bank of America* and *A Brilliant Bit of Color: The Work of Walter Launt Palmer* have been extended through August 23, 2020. The captivating contemporary art exhibition *Recycled & Refashioned: The Art of Ruby Silvius* has been extended through August 30, 2020. A new exhibition *Fellow Citizens! DeWitt Clinton's Broadsides of the Early Republic* is scheduled to open August 1, 2020. September exhibitions include *A Fresh Look at Eighteenth-Century Portraits* (opening September 2), the *2020 Exhibition by Artists of the Mohawk Hudson Region* (opening September 19), and *Summerland: A Sound Installation by Matthew Ostrowski* (opening September 19). Ongoing exhibitions include *The Hudson River School: Landscapes from the Albany Institute*, *Ancient Egypt*, and *Traders & Culture: Colonial Albany and the Formation of American Identity*.

"This spring, so many of us turned to the arts and learning to bring richness into our lives and stay connected while we were apart," says Groft. "Museums can be a place where people feel a sense of renewal or inspiration and we look forward to being a place for respite as we continue to live in new and uncertain times."

While closed to the public, the Albany Institute launched a *Museum at Home* initiative encouraging curiosity and creativity at home and directing the public to a variety of online resources such as student

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lesson plans, virtual tours, video presentations, online exhibitions, at-home art projects, and digital collections, plus a series of museum blogs that highlight behind-the-scenes stories and fun ways to connect to the museum remotely. “We’ve seen great interest in our online content and we will continue to share resources so that those who may not feel comfortable visiting the museum in person can still find meaningful ways to connect with us from home,” says Groft. *Museum at Home* materials are available through the Albany Institute’s website (www.albanyinstitute.org) and promoted through posts on the museum’s social media channels: Facebook (www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute), Twitter (@AlbanyInstitute), and Instagram (albanyinstitute).



In *The Young Madonna Appealing to a Moral World Community* (2016), Shavon is questioning if a moral world community is even possible. She is reading and reacting to news about the killing of Trayvon Martin. Shavon told artist Susan Hoffer that she reads all the time that young men are being killed by police who then are acquitted. But “people don’t want to read that news.” This painting is **currently on view** in the exhibition *Telling Her Story: New Acquisitions presented by Bank of America*.

(*The Young Madonna Appealing to a Moral World Community*, Susan Hoffer, 2016, oil on masonite, Exhibition by Artists of the Mohawk Hudson Region Albany Institute Purchase Prize, 2018.46)



Emergency Preparedness by Ruby Silvious. It was the first item of fourteen works created for her 2020 COVID Blue series. This work has been **added to the exhibition** *Recycled & Refashioned: The Art of Ruby Silvious* and has been acquired by the Albany Institute of History & Art for its collection. (watercolor, gouache, ink on used tea bags, image courtesy Ruby Silvious)

The Albany Institute of History & Art is located at 125 Washington Avenue in downtown Albany, New York. Free parking is available in the museum’s lot at the corner of Elk and Dove Streets.

The exhibition galleries and Museum Shop are open Wednesday-Saturday 10AM-5PM and Sunday 12-5PM. The Museum Café is open for take-out only Wednesday-Saturday 10AM-3PM and Sunday 12-5PM.

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The Research Library is open by appointment only. Please contact Archivist/Library Hannah Cox at coxh@albanyinstitute.org or call (518) 463-4478 ext. 415 for more information.

Admission rates are \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors (62+) and students with ID, \$6 for children ages 6-12, and free for children under 6. Albany Institute members are admitted for free. There is no charge to visit the Museum Shop or Museum Café. To learn about discounts and free admission opportunities, please refer to the Visit section of www.albanyinstitute.org.

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

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