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DELAWARE ART MUSEUM CELEBRATES CENTURY OF ART WITH 100 WORKS FOR 100 YEARS

WILMINGTON, DE (April 12, 2012) – As part of its year-long Centennial Celebration, the Delaware Art Museum is pleased to present 100 Works for 100 Years, a Museum-wide installation that will feature one (or more) work of art for each year of the Museum’s existence. The exhibition will focus on the history of the development and growth of the Museum’s permanent holdings and core collections, in addition to highlighting the generosity of those who have donated works of art. Also featured will be recent acquisitions, as well as one spectacular promised gift. The installation, which will be on view from June 23 through September 16, 2012, will be spread throughout the entire Museum and the Copeland Sculpture Garden. Visitors will utilize a special map to follow the exhibition throughout the premises.

In addition to highlighting the Museum’s permanent collection, 100 Works for 100 Years will share the stories behind the Museum’s most treasured works of art. These never-before-told narratives—which will be featured in separate exhibition labels next to each work of art—will explain the unique circumstances behind the Museum’s gifts and acquisitions. These stories intertwine to create a complete picture of the Museum’s core collections: American Illustration, the Samuel and Mary R. Bancroft Collection of Pre-Raphaelite Art, the American Collection, and the Contemporary Collection.

American Illustration Collection
The Museum’s American Illustration holdings are the Museum’s foundation collection. In 1912, upon the death of nationally renowned Wilmington illustrator, Howard Pyle, a group of forward-thinking citizens formed the Wilmington Society of the Fine Arts and gathered donations to purchase approximately 100 of the works of art remaining in Pyle’s Wilmington studio. Over the past century, the Illustration Collection has grown through gifts of Pyle’s students, bequests of local citizens, and the occasional Museum purchase. This collection is truly the result of a community understanding and appreciation of the importance of American illustrative art.
Highlighted works:

- Howard Pyle, *So the Treasure was Divided*
- Stanley Arthurs, *New Year’s Eve*
- Frank Schoonover, *Hopalong takes Command*
- Katherine Wireman, *Boy Scout Listening to the Radio*

Samuel and Mary R. Bancroft Collection of Pre-Raphaelite Art

Between 1886 and his death in 1915, Wilmington cotton mill owner Samuel Bancroft amassed a collection of over 75 works of Pre-Raphaelite art. A free-thinking individual, Bancroft’s passions were inspired when he first viewed Pre-Raphaelite art while traveling on business to England, despite their under-appreciated status in the United States. In 1935 his widow, Mary, and son, Joseph, bequeathed the collection and a parcel of land on Kentmere Parkway to the fast-growing Wilmington Society of the Fine Arts. Bancroft’s collection formed the basis of what is today an assemblage of over 250 works of art from this period in British art. Since his death, objects have been added to the collection through bequest, gift, and purchase.

Highlighted works:

- Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Lady Lilith*
- Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Mary in the house of St. John*
- Marie Spartali Stillman, *Pilgrim Folk*
- George Wilson, *Spring Witch*

American Collection

Within a decade of its founding, the Society began to amass a collection of American art, acquiring paintings and prints through gift and purchase. Many of the early purchases were works exhibited in our annual exhibitions by living artists. In the 1950s and ‘60s, collectors from the region, including John Sexton, Benjamin Bernstein, and Joseph and Mary Phelps, donated significant collections of American art. These works were supplemented by purchases—many arranged by the Friends of Art, a group of Museum benefactors—of major American paintings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Beginning in the 1960s, Helen Farr Sloan added considerably to the Museum’s growing strength in American art, with frequent gifts of paintings, prints, and drawings by her husband, American realist painter John Sloan. She also donated works by his friends, his students, and other artists active during his lifetime. Over time she gave more than 5,000 works to the Museum, including nearly 3,000 by her
husband. Her generosity encouraged gifts from the families of other artists, including William Glackens and Reginald Marsh.

Highlighted works:

- Rembrandt Peale, *George Washington*
- Asher B. Durand, *Classical Landscape*
- Winslow Homer, *Milking Time*
- Andrew Wyeth, *Tenant Farmer*
- Edward Hopper, *Summertime*
- Walt Kuhn, *Two Clowns*
- Aaron Douglas, *Study for a Mural*

Contemporary Collection

The Museum’s Contemporary Art Collection has developed over the years, most assertively with a program to acquire photography beginning in the 1970s. Over time the collection has been extended through the generous gifts of Raymond Merritt, Robert LeBeau, and others.

In the 1960s and ‘70s, Alfred Appel, Jr. (1934 – 2009), formed an exemplary collection of Leonard Baskin’s early work and generously donated it to the Delaware Art Museum in 2008. In 2008, through a program entitled *Fifty Works for Fifty States*, the collection of Minimal, Conceptual, and Post-Minimal art assembled by Dorothy and Herbert Vogel was distributed to one institution in each state. The Delaware Art Museum was chosen as the State of Delaware’s recipient.

Highlighted works:

- Grace Hartigan, *Eleanor of Aquitaine*
- Robert Goodnough, *Dark Blue Cluster*
- Tyrone Mitchell, *Sunday Samba*
- George Rickey, *Three Rectangles Horizontal Jointed Gyratory III*

For a complete list of all 100 works featured in the exhibition, or to request images, contact Molly Keresztury, Manager of Marketing & Public Relations, at mkeresztury@delart.org or 302-351-8515. Exhibition maps will be ready in early June.

Organizers & Sponsors
100 Works for 100 Years was organized by the Delaware Art Museum.

This exhibition is made possible, in part, by grants from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency dedicated to nurturing and supporting the arts in Delaware, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts.

**About the Delaware Art Museum**

The Delaware Art Museum, located at 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806, is open Wednesday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Sunday noon – 4:00 p.m. Admission fees are charged as follows: Adults (19 – 59) $12, Seniors (60+) $10, Students (with valid ID) $6, Youth (7 – 18) $6, and Children (6 and under) free. Admission to the Museum is free to all visitors on Sundays. The admission fee is waived thanks to generous support from Jessie Ball duPont Fund.

For more information, call 302-571-9590 or 866-232-3714 (toll free), or visit the website at [www.delart.org](http://www.delart.org)

Founded in 1912, the Delaware Art Museum is best known for its large collection of British Pre-Raphaelite art, works by Wilmington-native Howard Pyle and fellow American illustrators, and urban landscapes by John Sloan and his circle. Visitors can also enjoy the outdoor Copeland Sculpture Garden and a number of exhibitions throughout the year.

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