

MYSTIC MUSEUM OF ART

News & Views | Spring 2022

MMOA YEAR OF NARRATIVE ART



Norman Rockwell, *Triple Self-Portrait*. Cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*, February 13, 1960. Norman Rockwell Museum Collection ©1960 SEPS: Licensed by Curtis Licensing, Indianapolis, IN, All rights reserved. www.curtislicensing.com.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

MYSTIC MUSEUM OF ART

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Dear Members, Friends, and Neighbors,

It is a pleasure to bring back the MMoA newsletter, post COVID shutdown and especially to announce the MMoA Year of Narrative Art. We have all been through our own trials over the past two years, and witnessed even more. With so many stories to tell, so many divisive narratives to mislead us, and such a need to reconnect, MMoA will feature the forms and content of narrative art, that is, art that tells the stories of our inner lives, throughout 2022.

The use of images in all media today is simply overwhelming. To distill an appreciation of the deepest connections between art and narrative, MMoA will feature art forms that have traditionally conveyed personal experiences into a shared, articulate, culture. Enjoy a look at innovative printmaking techniques in the Providence Art Club's group portfolio exhibition *More than Hot Type*. Examine the public role of sculpture and all that it commemorates in *Art in Three Dimensions*. Enjoy the rich tradition of quilt making and the messages it carried among practitioners who, historically, had little overt political power in *Quilt National 21*.



MMoA elected artist Catherine Whall Smith, *Transfusion in Two Parts*, in *Quilt National 21*.

As the highlight of MMoA's Year of Narrative Art, the special exhibition *Norman Rockwell's Saturday Evening Post Covers: Tell Me a Story*, will present all 323 of the artist's legendary *Post* covers. Taken together, they detail Americans' lives and the history they shared for 47 years.

In a world flooded (some say "polluted") by data, media, information, and propaganda, join us at MMoA to contemplate one story at a time, and how it reaches you. Heed your own inner narrative. We'll listen.

V. Susan Fisher
Executive Director

NORMAN ROCKWELL'S SATURDAY EVENING POST COVERS: TELL ME A STORY



Norman Rockwell (1894-1978), *Boy and Girl Gazing at Moon (Puppy Love) (Sunset)*. Cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*, April 24, 1926. Norman Rockwell Museum Collection ©1926 SEPS. Licensed by Curtis Licensing, Indianapolis, IN. All rights reserved. www.curtislicensing.com

Plan now to see Norman Rockwell's *Saturday Evening Post Covers: Tell Me a Story*, organized by the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, MA, at MMoA from June 18 through September 18.

This spectacular display of all 323 *Saturday Evening Post* covers by the iconic American artist Norman Rockwell (1894-1978) unites two giants of American culture: *The Saturday Evening Post*, which chronicled "American history in the making" for nearly 200 years, and Norman Rockwell, who captivated Americans by the sheer visual appeal, historic detail, and narrative brilliance of his art for more than four decades.

Born in 1894, Norman Percival Rockwell left public school at the age of 14 to become an illustrator. He attended the Chase Art School, was admitted to the National Academy of Design, then studied further at the progressive Art Students League. His hard work paid off when an illustration was published by the Boy Scouts of America's *Boys' Life*, and again when he became the publication's art editor in 1913. Then, in 1916, his painting *Mother's Day Off*, was accepted for the cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*. He was only 22.

Rockwell took the opportunity seriously. Throughout his long career, he rarely took vacations, working meticulously from props and models for up to six months on a single cover painting.

Rockwell's earnest and unpretending attitude to his work also characterized his subject matter. "I showed the America I knew

and observed to others who might not have noticed" he said. By turns humorous and deeply moving, his subjects found an enthusiastic public and helped raise *The Post's* circulation to 6,900,000 by 1960.

While the "Golden Age of Illustration" waned through the 30s and 40s, Rockwell's popularity continued to grow. His last cover for *The Post*, *Portrait of John F. Kennedy* was published on December 14, 1963, one week after Kennedy's assassination.

To bring such a wealth of imagery and history into focus, MMoA will offer talks and events highlighting specific aspects of Rockwell's art. Keep an eye on the MMoA website at www.MysticMuseumofArt.org and promotional eblasts, or call MMoA at 860.536.7601.

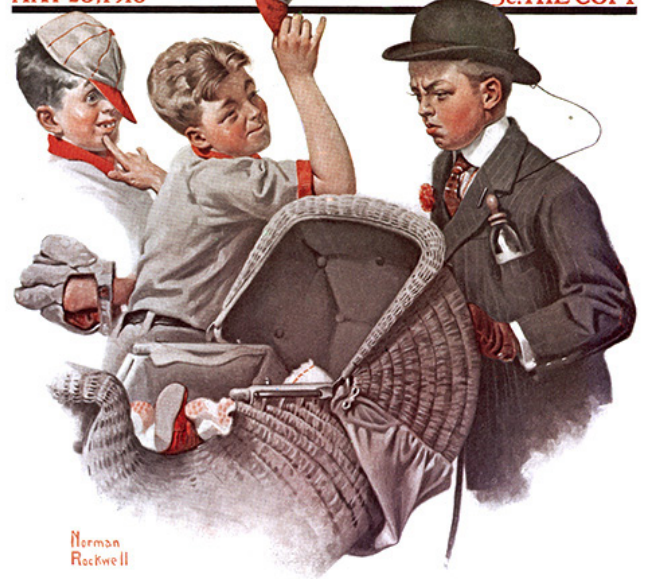
Support for this exhibition was provided by the Kitchings Family Foundation and CT Humanities (CTH), with funding provided by the Connecticut State Department of Economic and Community Development/Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) from the Connecticut State Legislature.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

An Illustrated Weekly
Founded August 8 by Benj. Franklin

MAY 20, 1916

5c. THE COPY



Norman Rockwell

© 1916 SEPS

THE EMPIRE BUILDERS—By Mary Roberts Rinehart

Cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*, May 20, 1916, featuring Norman Rockwell's *Mother's Day Off (Boy with Baby Carriage)*, the first of his cover illustrations for *The Post*.

exhibition open

June 18 - September 18

SPRING AND SUMMER EXHIBITIONS

Quilt National '21, now through April 17

This selection of the best contemporary quilts from around the world highlights innovations in the art form to address contemporary topics such as the COVID-19 pandemic, social justice, and climate change. The exhibition was organized and circulated by the Dairy Barn Arts Center of Athens, Ohio.



Quilt National '21, MMoA Davis Gallery

Art in Three Dimensions, now through April 17

MMoA spotlights three-dimensional examples of narrative art in the permanent collection, from sculptures to shadowboxes.



Katherine Tod Johnstone (1922-1999), Touch Me Too, undated, bronze and marble. MMoA permanent collection. Donated by Katherine Tod Johnstone.

More Than Hot Type, April 30 - May 29

MMoA is the final venue for this eminent printmaking portfolio from the Providence Art Club before it joins the Graphic Arts Collection of the Smithsonian. 25 artists drew inspiration from the power of the printed word to expose misinformation and "fake news."



Craig Masten, Act 3 Scene 1, Printed 1603, Photopolymer plate aquatint on Magnani Pescia paper, watercolor.

Young at Art, April 30 - May 29

Since the 1980s this exhibition has given young artists (18 and under) the opportunity to show their art in a museum setting. *Young at Art* expresses MMoA's commitment to enriching children's lives through art and art education.

Norman Rockwell's 323 Saturday Evening Post Covers: Tell Me a Story, June 18 - September 18

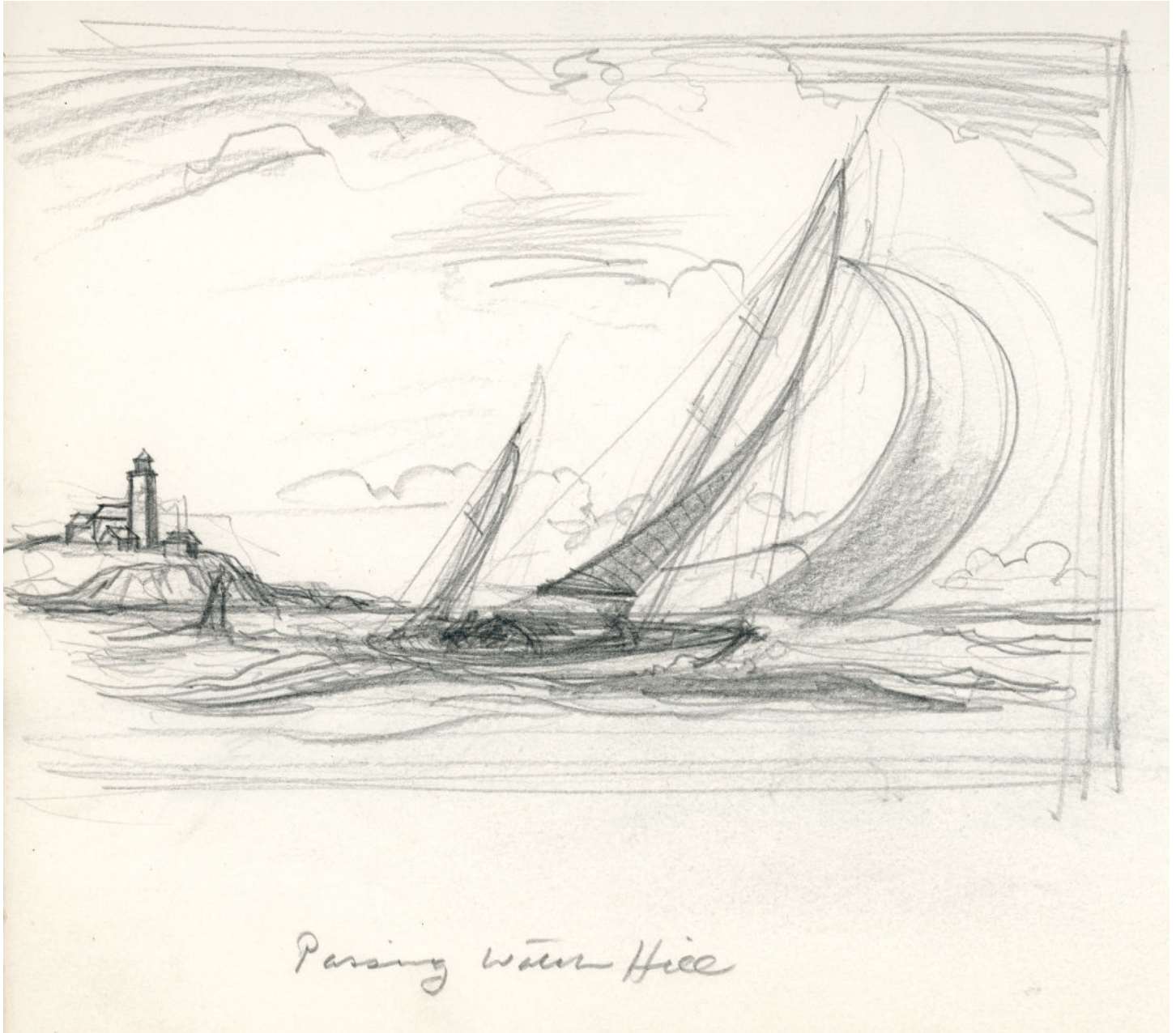
A remarkable opportunity to relish every one of the 323 *Saturday Evening Post* covers painted by Norman Rockwell over more than four decades. Admission to this special exhibition will be free to MMoA members, \$10 to non-members.



LEFT: *Norman Rockwell, Girl Running with Wet Canvas (Wet Paint)*, cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*, April 12, 1930. *Norman Rockwell Museum Digital Collection ©1930 SEPS: Licensed by Curtis Licensing, Indianapolis, IN. All rights reserved. www.curtislicensing.com*



RIGHT: *Norman Rockwell, Rosie the Riveter*, cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*, May 29, 1943. *Norman Rockwell Museum Digital Collection ©1943 SEPS: Licensed by Curtis Licensing, Indianapolis, IN. All rights reserved. www.curtislicensing.com*



Yngve Soderberg (1896-1972) *Passing Watch Hill*, graphite on paper, from the artist's sketchbook. MMoA permanent collection.

With *More than Hot Type* on display in the Liebig Gallery, we fondly remember the prominent MMoA printmaker, Yngve Soderberg.

From 1988 to 1999, Lois Constantine and Priscilla Wright Pratt recorded interviews with MMoA artists and their families. On the afternoon of September 2, 1992, they met in the home of Nancy Soderberg (née Horn), the late wife of artist Yngve Soderberg, to speak with her about "Sody's" life and career.

According to Nancy, Soderberg became interested "in the black and white business" while working in Chicago with Ralph Fletcher Seymour, a well-known artist who worked with Frank L. Baum, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and other prominent authors.

Soderberg honed his skills in etching as he traveled and studied abroad. Back in the US, he offered his prints for sale to a dealer in New York City. The dealer declined. Everyone, he said, was doing European subjects. He wanted something distinctly American. Soderberg started his search. On a trip to Mason's Island, he discovered a passion for marine imagery and devoted the rest of his career to visual narratives of American marine history. Nancy recalled the hundreds of sketchbooks that he would bring home as references for his etchings. "Anywhere there were boats," she said, "he'd be."

To find the audio excerpts from this story and others like it, check out our website at www.mysticmuseumofart.org/archives.

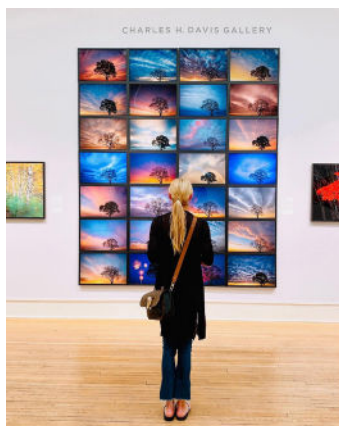
MEMBERSHIP



MMoA members are *a part of everything we do*: special exhibitions, studio classes, juried exhibitions, outreach and art education for children, gallery talks, and so much else. Thanks to our members, MMoA continues to build on the founding artists' mission to share the practice and appreciation of art with an ever growing public.

Membership benefits include:

- Free admission to special ticketed exhibitions, including *Norman Rockwell's Saturday Evening Post Covers: Tell Me a Story*
- Discounts on MMoA events
- Discounts on MMoA classes and workshops
- Weekly eBlasts with the latest MMoA news
- Advance notification of exhibition openings, trips, and events
- Free parking while visiting MMoA exhibitions and events



Becoming a member is easy online at www.MysticMuseumofArt.org/membership-form. You can also join by calling Pamela Feltus at 860.536.7601 extension 209.

Better yet, come by for a visit, say hello, enjoy the current exhibitions, and join in person!

Melford exhibition visitor

MMoA STORE



Don't forget to drop by the Museum Store on your next visit to the Museum! You may recognize items related to art and artists from MMoA exhibitions and permanent collection:

- **Katherine Tod Johnstone's** replicas of *Touch Me Too*, a sculpture of mother and baby seals. The original greeted tourists at the Mystic Aquarium for decades.
- **Garrett Price's** memorable *New Yorker* covers in puzzle form—one of the historic Mystic Outdoor Art Festival, and one of the former Mystic Art Association artists hanging a show in the Davis Gallery.



- **Harvey Fuller's** images, including a limited number of serigraphs (silk screen prints) that were printed and autographed by the artist.
- **Y.E. Soderberg** watercolor reproductions also available while supplies last.
- **Michael Melford** posters and postcards from his fall 2021 exhibition at MMoA.

GALLERY—STUDIO CONNECTION

MMoA is committed to sharing the practice as well as the appreciation of fine art. High-quality studio art instruction encourages students to explore their creativity in multiple media. Students at all levels of experience enjoy support from instructors and peers in daytime, evening, and weekend classes.

In honor of *Hot Type*, spring studios will feature weekend printmaking workshops for adults and after-school printmaking classes for children. MMoA's Family Fun Day on April 9th is a free, drop-in art making afternoon for children and adults that will include quilt making and printmaking activities such as the community peace quilt project, pattern paper quilting, and monotype printmaking—just for starters.

Special studio classes will also examine narrative art—art that tells a story—whether of history, tradition, social change, or imagination. Explore the use of symbolism, gesture, color, and value in narrative art in *Visual Storytelling*, a class on illustrating picture books; *Radha Krishna Romance: Madhubhani Art*, an Indian narrative folk art form, and *Narratives in Stop-Motion Pictures*, a class on clay sculpting and digital storytelling.



2022 SUMMER ART CAMPS



Unleash your child's imagination and creativity at MMoA weeklong summer art camps for children and youth (three-and-a-half to sixteen years old). Camps provide a wonderful introduction to a variety of visual art forms: drawing and painting, 3-D sculpture, crafting, and more. Campers meet new friends, develop new skills, and have fun. They can learn a little bit of everything in Junior Studio Camps or try out a Themed Specialty Camp in a specific area of interest. Register for multiple weeks for a fully immersive art experience. Camps start June 20th and end on August 26.

OUTREACH

MMoA's Outreach program offers transformative art experiences to local schools and community groups, to spark creativity and inspire wonder. School programs support Connecticut curriculum standards and include traveling "pop-up" lessons, field trips, and after-school art clubs. For adults, professional development workshops, art retreats, and offsite art education advance MMoA's mission to engage the community in the appreciation and practice of visual art.

MMoA recently collaborated with first grade teachers at Northeast Academy Arts Magnet School to enrich their non-fiction reading and writing units. Students learned about 3-D construction, created animals using plaster, paint, and assorted multimedia, and wrote about them.

Outreach teachers also created art with fourth grade students at Lyme Consolidated School. To welcome a new student from Afghanistan, the class created art based on cultural traditions from his homeland. The lesson plan featured beautiful and intricate Afghan architecture, especially its decorative mosaic tile façades.



Afghan mosaic outreach project

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LOOKING AT ART

Looking at Art

For the pure pleasure of looking at and talking about art please join Executive Director Susan Fisher for MMoA's new program series. Part gallery talk, part discussion, *Looking at Art* invites you to spend one hour each month examining artwork up close in person and from the deep perspectives of history. Admission is free to members, \$10 for non-members. Space is limited, to encourage discussion and exchange. For more information, call 860-536-7601 or check the MMoA website at <https://www.mysticmuseumofart.org/entry/looking-at-art/>. *Looking at Art* is generously sponsored by MMoA elected artist and benefactor Cathy Weiss.



Executive Director Susan Fisher discusses the art of Agnes Harrison Lincoln

MYSTIC MUSEUM OF ART

Mystic Museum of Art (MMoA) has served as a focal point for the arts in southeastern Connecticut for more than 100 years. Founded in 1913 as the Mystic Art Association, the museum now engages visitors in richly curated exhibitions, interpretive activities, studio classes, and outreach programs. MMoA's mission is to inspire creativity and critical dialogue by engaging the regional community in the understanding, appreciation, and practice of visual art.



Support for MMoA has been provided by the Kitchings Family Foundation and CT Humanities (CTH), with funding provided by the Connecticut State Department of Economic and Community Development/ Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) from the Connecticut State Legislature.

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