

## Silver in American Art: Medium, Message, and Metaphor

A Virtual Event Celebrating 25 Years of IAC's Conferences in American Art

Thursday – Saturday, 12 – 14, November 2020

12:00 – 4:30 pm

Thursday, November 12

**Celebrating the Life of Nancy Rivard Shaw**, Curator Emerita of American Art, Detroit Institute of Arts

**12:00 – 12:30 pm**      *Rooted in the Past and Looking Ahead: 25 Years of American Art.* **Lisa Koenigsberg**, President, Initiatives in Art and Culture.

**12:30 – 1:15 pm**      *In with the “New Movement”:* *American Artists in New York City, 1870 – 1900.* **Thayer Tolles**, Marica F. Vilcek Curator, The American Wing, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, will consider The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s formation of its core American collections and the establishment of New York City as an art capital between 1870 and 1900.

**1:15 – 1:25 pm**      **Break**

**1:25 – 2:10 pm**      *Dark Mines, Dusty Workshops: Silver Beyond the Smith.* **Ethan Lasser**, John Moors Cabot Chair, Art of the Americas, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston will place works such as Copley’s Portrait of Paul Revere within a consideration of the place of the silversmith in 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century America and Britain, building on past scholarship to connect such portraits to the maker’s mark and workshop and then to the mines and refineries where silver ores were extracted and refined.

- 2:10 – 2:20 pm**                      **Break**
- 2:20 – 3:15 pm**                      *"By the Light of the Silvery Moon": Albert Pynkham Ryder and "A Wild Note of Longing."* **William C. Agee**, Evelyn Kranes Kossak Professor of American Art Emeritus, Hunter College, CUNY; **Christina Connett Brophy**, The Douglas and Cynthia Crocker Endowed Chair for the Chief Curator, The New Bedford Whaling Museum; and **Elizabeth Broun**, director emerita, Smithsonian American Art Museum will discuss Ryder's work and its influence on subsequent artists.
- 3:15 – 3:25 pm**                      **Break**
- 3:25 – 4:10 pm**                      "A 'Living Glow': Silver as a Sculptural Element in the Work of Jackson Pollock and David Smith." **Jennifer Field**, Executive Director of the Estate of David Smith, will examine the effect of silver to create an optically expansive field that functions as a sculptural element in Pollock's "drip" paintings and a select group of Smith's sculptures.

Friday, November 13

**Celebrating the Life of John Driscoll**, owner Driscoll Babcock, Scholar, and Collector

- 12:30 – 1:15 pm**                      *Albert Bierstadt and the Art of Silver Mining.* **Spencer Wigmore**, Assistant Curator, Paintings, Sculpture, and Works on Paper, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, will connect the grand landscape – specifically the work of Albert Bierstadt – with silver prospecting.
- 1:15 – 1:25 pm**                      **Break**
- 1:25 – 2:15 pm**                      *Silver Moon, Heart of Darkness: The Art of the Nocturne and Racial Identity.* **Hélène Valance**, author, *Nocturne: Night in American Art, 1890 – 1917* and faculty member, University of Franche-Comte, will consider the paradox embodied in the contrast between the ethereal, misty nocturnes painted by turn-

of-the-century artists who followed in Whistler's steps and the vocabulary of night and light featured in more popular imagery.

2:15 – 2:25 pm

**Break**

2:25 – 3:10 pm

*American Silverscapes: Metallic Sculpture and Resource Display at the 1893 Columbian Exposition.* **Christine Garnier**, 2020 – 2022 Wyeth Fellow at the Center for Advanced Studies in Visual Art in Washington, DC, will discuss the late 19th century silver sculptures and artworks on view at the 1893 Columbian Exposition, by focusing on the material's relationship to the rapidly changing landscape of the American West during the rise of the mining industry.

3:10 – 3:20 pm

**Break**

3:20 – 4:10 pm

*From Moonlight to Machinery: How Modernist Innovations in Framing Embraced Silver as Complement and Symbol.* **Suzanne Smeaton**, independent frame historian and pioneer in the study and scholarship of American period frames, will consider the history of silver in American frames, beginning with progenitor Charles Prendergast's use of silver metal leaf and beyond to include white-gold, aluminum leaf and other surfaces that evoke the cool elegance of silver.

Saturday, November 14

12:00 – 12:45 pm

*Exploring and Shaping Modernism: A Conversation.* **Andrew Schoelkopf**, co-founder, and partner, Menconi + Schoelkopf, and **Joan Washburn**, founder, the Washburn Gallery, which, for over 40 years, has organized carefully selected exhibitions of works by major American artists, including the Stieglitz Group; American Abstract Artists of the 1930s and 1940s; the Abstract Expressionists and contemporary artists.

12:45 – 12:55 pm

**Break**

12:55 – 1:40 pm

*Joseph Stella: Visionary Nature and Silverpoint as a Medium.* **Audrey Lewis**, curator, Brandywine River Museum of Art and **Ellen Roberts**, Harold and Anne Berkley Smith Curator of American Art, Norton Museum of Art, in conversation with **Lisa Koenigsberg**, President, Initiatives in Art and Culture, will discuss Joseph Stella’s delicate fanciful botanicals executed in silverpoint—a technique he embraced in 1918, a year that coincides with a renewed interest in the medium by such American artists as Marsden Hartley and recalls Renaissance masters—within the context of the first major museum exhibition to focus exclusively on the artist’s nature-based subjects.

1:40 – 1:50 pm

**Break**

1:50 – 2:35 pm

*Charles Sheeler: Fashion, Form and Photography.* **Shawn Waldron**, Curator of Print Sales and Exhibitions, Getty Images and Founding Director, Conde Nast Photo Archive will – through visual analysis of Charles Sheeler’s photographs of models, starlets, and actors for *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* executed under Edward Steichen’s direction during Sheeler’s tenure (1926 – 1931) at Conde Nast Publications – demonstrate the centrality of this period to the modernist aesthetic of Sheeler’s mature career.

2:35 – 2:45 pm

**Break**

2:45 – 3:30 pm

*Silver as The Sign of Life in the Work of Charles Burchfield.* **Scott Propeack**, Deputy Director Burchfield Penney Art Center, and collector, film-maker, and author **John Sacret Young** assert and explore that “Silver is the stream of light that permeates all of the magic moments in Burchfield’s paintings and words ... silver becomes a tonal reference for the synesthetic artist who at the age of 22 he applied silver to, “the meadowlark’s note.” Silver is all things for Burchfield, if not the essence of life, the magic of an instant that places him in the world and the world that he steers our attention.”

3:30 – 3:40 pm

Break

3:40 – 4:30 pm

*A Story of Southwest Silver in Robert Henri's portrait of Tom Po Qui.* **Jennifer R. Henneman**, Associate Curator, Petrie Institute of Western American Art, Denver Art Museum, considers Robert Henri's attentiveness to the silver squash blossom necklace worn by Tewa ceramicist Tom Po Qui (Ramoncita Gonzales) from P'ohwhóge Owingeh (San Ildefonso Pueblo) in his portrait. Henri's depiction of this necklace reveals a history of Indigenous agency, artistry, adaptation, and participation within modern markets of the late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries.