



SOCIETY of ILLUSTRATORS

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PRESS RELEASE

“Americans Abroad: J.C. Leyendecker and the European Academic Influence on American Illustration,” on display at the Museum of American Illustration at the Society of Illustrators, May 21–July 12, 2008.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK – –

The Museum of American Illustration at the Society of Illustrators presents “Americans Abroad: J.C. Leyendecker and the European Academic Influence on American Illustration.” Opening May 21-July 12, 2008, the exhibit showcases the history and art of Leyendecker and other American Illustrators whose studies in London, Munich and Paris were influenced by the traditional teaching methods of the European Academies in the 19th Century.

Joseph Christian Leyendecker’s images became synonymous with *The Saturday Evening Post*, the Arrow Collar Man, and the advertising for Kuppenheimer Clothes in the early 1900’s. His recognizable use of cross-hatching with oil paints and mathematical compositions can be traced to his education at the Académie Julian in Paris. The most important lesson Leyendecker and his colleagues learned in Europe was that craft was important and that tradition was worth preserving. Throughout the twentieth century, illustrators in the United States embraced this idea, and while fine artists were encouraged to discard old methods and forge a path towards innovation, the European academic tradition survived and thrived in American illustration.

While Leyendecker is the main focus of this exhibit, works by his brother Frank Leyendecker, W.T. Smedley, Edwin Austin Abbey, Edwin Howland Blashfield and Everett Shin, among others, will also be on display. “Americans Abroad”, a full color catalog featuring works from the exhibit with an introductory essay by Alice A. “Bunny” Carter, Professor of Art and San Jose State University in California, will also be available.

Curated by illustrator Judy Francis Zankel and Director Emeritus of the Society of Illustrators, Terrence Brown, this exhibition features works from the Permanent Collection of the Museum of American Illustration as well as a collection from our generous lenders. Lenders include major museum and private collections throughout the United States.

Founded in 1901, the Society of Illustrators is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to “the promotion of the art of illustration- past, present and future.” It has over 1,000 members worldwide and is headquartered in an 1875 vintage carriage house in New York’s Upper East Side. Museum hours: Tuesday 10 - 8, Wednesday - Friday 10 - 5, Saturday 12 - 4. Admission is free.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kate Feirtag kate@societyillustrators.org

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