

New England Regionalism, 1900 to 1960 (Waterville, 5-7 Oct 17)

Colby College, Oct 5-07, 2017

Registration deadline: Jul 24, 2017

Elizabeth Finch, Colby College Museum of Art

Call for Papers

"Somehow a Past": New England Regionalism, 1900 to 1960

October 5-7, 2017

Colby College

Deadline for abstracts: July 24, 2017

On the occasion of "Marsden Hartley's Maine," an exhibition organized by the Colby College Museum of Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Colby College will present the symposium, "'Somehow a Past': New England Regionalism, 1900 to 1960." Taking its title from the autobiography of Marsden Hartley, an artist closely associated with Maine, this symposium will explore the interest in regional, New England subjects among American artists who contributed to the development of modernism.

In the 1930s and 40s, the American Midwest became the nationally recognized locus of Regionalism, an artistic movement that located quintessential American identities chiefly in rural and suburban contexts. But decades earlier, artists were drawn to the northeastern states, associating them with idealized conceptions of originality and authenticity. Inspired by the example of Winslow Homer, who famously settled on the Maine coast in 1883, a culture of New England artist colonies emerged at the turn of the century. These seasonal communities complemented art production in urban centers well into the post-World War II era, while a concurrent fascination for New England folk art spread from artists and collectors to museums.

This Colby symposium invites scholars to explore the following questions: What were New England's regional identities during the turbulent twentieth century and how were they instrumentalized by artists in search of an artistic home? In what distinctive ways did the rural northeast contribute to modernism in the United States? How did the regional impulse feed enduring artistic conceptions of America's geographical, cultural, and political origins? What do these ideas about place reveal about American art and its histories, and what do they obscure? Papers may address any aspect or medium of American art. We especially welcome scholarship that examines the audience, marketing, and cultural work of New England regionalism, as well as work on understudied artists, artist colonies, and the role of popular culture in American art, including folk art and the tourism industry.

The symposium will take place October 5–7, 2017 and will include a keynote lecture, panel discussions, and a day-trip to sites in Maine for symposium speakers and guests. Please submit a one-page abstract and two-page curriculum vitae by July 24, 2017, to efinch@colby.edu. Questions may be directed to this email address.

"Marsden Hartley's Maine" is organized by the Colby College Museum of Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

It is made possible by the Henry Luce Foundation, Bank of America, Betsy Cohen and Edward Cohen/Aretê Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Everett P. and Florence H. Turner Exhibition Fund.

Symposium Committee:

Elizabeth Finch, Lunder Curator of American Art, Colby College Museum of Art

Shalini Le Gall, Curator of Academic Programs, Colby College Museum of Art

Lauren Lessing, Mirken Director of Academic and Public Programs, Colby College Museum of Art

Tanya Sheehan, William R. Kenan, Jr. Associate Professor of Art and Chair of the Art Department, Colby College

Diana Tuite, Katz Curator, Colby College Museum of Art

Reference:

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