

ADELSON GALLERIES TO PRESENT
LIGHT IMPRESSIONS: AMERICAN WORKS ON PAPER, 1875-1925
AN EXHIBITION AND SALE
MAY 9 – JUNE 30, 2006

New York, NY (Spring 2006)—Nearly 40 important works on paper, including watercolors, pastels and pencil drawings, by leading American artists will be shown at Adelson Galleries in New York City this spring from May 9 – June 30, 2006. *Light Impressions: American Works on Paper, 1875-1925* will exhibit works for sale, many of which are available for the first time.

“Personally, I have long admired and collected works on paper, feeling that, in many ways, artistic expression on paper can be more spontaneous in execution and more direct in artistic intent than more “finished” examples in oil,” said Warren Adelson, president of Adelson Galleries. “In this exhibition we have assembled a spectrum of material of our favorite artists from the turn of the century in a variety of media on paper. Each in its own way is a spokesman for the artist.”

Light Impressions: American Works on Paper, 1875-1925 will feature works by Frank Benson, Robert Frederick Blum, Mary Cassatt, William Merritt Chase, Thomas Wilmer Dewing, Childe Hassam, Phillip Leslie Hale, Maurice Prendergast, John Singer Sargent, Everett Shinn, James Abbott McNeill Whistler and others.

Among the highlights of the exhibition are two significant works by Childe Hassam (1859-1935). *Summertime* (1891), a pastel on canvas, is one of the bucolic scenes in a series of pastels that the artist probably executed around Lexington, Walden Pond and the surrounding areas of Boston. This beautiful and serene work, with its vigorous strokes of pastel throughout the picture, gives the effect of immediacy and movement that was the hallmark of the artist’s Impressionist approach honed when Hassam and his wife lived in Paris from 1887-1889. While there, his works were influenced by the reigning French Impressionists Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro and Alfred Sisley, incorporating their brushwork and palette into his already developed Impressionist techniques. During this period, his canvases were exhibited and honored at the Paris Salon, and it is thought that these works were his most inspired. *Summertime* was last exhibited at The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s *Childe Hassam: American Impressionist* in 2004.

Another of the important Childe Hassam pictures to be featured in *Light Impressions: American Works on*

PAPER, 1875-1925, is *A Favorite Corner* (1892), a watercolor on paper. Hassam was one of the regulars in poet and gardener Celia Thaxter's summer circle on Appledore Island off the coast of New Hampshire; the two met around 1880, probably in Boston, where Thaxter studied art. At one point, around 1883-1885, Hassam was a substitute teacher for one of her classes, and not long after that began providing illustrations for some of her publications. Many of his works are outdoor scenes set in and around her flower garden. *A Favorite Corner* is a study for Hassam's most famous picture, *The Room of Flowers* (1894, oil on canvas), which illustrates Celia Thaxter's parlor on Appledore Island and sold in 2001 to a private collector for \$20 million. This picture is one of only two that Hassam painted of Thaxter's parlor and, as such, it is an especially rare subject and a highly significant work in the body of the artist's production. The painting was given by the artist as a gift to Mary Plympton (c. 1892), one of his pupils and a friend of Celia Thaxter and went by family descent to Mary Plympton's granddaughter. It has remained in a private collection to the present.

John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) will be represented in this show with five pictures, the most significant of which is the watercolor on paper *Palazzo Labia with Campanile of San Geremia* (1903). Among Sargent's most vibrant and sought-after works are his watercolors of Venice; although he had worked in the medium before 1900, it was just after the turn of the century that he began to develop significant interest in it, and it soon far surpassed his production of landscapes in oil. This picture, a prized watercolor of the artist, was painted from the Grand Canal, typical in the artist's working method in Venice in which he painted from his gondola that served as a floating studio, a technique he learned in Giverny by his friend Claude Monet in the late 1880s. This "water-level" perspective provided the backdrop for the brilliant light and resonant color in Sargent's works of this magical city and offered an intimacy in both the oils and watercolors that he painted there. *Palazzo Labia with Campanile of San Geremia* remained in the artist's possession until his death, descending to his sister Emily and then to her nephew, Jean-Louis Ormond in whose collection it remained until his death in 1986.

Another Venice scene in *Light Impressions: American Works on Paper, 1875-1925* is brilliantly executed by Robert Frederick Blum (1857-1903) in *On the Lagoon, Venice* (c. 1880-81). This painting by the Ohio-born artist is an excellent example of Blum's watercolor technique, which proved to influence the development of the medium in America. This beautiful and delicate work clearly proves that he was a proficient watercolorist in the tradition of James Abbott McNeill Whistler, his fellow painter who he met, worked closely with and was influenced by in Venice. His early watercolors of the city are generally characterized by the emphasis on texture and brushwork, exaggerated effects of light and dark and an application of fluid washes which merely hint or suggest the shape and character of forms. *On the Lagoon, Venice*, a picture executed on a grained paper, is saturated with paint, a style of the artist's choosing. In America, Blum's use of fluid washes with little or no addition of color in a semi-fluid condition was a revelation to critics, artists and collectors. The artist's

inscription on this watercolor, “R. Blum/To Portfolio/Pedestal Fund Exhibition/On the Lagoon” identifies this picture as being part of the portfolio that was created for the *Pedestal Fund Art Loan Exhibition*, which opened in early December, 1883 at the National Academy of Design in New York for the purpose of raising money for the base of the Statue of Liberty. The afore-mentioned portfolio, according to the *New York World* (December 2, 1883), contained “...a score of more of original watercolor sketches from foremost American artists and autograph letters from the most prominent statesmen and litterateurs.” *On the Lagoon, Venice* has remained in a private collection until the present.

A fully illustrated, color catalogue with an essay by Jay E. Cantor, director of the Mary Cassatt Catalogue Raisonné Committee, will accompany this exhibition and sale and will be available for \$20 exclusively through Adelson Galleries.

Adelson Galleries is noted for its expertise in the field of American art and the work of John Singer Sargent and Mary Cassatt in particular. In 1980, Warren Adelson, an internationally recognized authority on Sargent, initiated scholarship on the John Singer Sargent Catalogue Raisonné in partnership with the artist’s great-nephew, Richard Ormond. To date, three volumes of the catalogue raisonné have been published by Yale University Press; the forth volume will be published in fall 2006. In 1998, the gallery also became the home to the Mary Cassatt Catalogue Raisonné project, which is actively engaged in updating and expanding the existing catalogue by Adelyn Dohme Breeskin. Based on Breeskin’s pioneering research and her archives, the Mary Cassatt Catalogue Raisonné will include new works that have come to light since the publication of the first catalogue in 1970. The project will produce a revised and expanded catalogue raisonné, including both the original essays and new scholarship. In addition, the gallery has made significant contributions to the study of American art through critically acclaimed exhibitions and accompanying publications, including *Art in a Mirror: The Counterproofs of Mary Cassatt* (2004-2005), *Sargent’s Women* (2003), *Maurice Prendergast: Paintings of America* (2003), *From the Artist’s Studio: Unknown Prints and Drawings by Mary Cassatt* (2000), *Childe Hassam: An American Impressionist* (1999) and *Sargent Abroad: Figures and Landscapes* (1997).

Adelson Galleries is open to the public Monday-Friday, 9:30-5:30 and during this exhibition on Saturdays, 10:00-5:00. The galleries are located in The Mark Hotel, 25 East 77th Street, Third Floor, New York, NY. Tel: 212.439.6800. Website: www.adelsongalleries.com. E-mail: info@adelsongalleries.com.