



# PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DELAWARE ART MUSEUM PRESENTS**  
***SEEING THE CITY: SLOAN'S NEW YORK***

Wilmington, DE (October 9, 2007)—The Delaware Art Museum presents *Seeing the City: Sloan's New York*, a traveling exhibition focusing on John Sloan's images of New York City in paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs to present an in-depth view of the artist's years in the city and the city's effect on his art. Far from glamorizing the emerging vertical vistas of sky-scrapers, Sloan focused instead on people, public spaces, street life, elevated trains, and the pedestrian experience. The Delaware Art Museum organized this exhibition, drawing on the abundance of material in its own art and archival collections supplemented by loans from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Art, the Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester, The Phillips Collection, and various other public and private collections. *Seeing the City* will be on display at the Delaware Art Museum from October 20, 2007, through January 20, 2008, before traveling to three other institutions.

"The wealth of materials held at the Delaware Art Museum on and about John Sloan made the creation of this exhibition by us a natural," said Joyce K. Schiller, Curator at the Delaware Art Museum.

By bringing together numerous images in all media from 1904 through the 1930s, *Seeing the City* is the first major traveling exhibition to focus on Sloan's depictions of New York and the first since the 1970s to present significant new scholarship on the artist. This exhibition is also the first to isolate Sloan's vision from that of his "Ashcan School" colleagues in order to explore his individual contribution. As Sloan moved through the vast and rapidly changing metropolis, he made sense of it by describing—in his diaries, letters, and pictures—the streets, squares, gathering places, and city dwellers he encountered. He created a "pedestrian aesthetic," helping to define New York City in the popular imagination and creating what one critic called the "slang" of the city.

*Seeing the City* maps Sloan's New York, locating and explicating the subjects he pictured. The exhibition follows Sloan as he explores parks, streets, and rooftops, examining the personal and cultural meanings of

the sites he chose to depict again and again. Through wall text, label copy, an interactive kiosk, a robust website, and a catalog, *Seeing the City: Sloan's New York* looks at Sloan from new perspectives and hopefully will inspire new scholarship on the artist and his circle of friends.

*Seeing the City: Sloan's New York* is presented in Delaware by JPMorgan Chase Foundation. This exhibition has received generous support from the Henry Luce Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Helen Farr Sloan Trust. The News Journal is the Media Sponsor. This exhibition was organized by the Delaware Art Museum.

This program is made possible, in part, by grants from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency dedicated to nurturing and supporting the arts in Delaware, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts. The Sloan Lecture Series is co-sponsored by the Delaware Art Museum and the University of Delaware.

### **John Sloan**

From 1892 until 1904, John Sloan (1871-1951) worked as an artist at Philadelphia newspapers and contributed illustrations to magazines. In 1904, Sloan moved to New York City, determined to pursue a career as a painter. After the 1908 exhibition of *The Eight*, some of the group's artists were derogatorily called the Ashcan School for their depiction of the less savory areas of the city. Sloan's paintings of New York centered on his favorite subject: the "drab, shabby, happy, sad, and human life" of a city and its people. While Sloan remains best known for the New York scenes he painted during his first 10 years there, he was also an able landscapist and portraitist, as well as a prolific printmaker.

### **Helen Farr Sloan**

Helen Farr Sloan (1911-2005) first met John Sloan when she enrolled in the New York Art Students League. He became her lifelong friend and mentor, and they married in 1944. After John Sloan's death, Helen Farr Sloan managed his estate and turned it into a philanthropic instrument to serve local, regional, national, and international arts constituencies. She first visited Wilmington, Delaware, in 1960 to help organize *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Exhibition of Independent Artists in 1910*; the original show had been organized by her husband. Over the course of more than four decades, Mrs. Sloan donated thousands of paintings, prints, and drawings as well as manuscript materials to the Delaware Art Museum. This is the largest gift made to the Museum since the founding gifts of the Howard Pyle collection and the Pre-Raphaelite collection. The Museum has named two prominent spaces in honor of her generous gifts: the Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives and the Helen Farr Sloan Galleries. Recently, the Delaware Art Museum received the largest cash bequest in its history, as the Revocable Trust of Helen Farr Sloan distributed \$6,850,000 to the Museum.

## **Catalog**

The Delaware Art Museum has produced a 208-page catalog, dedicated to the memory of Helen Farr Sloan and fully illustrated with objects in the exhibition, as well as supporting material to accompany the exhibition. The catalog, titled *John Sloan's New York*, opens with a director's preface, describing the Delaware Art Museum's relationship with Helen Farr Sloan, and an introduction, followed by five scholarly essays and a chronology of Sloan's time in New York. The catalog is published by the Delaware Art Museum and Yale University Press, and is available at the Delaware Art Museum Store.

The essays examine Sloan's production from new perspectives, providing a more thorough understanding of the artist and the Ashcan School. Dr. Joyce K. Schiller and Heather Campbell Coyle analyze Sloan's notations of the city in his paintings, prints, drawings, and photographs. Dr. Molly Hutton's contribution posits that Sloan's engagement with the city streets—through walking, painting, and descriptive writing in his diary—functioned as a way to make sense out of his status as newcomer to the city. Dr. Susan Fillin-Yeh focuses on the liminal, threshold spaces—shop windows and sidewalks—where Sloan staged so many of the compelling human dramas he painted. Dr. Katherine Manthorne explores the connections between Sloan's view of the New York City streets and the moving pictures of the same streets created by cinematographer D. W. Griffith and examines the painter's relationship with John Butler Yeats. The final piece in the catalog, Dr. Alexis Boylan's essay, sheds new light on Sloan's identity as a part of the Ashcan School and his relationship to Robert Henri.

## **Website**

The Delaware Art Museum has produced an interactive website for *Seeing the City: Sloan's New York*, located at [www.johnsloansnewyork.org](http://www.johnsloansnewyork.org), as well as a touch screen kiosk for the exhibition. The website and kiosk were developed by the exhibition curators and Columbia University Digital Knowledge Ventures.

## **Exhibition Venues**

Delaware Art Museum	October 20, 2007 – January 20, 2008
Westmoreland Museum of American Art	February 10, 2008 – April 27, 2008
Smart Museum of Art at the Univ. of Chicago	May 22, 2008 – September 14, 2008
Reynolda House, Museum of American Art	October 4, 2008 – January 4, 2009

## **Press Preview**

A press preview for *Seeing the City: Sloan's New York* will be held on Thursday, October 18, 2007, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Delaware Art Museum. Exhibition curators Joyce K. Schiller and Heather Campbell Coyle will lead a tour of the exhibition and answer questions. Please RSVP by Tuesday, October 16.

## **Exhibition-Related Events**

- **Art in New York Before and During Sloan's Tenure (Art History Course)**

**Choose Session 1 or Session 2:**

**Session 1: Tuesdays, October 23 & 30, November 6 & 13 / 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

**Session 2: Saturdays, January 12 & 19 / 10:00 a.m. – noon**

**Entire Course: \$32 Members / \$40 Non-Members / Director's Circle Members Free**

**Individual Lectures: \$8 Members / \$10 Non-Members**

**Registration: 302-351-8551 or [bjohnson@delart.org](mailto:bjohnson@delart.org)**

**Joyce K. Schiller, Curator of American Art**

**Heather Campbell Coyle, Associate Curator of American Art**

This course, led by the curators who organized *Seeing the City: Sloan's New York*, will examine the New York art scene at the time of John Sloan's arrival as well as the scene's development over the years he lived in the city.

- **Sloan Lecture Series**

**Prices are for individual lectures**

**\$10 Museum Members / \$15 Non-Members / \$5 students**

**Free to University of Delaware students with college I.D.**

**Registration: 302-351-8509 or [cwaring@delart.org](mailto:cwaring@delart.org)**

- **John Sloan and the Politics of Urban Modernity**

**Dr. Thomas Bender, Professor of History, New York University**

**Thursday, October 25, 2007 / 6:00 p.m.**

Dr. Bender will discuss two groups of Modernists who utilized New York City as the object of their aesthetic revolution: John Sloan and The Eight and Alfred Stieglitz and his circle.

- **Exploring Old Wilmington**

**Dr. W. Barksdale Maynard, Lecturer, Johns Hopkins University and  
Princeton University**

**Saturday, November 10, 2007 / 1:00 p.m.**

Dr. Maynard will focus on Wilmington's architecture around 1900 to show how our modern urban environment is a complex series of historical layers, revealing a fascinating Wilmington now forgotten.

- **The Ashcan Artists' Urban Vision**

**Dr. Rebecca Zurier, Associate Professor of the History of Art,  
University of Michigan**

**Friday, November 30, 2007 / 6:00 p.m.**

This talk will explore the idea of “urban visibility,” or seeing and being seen in the metropolis, which formed the inspiration and distinctive subject matter for the Ashcan School.

- **Seeing Our City: Wilmington**

**Exhibition: October 30, 2007 – December 6, 2007**

**Opening Reception: Friday, November 2 / 5:00 p.m.**

**Student Artist Panel Discussion: Sunday, November 18 / 1:00 p.m.**

**Gilliam Lobby Exhibition Space in the Bank of America Education Wing**

Illustration students from the Delaware College of Art and Design (DCAD) will display drawings and paintings of Wilmington as part of this joint project from DCAD, the City of Wilmington's Office of Cultural Affairs, and the Delaware Art Museum.

- **New York City Film Series**

**Screening at Theatre N, 1007 N. Orange St., Wilmington, DE 19801**

**Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.**

**\$7:00 each**

October 24, 2007: *Ghost*

November 14, 2007: *Rear Window*

December 12, 2007: *On the Waterfront*

January 9, 2008: *Manhattan*

Films set in New York City, individually introduced by Joyce K. Schiller, Curator, Delaware Art Museum.

- **Make & Take Workshops**

**First Sunday of the month, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Free**

November 4: Map Making

December 2: City Snow Globes

Free art projects for children. Museum admission is free on Sundays thanks to AstraZeneca.

● **Glory of Stories**

**Fridays, 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

**\$2.00**

A city-themed story-reading leads to a discussion of works in the exhibition, followed by an art project.

November 2: *Eddie's Kingdom* by D.B. Johnson

November 9: *City Hawk: The Story of Pale Male* by Meghan McCarthy

December 7: *Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile* by Bernard Waber

December 14: *Hot City* by Barbara Joosse

December 21: *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats

**About the Delaware Art Museum**

The Delaware Art Museum, located at 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806, is open Tuesday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Sunday noon – 4:00 p.m. Regular admission rates are as follows: adults (18 – 59) \$10, seniors (60+) \$8, college students \$5, and youth (7 – 17) \$3, with children 6 and under entering for free. Admission is free to all visitors on Sunday. For more information, call 302-571-9590 or 866-232-3714 (toll-free), or visit the website at <http://www.delart.org>.

Founded in 1912, the Delaware Art Museum holds a world-renowned collection that focuses on American art and illustration from the 19th century to the present as well as the British Pre-Raphaelite movement of the mid-19th century. The Museum offers the outdoor Copeland Sculpture Park, the Helen Farr Sloan Library & Archives, studio art classes, the interactive Kids' Corner learning area, the delART Café featuring free Wi-Fi access, and the Museum Store with distinctive books and gifts.

**IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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