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**DELAWARE ART MUSEUM PRESENTS
TWO MAXFIELD PARRISH EXHIBITIONS**

Wilmington, DE (October 12, 2009)—The Delaware Art Museum presents two exhibitions devoted to Maxfield Parrish (1870 – 1966). *Fantasies and Fairy-Tales: Maxfield Parrish and the Art of the Print*, the first traveling exhibition of Parrish’s color lithographic prints (which were made from his original paintings), is on view October 31, 2009 – January 10, 2010. Included are reproductions of commissions for book illustrations, magazine covers, and advertisements. The works reveal Parrish’s sense of humor and his eye for graphic design. The subject of this exhibition is the phenomenon of the simultaneous merging of advances in print technology with Parrish’s singular genius for capturing the imagination of the American public.

In addition, *Maxfield Parrish: Illustrated Letters* is on view October 17, 2009 – January 17, 2010. Between 1884 and 1886, the teenage Maxfield Parrish traveled to England and Europe with his parents. In letters home to his cousin Henry Bancroft, Parrish chronicled and illustrated his experiences. These youthful illustrated letters provide a peek at life in England and Europe in the mid-1880s through the eyes of a 14-year-old and a hint of Parrish’s amazing adult talent and humor. The Delaware Art Museum owns these letters as part of the Samuel and Mary R. Bancroft Archival Collection.

About Maxfield Parrish

The artist and illustrator Maxfield Parrish was a household name during his long and productive lifetime. He was born in 1870 in Philadelphia and died in 1966 in Plainfield, New Hampshire, at “The Oaks,” the home he built and lived in for most of his life. His earliest artistic training was received from his father Stephen Parrish, a talented artist and printmaker. In 1891, he began a course of study at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. He studied briefly with Howard Pyle at Drexel Institute and then launched a career illustrating books and magazines.

Parrish's early work also featured a number of mural commissions, including perhaps his best known, *Old King Cole*, which was originally created for the Knickerbocker Hotel on Broadway in New York and now hangs further uptown behind the bar of the St. Regis Hotel. The success of his magazine illustrations led to commercial work including a decade of annual calendars for General Electric's Edison Mazda Lamp division.

Parrish's career coincided with advances in color printing technology. By the 1930s, Parrish realized he could free himself from the restrictions of advertising and magazine work and rely solely on color reproductions of his art. *Daybreak* was the first painting he produced as part of an arrangement with the publishing company House of Art. The lithograph was so popular that it netted Parrish almost \$25,000 in royalties within two months of its production. By 1925, it was estimated that one out of every four American households had a Parrish print. Subsequent annual and bi-annual reproductions of his original paintings were transformed into hundreds of color copies, bringing him both fame and financial success.

Illustrated Letters: Gallery Interactives

There will be a variety of interactive components in the gallery for *Maxfield Parrish: Illustrated Letters*. A computer terminal connects visitors to the "Sincerely Hen" blog at <http://sincerelyhen.blogspot.com>, where excerpts of Maxfield Parrish's letters to his cousin Henry are posted. Users can then post their own responses to Parrish. Postcards with Parrish imagery are available so that visitors can send handwritten messages to their friends and family. And a comment book invites guests to share notes and drawings about their own travels.

Press Preview

- **Thursday, October 29 | 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

Dr. Margaretta S. Frederick, Curator of the Bancroft Collection of Pre-Raphaelite Art and the curator for the Maxfield Parrish exhibitions, will lead a tour and answer questions.

Organizers and Sponsors

Fantasies and Fairy-Tales: Maxfield Parrish and the Art of the Print was organized by the Trust for Museum Exhibitions, Washington, D.C.

Maxfield Parrish: Illustrated Letters was organized by the Delaware Art Museum.

In Delaware, these exhibitions are 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.

Maxfield Parrish: Illustrated Letters is partly funded by a grant from the Delaware Humanities Forum, a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Support for this exhibition was also provided by Rose Valley Restorations.

About the Delaware Art Museum

The Delaware Art Museum, located at 2301 Kentmere Parkway, Wilmington, DE 19806, is open Wednesday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Sunday noon – 4:00 p.m. Admission fees are charged as follows: Adults (19 – 59) \$12, Seniors (60+) \$10, Students (with valid ID) \$6, Youth (7 – 18) \$6, and Children (6 and under) free. Admission fees are waived every Sunday thanks to support from AstraZeneca. For more information, call 302-571-9590 or 866-232-3714 (toll free), or visit the website at www.delart.org

Founded in 1912, the Delaware Art Museum is best known for its large collection of British Pre-Raphaelite art, works by Wilmington-native Howard Pyle and fellow American illustrators, and urban landscapes by John Sloan and his circle. Visitors can also enjoy the outdoor Copeland Sculpture Garden and a number of major traveling exhibitions throughout the year.

IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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