

# CURRIER MUSEUM<sup>of</sup>ART

## The Currier celebrates Maud Briggs Knowlton, the museum's first director

*Knowlton was an accomplished artist and one of the first women to direct an American museum*

**Manchester, NH – February 13, 2020** - The Currier Museum of Art celebrates the art and life of Maud Briggs Knowlton (1870–1956), who was an accomplished artist and the museum's first director. Knowlton was a lifelong Manchester, New Hampshire resident with deep ties to Monhegan Island off the coast of Maine. *A Life Made in Art: Maud Briggs Knowlton* will be on view February 15 through May 10, 2020.

The exhibition will explore Knowlton's watercolors and oils, and her roles in bustling, industrial Manchester and the remote, idyllic Monhegan Island. Her artistic practice demonstrates a mastery of the Arts and Crafts style as well as the influence of coastal Maine.

"This exhibition is meaningful for the Currier, since Maud Briggs Knowlton was a dedicated arts educator and the museum's first director," stated Andrew Spahr, director of collections and exhibitions. "She was a remarkable pioneer who helped others gain access to the arts."

Knowlton was one of the only female museum directors in the early 20th century and one of the only women artists to regularly work on Monhegan. The isolated island attracted a community of important artists, whom Knowlton befriended and included in exhibitions at the Currier Gallery of Art. Works from the collection of the Monhegan Museum of Art and History by prominent artists who painted on Monhegan, such as Rockwell Kent, Robert Henri, and Andrew and Jamie Wyeth will be featured in the exhibition to provide a fuller picture of the island as an artist colony.

On March 8, 2020 at 2pm, the Currier will hold an ArtTalk featuring lectures by the exhibition catalogue co-authors. Susan Strickler, former director of the Currier Museum of Art, will speak on Knowlton's art and her career from young artist to first director of the Currier Museum. Robert Stahl, co-director of the Monhegan Museum of Art and History will discuss life on Monhegan island where the Knowltons summered for six decades.

*A Life Made in Art: Maud Briggs Knowlton* is co-organized by the Monhegan Museum of Art and History and the Currier Museum of Art. A 92-page catalogue, published by the Monhegan Museum, accompanies the exhibition.

### About the Currier Museum of Art

The Currier Museum is an internationally renowned art museum located in Manchester, New Hampshire. The museum features paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, and photographs, including works by Monet, Picasso, O'Keeffe, Hopper, and Wyeth. It presents exhibitions, tours, art classes, and special programs year-round. Two houses designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, are part of its permanent collection.

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