

The Currier Museum Announces Reopening

The museum will be offering new exhibitions, hours and safety protocols for visitors.

MANCHESTER, NH— The Currier Museum of Art is thrilled to announce it will be reopening to the public on August 20, 2020. The museum will welcome visitors back with the installation of three new special exhibitions including [*Photographs from the Civil Rights Movement*](#), [*Open World: Video Games and Contemporary Art*](#) and the bold and colorful works of [*Richard Haynes: Whispering Quilts*](#).

The museum is also undertaking new safety protocols. All visitors must wear a mask and the number of visitors in each gallery will be controlled. In order to limit crowds and reduce contact and maintain social distancing, the museum is instituting timed tickets and encourages the public go online and buy their ticket in advance. Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the museum and surfaces will be regularly cleaned and disinfected. The museum will also offer new hours to expand accessibility and be open four days a week on Thursday 10am to 8pm, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday 10am to 5pm.

“Safety will be paramount,” stated Alan Chong, Director of the Currier. “We plan on ensuring that the experience is a rich and safe one for those who come to visit. We’ve used the time we were closed to revamp some of our galleries and I think visitors will be pleased with the renovations. And while we are excited to welcome everyone back inside, we are also aware that there are those who are still staying home. For those patrons we will continue to offer robust virtual events like curator art talks and online discussions for them to enjoy. We want everyone, no matter where they are to be able to enjoy the beauty the museum has to offer.”

The Currier will also continue to offer free admission every first Saturday of the month starting on Saturday, September 5.

Open World: Video Games and Contemporary Art

This dynamic exhibition explores how contemporary artists have been influenced by video games pervasive in popular culture since the 1970s. The exhibition will feature painting, sculpture, textiles, prints, drawings, animation, video games, video game modifications, game-based performances and interventions.

The artworks in *Open World* reference a broad cross-section of games, ranging from early text adventure and arcade games to modern multi-player online roleplaying games and first-person shooters. Participating artists are influenced by some of the most popular video game franchises including *Super Mario Bros.*, *The Legend of Zelda*, *The Sims*, and *Final Fantasy*. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue (hardcover, full-color, 96 pages) featuring contributions by video game historian Andrew Williams and feminist game scholar Samantha Blackmon.

According to a 2015 Entertainment Software Association survey, 155 million Americans play video games. We can only imagine how this number has increased since stay-at-home measures were put in place. Visual artists are gamers too, yet video games are rarely examined as a major influence on contemporary art. Come to the Currier to experience this extraordinary exhibition that explores how artists apply the influence of video games to express a viewpoint, and to encourage critical thinking by directing the player’s attention to systems at work within the real world.

Photographs from the Civil Rights Movement

Protests have been fundamental to American democracy since the country's founding. And artists have often given powerful expression to calls for change. Drawn from the museum's collection, the photographs in this show were made during the Civil Rights protests in the 1950s and 1960s.

The passion, tragedy, and essential humanity of the Civil Rights Movement emerge in these images. Some were made by outside observers, while others were taken by participants in the protests. Photographer Ernest Withers (1922-2007) created some of the most compelling images of the American Civil Rights Movement. In particular, his photographs of the Memphis Sanitation Workers' Strike of 1968 brought nationwide attention to the plight of African Americans trying to succeed a systemically racist political and cultural system. Civil rights leaders embraced photography as a means of raising awareness and funding for their cause.

Richard Haynes: Whispering Quilts

In a series of drawings, the artist Richard Haynes tells the story of an enslaved family's dangerous journey along the Underground Railroad, from a southern plantation to freedom in Canada. This narrative of hope, struggle, and triumph is based on historic accounts. Traditional quilting patterns evoke the themes in dynamic compositions. The faceless figures represent the thousands of slaves who made the journey as well as the hidden lives of countless others who died in servitude. The brilliant colors suggest that joy can be found even in horrific situations.

Richard Haynes is an artist, author, and educator based in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. He has been an artist-in-residence at the Currier Art Center, and his work is featured in the Currier Museum's collection.

About the Currier

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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