

Coming Up

March 7

9:15 Coffee
10:00 Lecture
Mary Lenihan,
American Collection

March 14

9:30 Board Mtg/Luria

March 21

9:15 Coffee
10:00 Lecture: Curator
Julie Joyce and Assistant
Curator Jennifer
Edwards, *Pasadena to
Santa Barbara* exhibition

March 28 (Wed)

8:30 a.m. Bus trip to
Pasadena Museum of
CA Art and the Norton
Simon Museum

April 2: (Mon)

1:30 p.m. Docent Book
Group Meets

April 4:

No Docent Council
Meeting

April 11:

9:30 a.m. Board
meeting in Luria

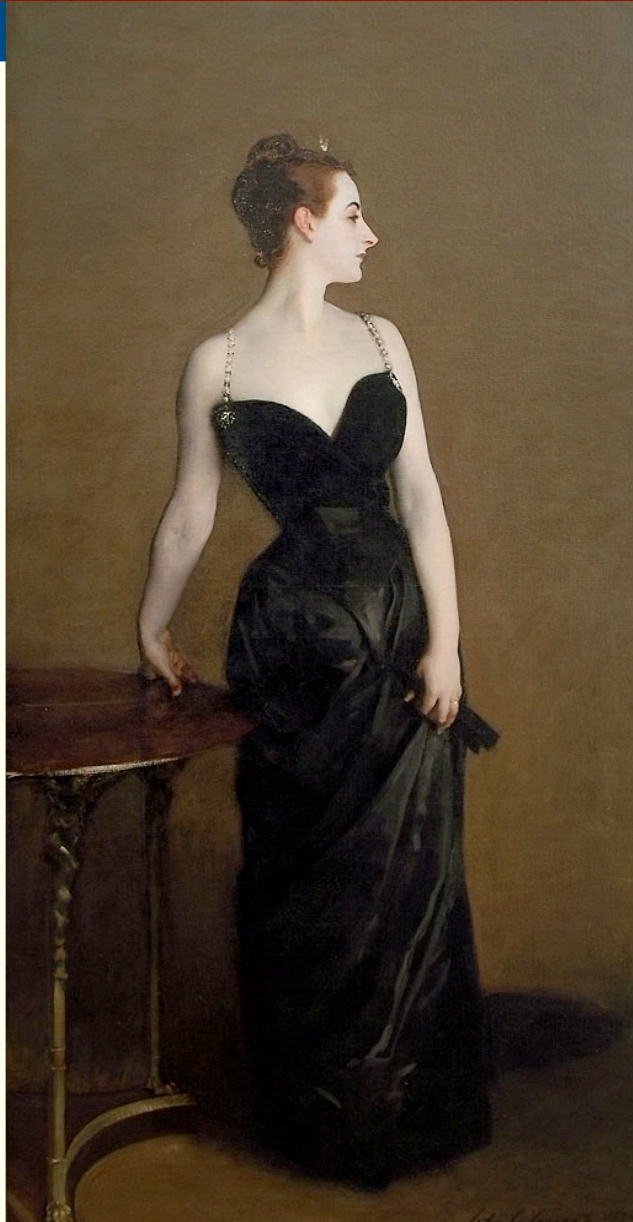
April 18

9:15 Coffee
10:00 Docent Council
Meeting

Save the Date

June 8 (Fri)

Graduation and Recog-
nition Ceremony



Sargent's famous portrait of "Madame X" (socialite Virginie Amélie Avegno Gautreau), incited quite the scandal during its debut at the Paris Salon of 1884.

While appearing rather tame to us today, in 1884 the portrait of a society lady posing with the strap of her low-cut evening gown falling down her arm was considered to be provocative eroticism. So icy and voluble were the remarks concerning the portrait that Sargent virtually fled Paris for London where, fortunately, he had several portrait commissions waiting. The Madame X painting continued to haunt Sargent's career - he was considered quite avant-garde - thus leaving him with time between portrait commissions, time that he used to experiment with Impressionism and His childhood love - landscape painting.

~Excerpted from Tracey Miller's Research paper, 2007. Refer to our docent website for the complete text on Sargent and his work, Perseus at Night, 1907.

LM

John Singer Sargent, *Madame X* (Madame Pierre Gautreau) 1884 Oil canvas, 92.5" x 43.25"

I hope you are enjoying the wonderful art installations in all of the galleries now that *Pasadena to Santa Barbara* has opened. Those of us who enjoyed the Community Celebration activities last Sunday have to marvel at the creativity and ingenuity of Patsy and staff in recreating performance art both inside and outside our museum. Kudos!

Our last bus trip to tour Pacific Standard Time exhibitions is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 28**. At the Pasadena Museum of California Art we will tour the exhibition *L. A. RAW: Abject Expressionism in Los Angeles 1945-1980*, From



Irene Stone

Rico Lebrun to Paul McCarthy. We will then take our bus to the Norton Simon Museum for a tour of *Proof: The Rise of Printmaking in Southern California*, which describes the founding of the Tamarind Lithography Workshop in 1960 to “create a pool of master artisan-printers in the United States.” The exhibition will include works by such local founders as John Altoon, Sam Francis, Ed Ruscha and June Wayne as well as those artists who traveled to Los Angeles specifically to print, such as Joseph Albers, Bruce Conner and Robert Rauschenberg. We will have additional time to view other exhibits before boarding the bus at 4:00 for the return trip. We will start our trip with an early lunch at a nearby California Pizza Kitchen before the tours.

The fee for the day will be \$45, which includes the bus, driver’s tip, and fees for tours. Signups and checks made out to the “SBMA Docent Council” will be collected at the docent council meetings on March 7 and 21 or may be mailed to my home. This final trip will be a most stimulating way to end our Pacific Standard Time bus trips.

For those interested, some earlier selections of the Docent Book Group are available for checkout in the Docent office. At the March 7 Docent Council meeting, Mary Lenihan, Museum Educator and Program Director at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, will address the American collection. The March 21 presentation will be on the *Pasadena to Santa Barbara* exhibition by SBMA Curator Julie Joyce and Assistant Curator, Jennifer Edwards, temporarily on loan from the Getty Center to assist in the mounting of our own exhibition. These two lectures will certainly facilitate our engagement of the public with our museum exhibitions.



Message from our Vice President



Kathryn Padgett

March, to walk or proceed quickly with determination, is an apt description of this month. The Docent Council has many events and activities on the agenda, leading up to our summer hiatus. Remember to hold the following dates in your very busy calendars:

- March 28—Bus trip to Pasadena
- April 2—Book Club
- May 11th, 3:30pm—Provisional Recruitment Social
- May 14—Book Club
- June 8th, Graduation

By now you should have received an invitation to a provisional luncheon. Please respond promptly to your host or hostess so the guest lists may be finalized. If you need to be rescheduled to another time please contact your host or hostess and Gabriella Schooley. These luncheons provide a wonderful opportunity to spend time getting to know one of the provisional class members.

Pacific Standard Time has arrived at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art! *Pasadena to Santa Barbara: A Selected History of Art in Southern California, 1951–1969*, will be on view until May 6, 2012 featuring works by John Altoon, Karel Appel, Karl Benjamin, William Brice, Richard Diebenkorn, William Dole, Marcel Duchamp, Llyn Foulkes, Sam Francis, Philip Guston, Robert Irwin, Ynez Johnston, Ed Kienholz, Helen

Lundeberg, John McLaughlin, Robert Motherwell, Lee Mullican, Larry Rivers, Richards Ruben, Mark Tobey, June Wayne, and Beatrice Wood.

If you are a fan of Richard Diebenkorn's work (right) and feel you have had your curiosity stimulated by the SBMA's exhibit, I recommend going to the Orange County Museum of Art to see *Richard Diebenkorn: The Ocean Park Series*. The OCMA describes the Ocean Park Series as "the first major museum exhibition to explore the artist's most celebrated series created from 1967 to 1988. Recognized as a leading West Coast Abstract Expressionist in the 1950s, Diebenkorn turned his attention to figurative painting in 1955 and achieved equal success in this alternate style. In 1967 he returned to abstraction, and during the next twenty years would forge one of the most



compelling and masterful bodies of work of the 20th century: the Ocean Park series. Featuring approximately 80 works—including paintings, prints, drawings, and collages—this exhibition captures Diebenkorn's practice of working simultaneously in diverse media and provides audiences with the first opportunity to explore the complexity of Diebenkorn's artistic and aesthetic concerns in this seminal body of work." This exhibit will be on display until May 27th. The Orange County Museum of Art's web site is: <http://www.ocma.net>.

We are drawing near the conclusion of the celebration of Southern California Art, with the final Pacific Standard Time exhibits that are on view:

California Design, 1930-1965 "Living in a Modern Way"

LACMA, October 1-March 25

Indoor Ecologies: The Evolution of the Eames House Living Room

Eames House Foundation, October 1-April 30 <http://www.Eamesfoundation.org>

From Start to Finish: De Wain Vallentine's Gray Column

September 11-March 11

In Focus: Los Angeles, 1945-1980

December 20-May 6

Both at The Getty Center <http://www.getty.edu/pacificstandardtime>

Proof: The Rise of Printmaking in Southern California

October 1-April 2

Norton Simon Museum of Art <http://www.nortonsimon.org>

(continued on next page)

46 N. Los Robles: A History of the Pasadena Art Museum

November 18-April 8

Pacific Asia Museum <http://www.pacificasiamuseum.org>**L.A. Raw: Abject Expressionism in Los Angeles, 1945-1980, from Rico Lebrun to Paul McCarthy**

January 22-May 20

Pasadena Museum of California Art <http://www.pmcaonline.org>**Common Ground: Ceramics in Southern California 19450-1975**

November 12-March 31

American Museum of Ceramic Art <http://www.amoca.org>**Carefree California: Cliff May and the Romance of the Ranch, 1920-1960**

February 26-June 17

Art, Design & Architecture Museum, UCSB <http://www.uam.ucsb.edu>

Adult Touring for January, 2011



American Paintings and Sculpture from SBMA, and the *Pasadena to Santa Barbara* exhibitions opened to rave reviews in February!

For the months of February, March, and April the *American Paintings and Sculpture* exhibition will be treated as a 'Special Exhibition' for tour scheduling. This allows it to be toured every Sunday along with other Special Exhibitions. Beginning in May it will return to a Focus Tour schedule. It is nice to highlight a completely re-organized permanent collection in this manner.

Shirley Waxman
Adult Teams

Touring numbers for January 2012:

Highlights - weekend and daily	105
Focus Tours	159
Picasso and Braque	<u>120</u>
	384 (three more visitors than December)

A very special thank you to those docents who came in for the Special Request tours! In January **Vikki Duncan, Marty Molof, Helene Strobel, and Efreem Ostrow** were representing the docent council and museum by giving excellent tours to these special groups.





Christine Holland, Nominations Committee Chair

Hello Docent Volunteers!

As you have heard several times by now, nominations are open for next year's Docent Council Board! If you would like to nominate a Docent for any Board position, please contact me. We are grateful to all Docents who wish to serve to keep our Docent Council functioning so well.

Please note that the final slate of nominees will be presented at the March 21st meeting (at which time nominations may be made by council members from the floor), and printed in the April 1st *La Muse*. The election of officers will be made by majority vote at the Docent Council meeting on May 2nd.

Cheers to you all,

Christine 

Docent Book Club



Sue Billig

The selection for SBMA Book Club for the next meeting is
"Portrait of an Artist: a Biography of Georgia O'Keeffe"
 by Laurie Lisle

"Georgia O'Keeffe, one of the most original painters America has ever produced, left behind a remarkable legacy when she died at the age of ninety-eight. Her vivid visual vocabulary -- sensuous flowers, bleached bones against red sky and earth -- had a stunning, profound, and lasting influence on American art in the last century. O'Keeffe's personal mystique is as intriguing and enduring as her bold, brilliant canvases. Here is the first full account of her exceptional life."



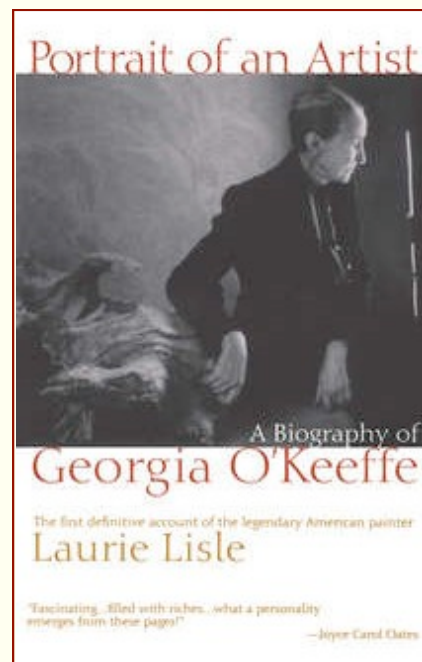
University of New Mexico, 1986, 408 pgs
 Available on Amazon in hard back or paperback. Videos of O'Keeffe or Alfred Steiglitz are available from NETFLIX only as a DVD

Meeting date:
Monday, April 2 at 1:30

Place to be announced



"Flower Abstraction"



Artful Thinking:

Toe in the Water/Swim the Shallows/Dive Deep

By Joni Chancer, Program and Performance Consultant, SBMA, Education



There's so much excitement about our newly-hung American collection, so I asked Joni to share one of her fun and very useful Artful Thinking routines. The use of VTS (Visual Thinking Strategies) is second nature to us by now, so these exercises offer a great way to expand our repertoire in student touring.

Many thanks, Joni.

LM

This is a new Artful Thinking Routine that Patsy and I introduced during a recent workshop for teachers of grades K-5. Our topic was using art to engage students in higher-order (critical) thinking. The new Common Core State Standards emphasize reviewing input or data, forming an opinion, and supporting the opinion with specific details from an image or text. As you will see, this Artful Thinking Routine leads students on that thinking and responding path.

Joni Chancer

This is also a good routine for segues and transitions. I suggest beginning this routine (the *Toe in the Water* phase) before leaving a different piece of art, or on a quick stop midway to the subject of this inquiry (we used *Boy Fishing* as our subject). Ask: *When I say the words "going fishing" - what comes to mind? How do those words make you feel?* Allow students a few seconds to think, and then elicit their responses. Next, ask: *Have you ever gone fishing? How did you like it? Where were you?* Invite a few students to share quick thoughts and responses.

Here is the generic frame for this phase:

Toe in the Water: Think about the topic of (_____) for just a few seconds, and then share your response with the group (raise your hand), or with a partner.

After the students share responses to these introductory questions, walk them toward the painting you've selected (in this case *Boy Fishing*). Now it is time for the next phase of the routine, *Swim the Shallows*. Ask the students to stand back from the painting (about 6 or 7 feet), and look at it for about 6-8 seconds. Then they should turn around (with their backs



John George Brown, *Boy Fishing*, 1877
Oil on canvas, 21" x 27"

to the painting). You will face them, and ask the *Swim the Shallows* question(s): *What do you notice? What strikes you? What emotion or feelings does the image provoke? Or, with younger students: What's happening in this painting? What is the boy doing and how does he feel? What do you think is going on in the painting? Share your ideas.*

After eliciting a few responses, tell your group that they are going to look more carefully at the painting to discover details they might have missed. In other words, they will *Dive Deep* this time. Here are the questions for this phase: *Now look at the image again, this time for a full minute. What new details do you notice? Allow students time to look carefully, and then ask them to share their discoveries.*

Then ask: *Have these new details that you noticed caused you to change your opinion about what's happening in the painting, what the boy is doing, and/or how he feels? Do you have a new opinion?*

Allow students a few minutes to share their responses. If they haven't offered responses that refer to the shabbiness of the subject's clothing, or to his pensive, almost sad expression, ask them: *What do the boy's clothing, posture, or expression reveal? What do these details tell you about what he is doing or feeling?*

Finally, and only *after* the children have explored ideas on their own, you might ask: *Do you think he is having fun? Sometimes, do people fish for a reason other than fun? What would he need, and what do you see that makes you say that?*

Of course, there is no one right answer. This boy may be fishing because he is poor and needs food, or he may be fishing for fun, wearing his old clothes, and patiently waiting for that tug on the line. However, looking closely at the details invites speculation, curiosity, and the forming of an opinion that can be supported by many rich details.

At the workshop, we had the teachers find another piece of art in any of the galleries to use with this routine, and to take turns leading the questioning process with a partner. The teachers selected many diverse pieces and found that this Artful Thinking Routine stimulated careful viewing and deeper response.

I hope you find this a useful, relatively "quick" routine to use with students while touring the galleries!



California Hwy 41, Photo by Doug McElwain, March, 2010

I know we're all familiar with genre painting in general, those scenes depicting everyday life. But after going on Christine Holland's excellent American Tour and learning about the motivation behind these works, I thought it might be useful to read a little more about the social and psychological life that generated this nostalgia. The following essay is excerpted, with permission, from the Cape Cod, MA, Cahoon Museum of American Art in their exhibition, *At Home in America: 19th Century Genre Painting*. I've also selected paintings from our permanent collection to illustrate genre themes. LM

But by mid 19th century, Americans-particularly artists-began to chafe under the limitations imposed by portraiture and romantic landscape. A growing awareness of the uniqueness of American democracy, where government resided in the people rather than in tradition-bound European monarchies, coupled with the effects exerted by frontier life upon the American character, led to an appreciation for depicting the experience of common folk. The trauma and upheaval of the Civil War (1861-1865) only deepened this trend. In the aftermath of such conflict, lofty and noble paintings representing the American landscape as a "New Eden" seemed hollow at best. The great loss of life and property engendered by the war caused Americans to turn inward to focus upon the simple pleasures of family or home. And artists responded accordingly.

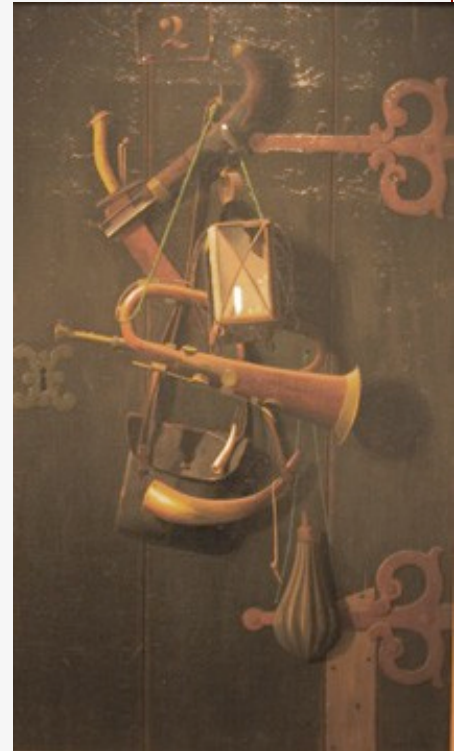
Major themes of genre painting include: Memories of the Civil War, Family and Home, Children and Childhood, Leisure Activity, and Farm and Labor. Within these categories, the overriding tendency has been to portray American life with an affectionate nostalgia, and, one might say, "homey" quality, whether urban or rural. Often there is humor,

occasionally a melancholy sadness, particularly if portraying loss of a loved one. The Victorian woman is presented with complex ambiguity, both an adored creature yet one often marginalized, while children inhabit a special world of innocence or mischievousness.

The Civil War earns the infamous distinction of being the bloodiest conflict in United States history, the loss of life and destruction of property being greater than that for all other American wars combined. During Reconstruction (1866-1877), Americans attempted to restore a semblance of normality to lives, routines, and familiar patterns shattered by the conflict. While some Americans attempted to start life afresh by heading west and settling the frontier, others reminisced fondly of wartime camaraderie with brothers in arms. For others, still, the post war period only heightened the feeling that their lives had been altered forever despite their seeming re-integration into the familiar rhythms and ways of civilian life.



William Merritt Chase,
The Lady in Pink



John Frederick Peto,
My Studio Door

American Families experienced profound social changes in the 19th century. Increasing urbanization, industrialization, war, and changing attitudes with respect to women's roles—all these altered the traditional family. During the first half of the nineteenth century, most Americans lived in villages or rural farms. Families were often self-reliant, growing their own food, making their own clothing. Socializing occurred with one's immediate neighbors. In this tight-knit society, gender roles were rigidly prescribed. Women were expected to marry, bear children, and serve as the moral and religious force within the family unit. Genteel ladies were to excel at homemaking, the useful arts such as needlepoint, and household management.

The reality of daily living differed from this romanticized ideal, especially after 1865 when many young women abandoned farm life for more lucrative jobs in factories and the opportunities and advantages promised by city living. Yet it remained a dominant paradigm in American culture. Rooted in its appeal to popular taste, genre painting repeated and reinforced these cultural myths, as if nothing had changed between the 1840s and 1870s. Images of women as patient, contented, morally uplifting, and self-sacrificing, are all familiar subjects in genre painting.

Childhood, as we understand the concept today, did not exist in the 19th century. Children were not viewed as individually self-actualized beings. Rather they tended to be perceived either as innocent and pure, almost angelic, creatures unspoiled by the corruptions of worldly life; or they were regarded as mischievous with a propensity to stray unless guided with a firm and stern discipline. A well-known adage of the era, "spare the rod and spoil the child," summed up this view for many Victorians

and illuminates the humor underlying John Williamson's *Nervous Truant* where we are placed in the position of privileged viewers glimpsing what is hidden from view of the schoolhouse—a young boy tempted by the beauty of the day and his own impetuosity. Too late, he seems to regret ignoring the call of the school bell. His expression of remorse would have found a sympathetic response with

Victorian audiences.

Leisure time and the ability to enjoy it were rare luxuries in the nineteenth century. For those who lived in urban areas, a ten-hour, six-day workweek plus an endless round of housekeeping tasks—cleaning, cooking, the daily procurement of food, chopping wood, sewing clothing—filled their time. Sunday became the focus of leisure activity. And that sole day was often devoted to Sabbath keeping. Those who lived in rural areas or on farms found leisure in infrequent spare moments when not attending to requisite chores or long hours in the fields growing crops, tending livestock, or harvesting. By mid-century, however, industrialization began to alter accustomed patterns of daily living as machines made leisure

time available to a wider segment of people. What we would now term a



George Henry Story (1835-1923)
Seashells, oil on board, 9.75" x 13"



John Williamson, *The Nervous Truant*, 1861
Oil on canvas, 8" x 10.25"

"sports craze" became the fashion for urban dwellers, especially those of the

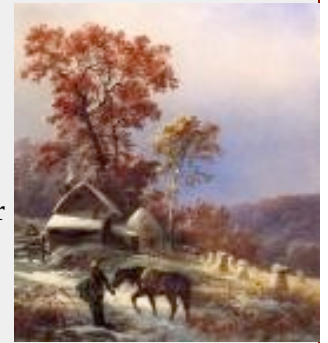
middle and upper classes. Activities such as croquet, badminton, tennis, and ice-skating became popular. Many artists, including such luminaries as Winslow Homer, turned their attention to these new phenomena. Summer recreation also merited artistic notice. George Story's *Seashells* (p 7) offers a quintessential look



William Davis, *Cider Making on Long Island*, 1865, oil on canvas 15" x 24"

at a relatively new phenomena-seaside recreation. In Story's picture, a proper Victorian girl in crisp white summer attire gathers shells. While today viewers might find her dress overly formal, impossibly difficult to keep clean, and stiflingly hot, 19th century viewers reacted quite differently. The cut and color of the gown imply a refined taste and the cultivated leisure of the wearer. As social mores changed, women pursued careers formerly restricted to men.

Farm Life was a familiar environment for the vast majority of Americans in the 19th century. Indeed, it was not until the 1920 census that more Americans listed their



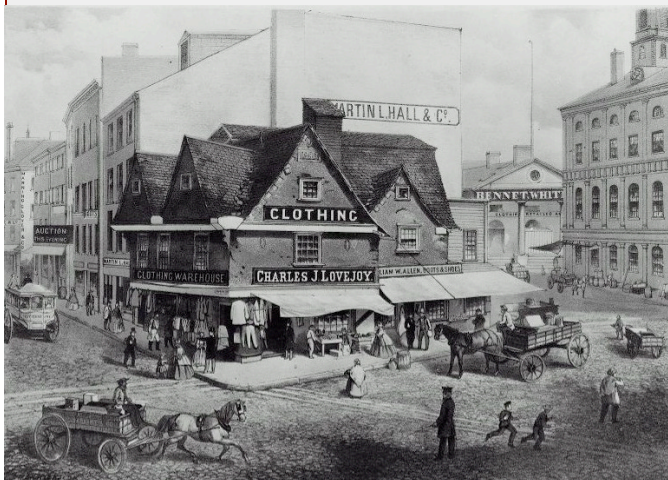
residence as urban as opposed to rural. The vast fertility and agricultural abundance of America made farming a logical and profitable occupation and agriculture a metaphor for self-reliance, independence, and democratic equality. The American landscape itself came to be viewed by the earlier Hudson River school painters as a New Eden, a virginal landscape favored by God.

It is no coincidence, then, that farm life and labor in general were pictured as illustrating these ideals. In William Davis's matter-of-fact *Cider Making on Long Island*, the tedious work of mashing apples by horse cart is made picturesque. Similarly, Edward Moran's *Winter at the Farm* (above right) emphasizes the glorious display of late autumn foliage and an abundant harvest set off against the first snows of winter. The drudgery of farm life is all but forgotten in this exquisite canvas.

A more urban setting is seen in Alfred Kipps's watercolor, *Clothing District, Boston*, a quintessential example of the fast-changing face of urban America where only a generation earlier clothing was home

Alfred K. Kipps,
Old Warehouse, Dock Square, Boston, 1860
Chromolithograph on paper

made rather than store-bought or factory produced.



This same dynamic of a fast-changing society can also be seen in George Bellow's *Steaming Streets*, as old and new worlds clash with the advent of steam-generated power.





Nancy Estes touring *Pacific Standard Time*

Please note my new email address:
m2.ramey@gmail.com
Thank you, Mike Ramey
Provisional Class 2011-12

Comments?
Suggestions?
Mohrojai@aol.com

