

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lyman Allyn Art Museum

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LYMAN ALLYN ART MUSEUM ACQUIRES RARE MID-19TH CENTURY PORTRAIT

NEW LONDON - The Lyman Allyn Art Museum is proud to announce the purchase of a portrait of a mixed-race youth, ca. 1830s-'40s, a rare painting that speaks to the diverse community of free Blacks that existed in New Orleans before the Civil War. It is on view in the Museum's *American Perspectives* gallery, having been installed just in time to add to the celebration of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend.

The intriguing portrait of a mixed-race young man is closely related to the portraiture of Julien Hudson, one of the earliest free painters of color in America. Hudson was born in New Orleans and his principal period of activity was from 1831 until 1844, when he died prematurely at age 33. A thriving community of free people of color existed in early 19th century New Orleans, unique to the American South. Within that community, Hudson was patronized by both white and mixed-race clients and is known to have taught students as well, although their identities remain largely unknown.

"We are very pleased to add this exquisite image of a youth, very likely painted by an important free black American artist, to our permanent collection," said Lyman Allyn Director, Sam Quigley. "It was acquired as part of our intentional effort to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels within the Museum's collection, programming, staff, and board," he said.

The painting was purchased for the Lyman Allyn's permanent collection from Robert Simon Fine Art, Inc., New York, where it was featured in the recent exhibition *Beyond Boundaries: Historical Art by and of People of Color*. At the Lyman Allyn this portrait is now on view in *American Perspectives*, the Museum's permanent collection galleries of American art.

For more information or to request images, please contact Rebecca Dawson by email at dawson@lymanallyn.org.



Circle of Julien Hudson (New Orleans, mid-19th century), *Portrait of a Youth*, oil on canvas, 12 x 8 7/8 inches.

About the Lyman Allyn Art Museum

The Lyman Allyn Art Museum welcomes visitors from New London, southeastern Connecticut and all over the world. Established in 1926 with a gift from Harriet Allyn in memory of her seafaring father, the Museum opened the doors of its beautiful neoclassical building surrounded by 12 acres of green space in 1932. Today it presents several changing exhibitions each year and houses a fascinating collection of over 17,000 objects from ancient times to the present, including art from Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe, with particularly strong collections of American paintings, decorative arts and Victorian toys and doll houses.

The Museum is located at 625 Williams Street, New London, Connecticut, exit 83 off I-95. The Museum is open **Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sundays 1 - 5 p.m.**; it is closed on Mondays and major holidays. For more information call 860.443.2545, ext. 2129 or visit www.lymanallyn.org.