

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lyman Allyn Art Museum

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LYMAN ALLYN ART MUSEUM PRESENTS
PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE PAINTED IMAGE

New London – Lyman Allyn Art Museum announces the opening of *Photography and the Painted Image*, an exhibition exploring the long and creative exchange between photography and painting, highlighting the ways in which the two mediums have overlapped and complemented each other. This exhibition is on view Jan. 17 through Apr. 12, 2026.

The first gallery (Miles) introduces the painted backdrop, a hallmark of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century portrait studios. These elaborate hand-painted scenes framed sitters within idealized interiors or imaginary landscapes.

The second gallery (Powers) turns to the painted photograph itself – images enhanced, tinted or radically transformed through the application of pigment. Ranging from subtle hand-coloring to bold overpainting, these works blur the line between photography and painting.

The third gallery (Hazlewood) focuses on the painted foreground, featuring carnival and arcade photographs in which participants posed behind humorous or fantastical cutouts, playfully transforming their identities through caricature and painted figures.

Together, the works in this exhibition show how painting shaped not only the settings and surfaces of photography, but also expanded the capacity for imagination, spectacle and self-representation in photographic images – offering new ways of seeing and being seen.

This exhibition was curated by Professor Christopher B. Steiner and students in his Fall 2025 course *AHI 250: Perspectives on Photography* at Connecticut College. The course explores alternative approaches to the history of photography, moving beyond canonical “greatest hits” to consider overlooked practitioners, vernacular traditions, and everyday photographic practices. By emphasizing amateur and commercial forms of image-making, students



Unknown photographer. Backdrop Painter Posing in Front of a Completed Backdrop. The Biles Studio, Staten Island, New York, 1920s-30s. Scan from original glass-plate negative.

examine the wide range of technologies, processes, and social contexts that have shaped photography's role in daily life.

The opening reception is Friday, Jan. 30, from 5 - 7 p.m. Museum members are free, Connecticut College students are free, and non-members are \$10. To register, call 860.443.2545 ext. 2129 or email us at info@lymanallyn.org.

Related programming includes a Gallery Talk with Christopher Steiner on Thursday, Feb. 19 at 5:30 pm. Members are \$10, and non-members are \$15. More information will be available on lymanallyn.org.

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

This exhibition has been made possible with support from the Elizabeth '62 and Anthony Enders Endowed Art Fund; an anonymous foundation; and by the Connecticut State Legislature, administered by the Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts.

About Lyman Allyn Art Museum

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 20,000 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. It is open **Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sundays 1 - 5 p.m.**, and closed on Mondays and major holidays. For more information call 860.443.2545, ext. 2129 or visit www.lymanallyn.org.