

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS: CARDS AND HEARTHS FROM THE COLLECTION

Home for the Holidays showcases selections from the museum's permanent collection that represent a range of artistic responses to the urge to gather, reminisce, and celebrate during the holiday season. In several intimate paintings, regional artists such as Edward Willis Redfield, Bo Bartlett, Barclay Rubincam, Karl J. Kuerner, and N.C. Wyeth depict family homes and heirlooms, along with other fixtures of their communities. A display of Christmas cards and charity seals includes examples by

illustrators Howard Pyle, Elizabeth Shippen Green, and Hans Axel Walleen.

Some of these installations are themselves family affairs, such as two rooms from Ann Wyeth McCoy's nine-foot-tall dollhouse. Her husband, artist John W. McCoy, constructed the dollhouse, and her siblings and in-laws contributed many of its handmade furnishings and paintings. Also on view is a selection of Andrew Wyeth's Christmas cards in watercolor, some of which his wife, Betsy, would sign and mail on behalf of their family. The Peters-Herdeg Dollhouse re-creates a colonial-era home in Chadds Ford that John and Judith Herdeg restored and filled with their collection of period

furniture. Each of these works provides a glimpse into collaborative, generative creative relationships between spouses and family members, while serving as a testament to the power of art in strengthening bonds with loved ones near and far.

Henriette Wyeth

Christmas Scene, n.d.

Watercolor and gouache on paper



John W. McCoy (1910–1989)

The Road to Chadds Ford, 1958

Tempera on panel

Gift of Clementine B. Gardner, 1999



N.C. Wyeth (1882–1945)

Zirngiebel House, Needham—Heavy Snow, c.
1922

Oil on panel

Bequest of Carolyn Wyeth, 1996



In this painting, Wyeth renders the home that belonged to his maternal grandparents, Denys and Henrietta Zirngiebel, in Needham, Massachusetts. Wyeth purchased the house after his grandfather's death during a period of homesickness and lived there briefly with his family from 1921 to 1923 before returning to Chadds Ford. Even then the artist continued to revisit the Zirngiebel House as a subject.

Ann Wyeth McCoy Dollhouse

Dining Room, 1966

Bequest of Ann Wyeth McCoy, 2006



Karl J. Kuerner (b. 1957)

Miss Wyeth, 1981

Acrylic on panel

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Wyeth, 1985



Kuerner enjoyed a close artistic relationship with several members of the Wyeth family, including his teacher Carolyn Wyeth and mentor Andrew Wyeth. Here, Kuerner depicts Carolyn on the deck of the Wyeth family home, where she lived for decades after her parents' deaths. Carolyn regularly taught her students to pay close attention to light and shadow in their work; Kuerner applies those teachings in his rendering of soft, diffused winter light across the composition.

Karl J. Kuerner (b. 1957)

Dancing in the Wind, 2000

Acrylic on panel

Gift of the artist in memory of Carolyn

Wyeth, 2001



Peters-Herdeg Dollhouse, 1980s–2024

Mixed media

Gift of the Estate of Judith C. Herdeg, 2025



In 1963, Judith and John Herdeg purchased an early eighteenth-century house and moved it from Bethel Township to Chadds

Ford. A classic example of a brick “hall and parlor” house, it features a distinctive pent roof extending below the second-floor windows. The home was restored under the guidance of historical architect Albert Kruse. The Herdeggs lived there for decades with their children, furnishing it with their collection of colonial-era decorative arts and paintings by artists such as Charles Willson Peale, John Singleton Copley, and William Williams. This dollhouse is a to-scale reproduction of their house, built by Roger Demers, who spent five and a half years on the project, handcrafting thousands of shingles for the roof and replicating the unique patterns of the floorboards in each

room. Judith Herdeg filled the dollhouse over the course of her life, commissioning miniaturists to reproduce pieces from her collection and hand-embroidering rugs for several rooms.

Edward Willis Redfield (1869–1965)

Winter Reflections, 1935

Oil on canvas

Gift of Carolyn Elkins Foster, 2005



Ann Wyeth McCoy Dollhouse

Kitchen/Entry Room, 1966

Bequest of Ann Wyeth McCoy, 2006



N.C. Wyeth (1882–1945)

Old Kris, c. 1925

Oil on canvas

Wyeth Foundation



CASE 1

Andrew Wyeth (1917–2009)

Christmas Card #P2669, 1943

Watercolor on paper

Wyeth Foundation for American Art
Collection



Andrew Wyeth (1917–2009)

Christmas Card #P2668, 1943

Ink and watercolor on paper

Wyeth Foundation for American Art
Collection



Barclay Rubincam (1920–1978)

Christmas Ball, 1954

Oil on gesso panel

Purchased with Museum funds, 1986



In this composition, Rubincam depicts an ornament that was gifted to him by his grandmother, Lillie Mae Hoopes, who died the same year he executed this painting. His muted, sparse rendering of a typically festive and colorful season suggests quiet contemplation of a treasured object and perhaps a state of mourning.

CASE 2

John W. McCoy (1910–1989)

Greens for the Church, n.d.

Watercolor

Gift of Hallmark Cards, Inc., 1986



This vibrant watercolor represents one of two designs by McCoy that appeared on Hallmark cards between 1949 and 1962, soon after the company began collaborating with artists such as Norman Rockwell and Georgia O'Keeffe for its Gallery Artists collection.

McCoy's second design, *Paul Revere Bell*, was notably popular, selling more than 100,000 cards during its first year in print.

Ann Wyeth McCoy (1915–2005)

Winter Scene—Christmas Card, n.d.

Watercolor on paper

Gift of Bertha Bates Cole, 1981



McCoy sent this small-scale, delicate watercolor to Bertha Bates Cole as a holiday card. Cole was a trained artist and the daughter of illustrator Bertha Corson Day Bates, an early student of Howard Pyle, as well as a friend of several members of the Wyeth family.

Margaret Jordan Patterson (1867–1950)

Red Roses, c. 1947

Woodblock print with watercolor on paper

Gift of Lansdale Oakley Humphreys, 1981



Patterson specialized in making floral works in woodcut, including arrangements like the roses depicted in this New Year's card. She rarely used outlines to delineate forms, opting instead to layer masses of overlapping color, but here she employs a block of muted blue line to render the twisting rose stems and veins on the leaves. Patterson sent this print to artist and illustrator Thornton Oakley, along with a yellow colorway of the same design. Oakley was the president of the Philadelphia Water Color Club, where Patterson was an exhibitor and prizewinner.

Hans Axel Walleen (1902–1978)

Christmas Greeting 1936, c. 1936

Tempera on paper

Anonymous gift, 1970



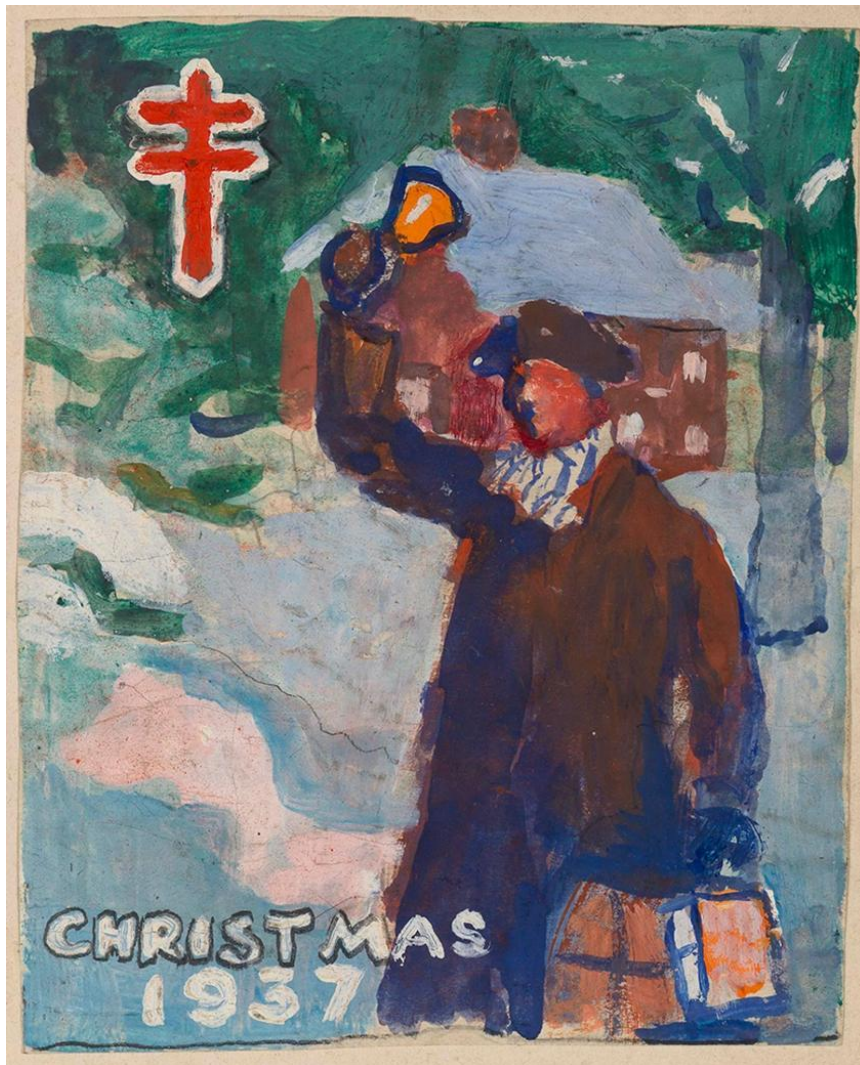
Unidentified Artist

1937 Christmas Seal, 1937

Tempera on mat board

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Richard M. Scaife and an

Anonymous gift, 1970



Christmas seals are stamp-like adhesive labels that are sold to raise money for charitable causes. The tradition began in Denmark in 1904 and was first enacted in the United States three years later through the efforts of Wilmington-based activist and philanthropist Emily Bissell. This seal, along with artist Hans Axel Walleen's neighboring design in this case, bears the red double-cross of the International Union Against Tuberculosis, one of the earliest organizations to employ seal sales as a fundraising tool.

Howard Pyle (1853–1911)

Cor Cordia: A Christmas Greeting from Thy Husband, 1881

Watercolor and ink on vellum

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Howard P. Brokaw,
2007

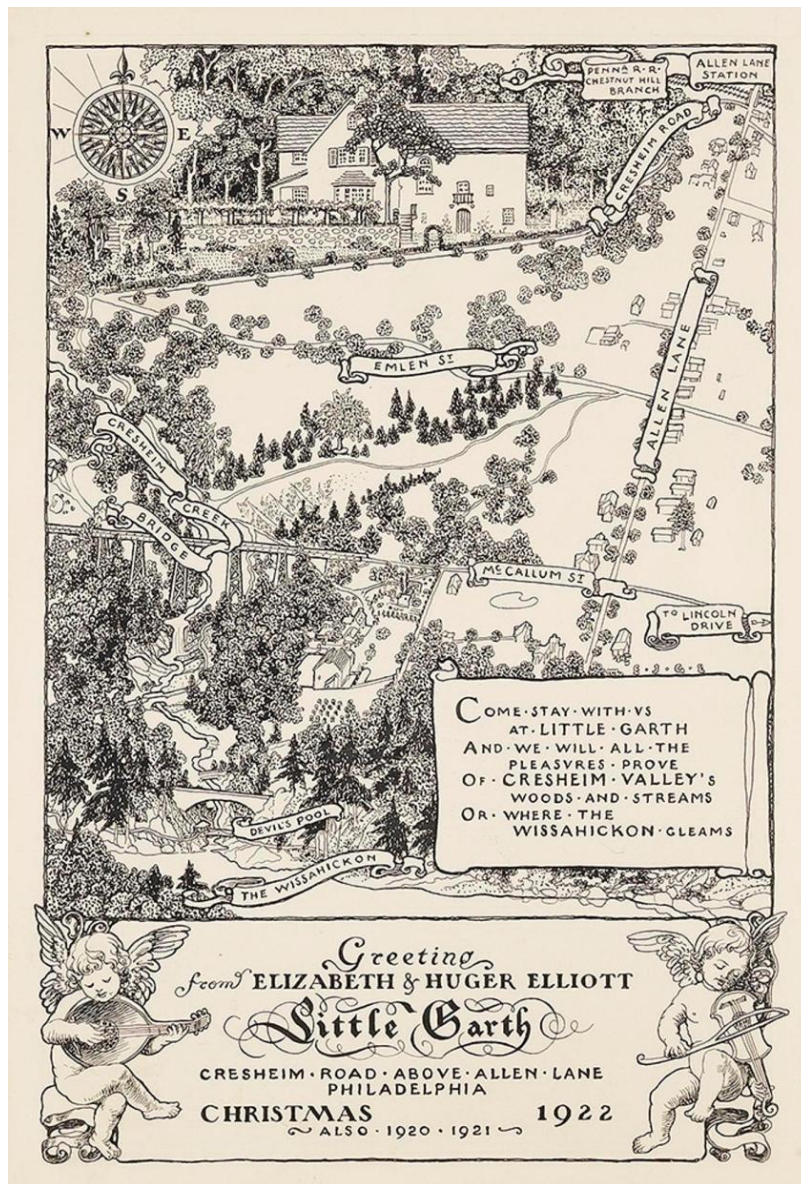


Elizabeth Shippen Green (1871–1954)

Christmas Card 1922, 1922

Ink on board

Purchased with Museum funds, 1993



This ingenious Christmas card serves as both a seasonal greeting and a map to Green's home, Little Garth, in the West Mount Airy neighborhood of Philadelphia. Green was a student of Howard Pyle and a member of the Red Rose Girls with fellow artists Violet Oakley and Jessie Willcox Smith. On the lower half of the map, Green depicts Cogslea, the estate where she had previously lived with the Red Rose Girls, southeast of Cresheim Creek Bridge.

CASE 3

Andrew Wyeth (1917–2009)

Christmas Card (stone house in snow with farm), 1951

Watercolor on paper

Wyeth Foundation for American Art
Collection



Andrew Wyeth (1917–2009)

Christmas Card #P0876, 1955

Watercolor on paper

Wyeth Foundation for American Art
Collection



Andrew Wyeth (1917–2009)

Christmas Card #P1755, 1950

Watercolor on paper

Wyeth Foundation for American Art
Collection



OUTSIDE THE GALLERY

Maker Unknown

Dollhouse, ca. 1900

Gift of Richard M. Scaife



This eleven-room dollhouse is one of a series referred to as “mystery houses” because little is known about their origins. The toy retailer FAO Schwarz advertised these dollhouses, of various sizes and degrees of decoration starting in the late 19th century, but the maker has never been identified. This particular dollhouse was owned by Sarah Cordelia Mellon Scaife (1903 – 1965), the mother of the donor, although it is not known when she acquired the house or the hundreds of objects that furnish the rooms.

The ensemble presents a view of daily upper and middle-class domestic life at the turn-of-the-century, with a myriad of

detailed, made-to-scale accessories. Not simply for amusement, Victorian dollhouses served as models for girls and young, predominantly white, women of certain social standing to learn about etiquette, polite living, and the responsibilities of running a household.

NEW ACQUISITION

Maker Unknown

*Model House in the International Style, ca.
1930*

Associated furnishings, 1960s-70s

Mixed media

Gift Julia Bissell Leisenring, 2024



This ultra-modern doll house represents a bold new direction for toy makers in the 1930s. Typically dollhouses of the day reflected more traditional architectural styles of Victorian or Tudor design.

Sold by FAO Schwarz, the house represents the International Style of architecture developed in the 1920s and made famous by such architects as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and Phillip Johnson. The model's stark geometric forms emphasize the style's devotion to utility and functionality. After an exhibition of modernist architecture at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1932 featured similarly themed creations by

architects from fifteen countries, the term “International Style” began to take hold.

Though several toy companies manufactured International Style dollhouses in the 1930s, the exact maker of this house has not yet been determined. Many European toy manufacturers halted production during World War II to support the war effort by manufacturing military items. When they resumed production after the war, the International Style houses were much less popular and rarely produced.