

November 14, 2011

**For Immediate Release from the New Bedford Art Museum....**

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**THE NEW BEDFORD ART MUSEUM & THE NEW BEDFORD FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY JOIN TOGETHER FOR ANOTHER GLIMPSE INTO THE FOLIOS OF JOHN JAMES AUDUBON**

***JOHN JAMES AUDUBON: AN ASIAN VIEW OF NATURE?***

*Louie Doherty & Janice Hodson, Curators*

**November 18, 2011 – January 21, 2012**

**Opening Reception, Friday, November 18, 2011**

**7-8:30pm – Open to the Public**

(NEW BEDFORD, MA)— The New Bedford Art Museum is pleased announce a new exhibit, *John James Audubon: An Asian View of Nature?*, an investigation into the possible connection of Audubon's prints with Asian art.

Monet. Cassatt. Renoir. Frank Lloyd Wright. Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century Western artists have been influenced by Asian art. Was this the case with John James Audubon? Was the self-proclaimed "American woodsman" influenced by renderings of flora and fauna on Chinese porcelain? Did the influx of Chinese export art into Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century change John James Audubon's view of nature? Could the creator of *Birds of America*, a copy of which was presented to the Japanese government at the Convention of Kanagawa by US Navy Commodore Matthew Perry, have influenced Japanese artists?

This new exhibit will explore these questions. Featuring 11 newly treated, never-before shown prints from the New Bedford Free Public Library's *Birds of America* double elephant folio, the show also includes woodblock prints from the Library's collection of Japanese art. "During our previous exhibitions of Audubon's work, I was frequently asked if John James Audubon was influenced by Asian art. This planted the seed in my mind for the exhibit's theme," says Louis Doherty, the show's curator. "I think people

will be surprised by what we've come up with. There are a number of facets to this subject.”

The upcoming exhibit, *John James Audubon: An Asian View of Nature?* marks the beginning of the “City Series” -what we hope will be ongoing collaborative installations by the New Bedford Free Public Library and the New Bedford Art Museum highlighting the Audubons, as well as other works from the City of New Bedford’s collection. “This collaboration between the Art Museum and the Library is really exciting. As we learned through last year’s large Audubon show, exhibits like this attract visitors from near and far, provide educational opportunities for school children and showcase the rich cultural heritage of our city. This isn’t just about art, this is great for New Bedford on a lot of levels,” says Kate Ross, executive director of the New Bedford Art Museum.

A panel discussion exploring the topic of Audubon’s Asian view of nature will be held on Thursday, December 8, 2011 at 7pm during the New Bedford Art Museum’s AHA! Night activities. Participants will include curators of this exhibit, Louie Doherty and Janice Hodson. This event is free and open to the public.

To download images from the exhibit, please visit:

[http://www.kateross.com/Audubons\\_Asian\\_View/Photos.html](http://www.kateross.com/Audubons_Asian_View/Photos.html)

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Also on view at the museum through January 21, 2012, *Light, Space and Atmosphere: A Spiritual Journey – Willoughby Elliott Retrospective.*

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*Hours: Wednesday - Sunday, 12-5pm. AHA! Nights, the 2nd Thursday of the month, 5 - 9 pm  
General Admission: Adults \$5, Students & Seniors \$3, Children 12 & Under, Members free.*

New Bedford Art Museum  
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[www.newbedfordartmuseum.org](http://www.newbedfordartmuseum.org)