January 15-April 17, 2011

What’s Inside:

• Curriculum-related Activities
• Artist Biographies
• Exhibition Overview
• Resources and Vocabulary
• Chaperone Information
• Museum Manners

Major Exhibition Sponsor: Andrew Wyeth, Back Apartment, 1961, watercolor, Collection of the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, © copyright 2011 Wyeth

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Museum Visit 101: A Checklist

Before the Visit (2-3 weeks):

- **Recruit chaperones!** One adult is required for every 15 students (2nd-12th grade) and every 10 students (pre-K-1st grade). Please share the enclosed *How to be a Great Chaperone* handout with your adult volunteers so they know what will be expected of them.
- **Transportation!** Groups must arrange their own transportation. Ask us about busing stipends.
- **Name Tags!** It is so helpful when docents and museum staff can call each student by name. Use large, bold printed letters.
- **Pre-visit student preparation!**
  - Try to visit the KIA to familiarize yourself with the museum’s layout, including restrooms, classrooms, etc. Note where the exhibitions are located. A personal visit is crucial if you have any concerns about exhibition or tour content. Please call 349-7775, x 3162 for an appointment with KIA staff.
  - Read through the pre-visit/post-visit activities listed in this packet and decide which are best suited for your students.
  - Work with students on completing assignments before visit. Review Museum Manners.
  - Please inform the KIA Museum Education staff if your group has an assignment or will need extra time in the galleries following their tour.
  - Familiarize chaperones with any assignments so they can assist as needed.
  - Please bring the proper materials for students to complete their project: pencils only and paper with something hard to write on. Students may sit on the floor or stools can be made available with advanced notice.

Day of Visit Checklist

- **Name Tags!** Have them? Are your students divided into the number of groups as specified on the tour confirmation?
- **Chaperones!** Make copies of *How to be a Great Chaperone*.
- **Camera?** You may take photos outside or in the lobby. Photography is not allowed in the galleries.
- **Gallery Shop!** Remind students that the KIA Gallery Shop is not included as part of the visit.
- **Museum Manners!** Please review one more time.
- **Coats, backpacks, umbrellas and roller shoes** are not permitted in the galleries. Please leave them on the bus, weather permitting or in bins located in the lobby.
- **Let's be early birds!** Please arrive at the South St. entrance at least 5 minutes before the tour begins and have students organized into the proper number of tour groups. A docent or KIA staff member will greet your group, review Museum Manners and then each small group will be assigned a docent and dismissed into the galleries.
- **Oops! We're late!** Please call the KIA at 269/349-7775 if you will be late. As groups may be scheduled back to back, a late arrival could shorten your visit. Docents will wait no more than 20 minutes. After that time we reserve the right to cancel or shorten your tour.

After the Tour

- **Discuss** the tour with your students. Round out the experience with some post visit activities.
- **Evaluate!** Fill out the Tour Evaluation form and return in the envelope provided. Let us know what did or did not go well.
How to be a Great Chaperone

To be a great chaperone, you don’t need any special knowledge—just common sense and a willingness to jump in and get involved. Here are a few tips to make this visit successful:

• Introduce yourself to your group and your docent (tour guide)
• Stay with your group and assist the teachers and docent.
• Review KIA’s Museum Manners and help remind students.

Classes tour in small groups of 10-15 students. Each group is led by a museum docent, a specially trained volunteer tour guide.

As tours move through the museum, chaperones help keep the group together. They remind students of their Museum Manners if needed and are good role models during the tour. Chaperones are ready to help the docent if asked.

Thanks for being part of your group's guided tour. Your participation will help make your school’s visit to the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts fun and educational. We invite you and your family to visit the KIA again!

KIA Museum Manners

1. Do not touch any of the art because it is fragile and the oils on your fingers (even if your hands look clean) will make the work of art dirty. If everyone touched, the art would be ruined, and no one would be able to enjoy it. We want it to last as long as possible.

2. Please walk in the museum. We do not want you or the art to get hurt.

3. Use quiet voices during your tour; other people are trying to enjoy their visit too.

4. Stay with your group. Be ready to look carefully and think about what you see. Your docent will ask you to share your ideas about the works of art.

5. Gum, food and drinks are not allowed in the galleries because spills could damage the works of art.

6. Please do not lean on walls or cases as you might lean into a work of art or mark the walls.
The Wyeths: America’s Artists: An Exhibition Overview

_The Wyeths: America’s Artists_ features 90 paintings and drawings by three generations of the Wyeth family of artists. N.C. Wyeth, the family patriarch, is considered one of the greatest illustrators from the “Golden Age of Illustration” and taught his five children the fundamentals of art. Henriette, Carolyn and Andrew all became artists with varying degrees of success and are represented in this exhibition. Andrew’s son, Jamie is also featured in this exhibition. The exhibition was organized by the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts with loans from the Farnsworth Art Museum, Brandywine River Museum, Terra Foundation for America Art and three private lenders.

Exhibition and Artistic Themes:

**Importance of Place**—For all the Wyeth artists, where they lived (Chadds Ford, PA and Cushing, ME) features prominently in their art. They explore the familiar in the world around them and portray not only the landscape but the people who live there. The artists would draw studies en plein air (outside) and create the final paintings in their studios. The locations have important significance for the artists and the paintings, especially Andrew’s often contain layered meanings.

**Storytelling**—Beginning with N.C. Wyeth who was best known for his book illustrations, all the Wyeths have strong narrative content in their paintings. N.C. was expert at showing dramatic moments in his illustrations. He passed this sense of theatricality (choosing the important moment, lighting, framing, etc.) to his children, who passed it to his grandson, Jamie. The theatricality in all their works tells the viewer that these are not just ordinary scenes of nature, animals, or figures but are a heightened reality that is trying to convey something to us.

**Realism**—The Wyeths painted in a realist style at a time when many American artists were exploring abstraction. But the Wyeth style of realism brings a sense of otherworldliness, that these realistically painted objects and figures exist in a world separate from our own.

**Importance of Imagination and Feeling**—N.C. Wyeth learned from his teacher, Howard Pyle, that it is important to portray strong feeling. He taught his children the same lesson: that all things living and inanimate have feelings and can convey emotion. He also encouraged them to find the fantastic in the everyday. A sense of mystery is especially prevalent in paintings by Andrew and Jamie Wyeth.
The Wyeths: Biographies

N.C. Wyeth (1882-1945)

Newell Convers Wyeth was born in Needham, Massachusetts. N.C. began his formal artistic education at the Mechanic Arts High School in Boston. With support from his mother, N.C. transferred to Massachusetts Normal Arts School and in the autumn of 1902, N.C. traveled to Wilmington, Delaware to work with Howard Pyle. Pyle, a well-known illustrator, had a school of illustration that stressed the use of dramatic effects and emotional content in painting and a good knowledge of one’s subject. Within five months under Pyle’s tutelage, N.C. had his illustrations published on the cover of the Saturday Evening Post.

The artist married Carolyn Bockius in 1906 and in 1908, the newlyweds moved to Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania along the Brandywine River. In 1911, N.C. was engaged by the Scribner Publishing House to illustrate Robert Louis Stevenson’s Treasure Island. N.C.’s dramatic mix of action and character study in each illustration furthered the narrative beyond the text and helped make the book a great success. This began N.C.’s long and successful career as an illustrator with Scribner’s Publishing House. N.C. Wyeth was also a successful muralist and illustrator of magazines, calendars and advertisements.

N.C. died when his car stalled on a railroad crossing in 1946. He was survived by his wife and five children who also pursued creative careers—Nathaniel as an inventor; Andrew, Henriette, and Carolyn as painters; and Ann as a musician and composer.

Andrew Wyeth (1917-2009)

Andrew Wyeth was the youngest of N.C. Wyeth’s children. He was often sick as a child and seldom left his family home at Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. His only art instructor was his father, N.C.

Andrew is known as one of America’s foremost realists. Andrew said of his work, “I search for the realness, the real feeling of a subject, all the texture around it...I always want to see the third dimension of something...I want to come alive with the subject.” His subdued palette and stark compositions speak to a generation caught between two World Wars and the Great Depression.

Andrew married his wife Betsy in 1940 and she encouraged his work in Maine. Through his work with the Olsons and his paintings of the buildings and landscapes of Maine, Andrew explored the character of New England. In the 1960s and 70s, he began working on nude studies. Towards the end of his life, Andrew returned to landscape painting. Of his late landscapes, he said “Catching the essence of a landscape without making it into a picture is the most important thing to me.”
James Wyeth (1946-Present)

James “Jamie” Wyeth is the son of Andrew. Born in Wilmington, Delaware, Jamie left the public school system in 6th grade to spend more time on his art. He studied with his father and two aunts, Henriette and Carolyn. Jamie would sketch, paint, and study for eight hours most days and he achieved recognition very early in his career. Non-human subjects are prominent in his work. He treats his portraits of farm animals with the same sensitivity and intensity as his portraits of people.

Unlike N. C. and Andrew, Jamie Wyeth has spent time documenting current events in the world outside Pennsylvania and Maine. Despite these varied experiences, the land and people of Pennsylvania and Maine remain a central theme in Jamie's work. Over the years, his style has evolved. Tightly rendered subjects have given way to bolder brushwork and a broader palette of color. He often works in oil—even as a young student, the rich, tactile quality of oil paint appealed to him. Jamie is skilled in printmaking techniques, watercolor, and egg tempera and does not hesitate to combine media to suit his subject.

Henriette Wyeth Hurd (1907-1997)

Henriette was N.C. Wyeth’s first child. She began studying art under her father at age 11. She had polio as a child that permanently crippled her right hand. This did not prevent her from pursuing a career as a painter. At age 13, she entered the Normal Art School in Boston. At art school, Henriette was exposed to theater, which had a great impact on her work as an artist.

She returned to her family farm at Chadds Ford after her schooling and fell in love with Peter Hurd, one of her father's students. After her marriage, she and Peter Hurd moved to a Ranch in New Mexico. She was the only Wyeth to leave the East Coast. She worked as a portrait painter and she received commissions to do portraits of public figures, including First Lady Pat Nixon. Her still life work has distinguished her among painters of the 20th century. The way she incorporates realism and theatrical realism in each of her paintings speaks to the mystery she believed each item possessed.

Carolyn Wyeth (1909-1994)

Carolyn Wyeth was born and died at the family farm in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. She studied with her father, N.C. Wyeth, for 19 years, and was guided by her father’s advice to understand and feel deeply about the subjects she painted. However, as the family rebel, she was not as enthusiastic about N.C.’s insistence that his children master drawing basics by spending months rendering cubes, pyramids, and plaster casts with charcoal. For over 30 years she taught painting; her nephew, Jamie Wyeth, was one of her students. Carolyn avoided publicity and seldom exhibited her work. Using familiar objects and surroundings as subject, bold colors, and strong, slightly mysterious compositions, her paintings express her strong connection to place and past.
**N. C. Wyeth, The Battle of Glen Falls**  
*(from The Last of the Mohicans), 1919*  
(larger image on page 11)

The following information and curriculum connections were borrowed from the NEH's *Picturing America* program. You can print out the *Picturing America* information about N.C. Wyeth and his illustrations for *Last of the Mohicans* from their website: [picturingamerica.neh.gov/educators](http://picturingamerica.neh.gov/educators).  
Click on Resource book and then Image 5b.

**DESCRIBE AND ANALYZE**-Encourage students to look closely at the figures and the background (K-12)

Where is the setting of this story?  
How did N.C. Wyeth show distance and space in this painting?  
Describe the characters' clothing. How does the clothing tell who they are?

**INTERPRET** (MS/HS)  
Which moment from the story is depicted here? Why did Wyeth chose this particular scene?  
Explain to students that this is an illustration for a fictional novel, *The Last of the Mohicans*. Ask why they think this is—or is not—an accurate depiction of an American Indian.  
Have students debate whether this novel should or should not have been illustrated with historically accurate likenesses of American Indians.  
Wyeth's illustrations have shaped the way generations of readers view stories like *Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped*. His paintings even impacted the visual look of the films later made of these books. View scenes from the film *Last of the Mohicans*, starring Daniel Day Lewis. Are there similarities between the film and Wyeth's illustration?

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**  
(HS) Have students read *Last of the Mohicans*. Select a scene from the book and create their own illustration.  
(ELEM and MS) Read a scene from Last of the Mohicans. Discuss it and have students create an illustration of that scene. OR students can create their own story and accompanying illustration. Emphasize that students should choose a dramatic moment in the story to depict.

**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

**Historical Connections:** French and Indian War; European colonies in N. America; Huron, Mino, Mohawk, Algonquin tribes and the Iroquois Confederacy; Pontiac’s War; Eastern Woodland tribes; King Phillip’s War; also known as Metacom’s War.

**Historical Figures:** King Phillip; Marquis Louis-Joseph de Montcalm; Chief Logan; Pontiac

**Geography:** Adirondack region

**Literary Connections and Primary Documents:** *The Last of the Mohicans*, James Fenimore Cooper (middle, secondary); *Ishi, The Last Yahi: A Documentary History*, Robert Fleming Heizer and Theodora Kroeber (middle and secondary); *Hiawatha*, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (middle); *Pontiac’s speech at Detroit* (1763) (secondary)

**Arts:** the history of American book illustration, realism, The Wyeth Family
Andrew Wyeth’s father taught him that objects could represent thoughts and emotions. Andrew regularly combined still life (painting objects) with landscapes to express a very personal iconography. In *Her Room*, the artist considered the shell to represent his wife, Betsy. Besides being a wife and mother, Betsy Wyeth played an important role in Andrew Wyeth’s artistic career. She was his business manager, model and most faithful critic. The interior featured in *Her Room* was designed by Betsy. She had a lifelong interest in architecture and designed and re-designed many of the spaces where the Wyeth family lived. She liked spare, controlled rooms and Andrew records that austerity in this painting. The water, seen through the windows, is choppy and ominous, a marked contrast to the calm, ordered room. According to Betsy’s records, the painting was conceived on a day when the Wyeth’s two sons, Nicholas and Jamie were out on the water in a boat and their parents were concerned about the rising waves. The shell was one of many collected by Betsy near the artist Winslow Homer’s home in Prout’s Neck. The boys would move one of the shells to see if their mother would notice. She always did.

**DESCRIBE AND ANALYZE** Encourage students to look closely at the picture. (K-12)

What is the setting? What do you notice about this painting?  
What kinds of colors did the artist used? How does that affect the mood? What would the mood be if the colors were brighter and more intense?

**INTERPRET (MS/HS)**

Why use a shell to represent a person? What are the characteristics of a shell and what does that say about Betsy? How would the work’s meaning be affected if Betsy Wyeth’s portrait was included? What object would represent you?  
Although this painting relates to a personal experience, it is not obvious. Why would Andrew Wyeth be so vague? What title might you give this work?  
What might the open door mean?

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

Try to make egg tempera. Experiment painting with egg tempera and watercolor and discuss the differences. Instructions can be found at www.eggtempera.com. (MS/HS)  
Create a self-portrait or portrait of someone else using an object that represents the person in some way. Write a description and why the object was chosen to represent the person. (MS/HS)  
Artistic talent was obviously passed down in the Wyeth Family. Discuss families with students and talk about lessons or talents that have been passed down in their families. Students can create a family tree that discusses these inherited characteristics. Or students can write a narrative about one’s family. (K-12)

**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

**Geography:** Prout’s Neck, Cushing ME, Atlantic Ocean

**Literary Connections and Primary Documents:** Andrew Wyeth’s biography and autobiography (see resources)

**Arts:** The Wyeth family, realism, connections to Winslow Homer, landscape, still life, iconography, egg tempera
# Vocabulary

## Abstract
This style of art does not show objects realistically. Abstract artists sometimes simplify or exaggerate shapes and colors. If the art does not resemble anything in the natural world—it is called non-representational or non-objective.

## Color
What the eye sees when light is reflected from it. Hue is the color at its most intense form. Value refers to the differences in hue ranging from the lightest to darkest. Primary colors (red, blue, yellow) cannot be produced by mixing other colors together. Secondary colors (orange, violet, green) are created by mixing primary colors.

## Composition
The way shapes, color, line, space, mass and objects are arranged and organized in a work of art.

## Docent
From the Latine word *docere*, meaning to teach. Docents are specially trained volunteer museum guides.

## Drybrush
A watercolor painting technique where the artist dips a small brush into watercolor pigment and squeezes out most of the color and moisture before splaying out the bristles. When the relatively dry brush is stroked on top of a watercolor wash, the brush leaves separate, distinct marks which can be layered.

## En Plein Air
Creating a work of art outside, rather than in a studio.

## Egg tempera
A painting medium in which dry pigment is mixed with egg yolk and water.

## Illustration
Visual matter used to clarify or to decorate a text.

## Landscape
Painting that depicts a scene from nature in which the place or the land itself becomes the main subject.

## Line
The path of a moving point. It can be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, curved, angular, zigzag, bent, straight, interrupted, thick, thin.

## Portrait
A likeness made of a person created by an artist, such as a painter or photographer.

## Realistic
The artist tries to depict objects as they are seen.

## Still Life
A picture of an object or group of objects—implies an absence of people or activity.

## Study
A preliminary sketch for a work of art.

## Watercolor
A paint composed of a water-soluble pigment. Also a work that is done in watercolors.
Resources

Selected Books about The Wyeth Family (KIA=KIA Library; KPL=Kalamazoo Public Library)

Delaware Art Museum, Wondrous Strange: The Wyeth Tradition by N.C. Wyeth, Andrew Wyeth, James Wyeth. (KIA)
Stoner, Joyce Hill. A Closer Look: Howard Pyle, N.C. Wyeth, Andrew Wyeth and Jamie Wyeth (KIA)
Wyeth, Jamie. Jamie Wyeth by Jamie Wyeth. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1980. 759.11 W9795 (KPL)

Selected Books illustrated by N.C. Wyeth

Cooper, James Fenimore. The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757, Scribner, NY.
Defoe, Daniel, Robinson Crusoe, Scribner, NY. (not in exhibition)
Malory, Sir Thomas. The Boy’s King Arthur: Sir Thomas Malory’s History of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Scribner, NY.
Stevenson, Robert Louis, Kidnapped, 1st ed., Atheneum Books for Young Readers, NY

Videos about The Wyeths

You Tube
Andrew Wyeth paints Tom Hoving-www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Qg1PwQXrs0
Christina’s World-www.youtube.com/watch?v=8XFbddzvT5A&NR=1

Websites

Farnsworth Art Museum, Wyeth Center, Rockland ME-www.farnsworthmuseum.org
Brandywine River Museum-www.brandywinemuseum.org
Jamie Wyeth-www.jamiewyeth.com
N.C. Wyeth, *The Battle of Glen Falls* (from *The Last of the Mohicans*), 1919, oil on canvas, Collection of Brandywine River Museum, Bequest of Mrs. Russell G. Colt, 1986, 86.7.1
Andrew Wyeth, *Her Room*, 1963, Tempera on panel, Collection of the Farnsworth Art Museum, Museum Purchase, 64.1313, Copyright Andrew Wyeth