



EXHIBITION OPENING AUGUST 14 AT MAG EXPLORES THE STORY BEHIND A FAVORITE PAINTING

ROCHESTER, NY, July 22, 2009 — In 1998, Memorial Art Gallery director Grant Holcomb bid on a mysterious painting on the auction block at Sotheby's. Almost nothing was known about it, or about its remarkably talented painter, Walter Goodman, but Holcomb's risk paid off. In a review of auction sales that year, one writer hailed *The Printseller's Window* as "a masterpiece that is the equal of the best of William Harnett...John Peto...and John Haberle...the three great American titans of trompe l'oeil." With photos, engravings and bits of bric-a-brac—all overseen by a bespectacled and bearded figure—the work implies the passion of a collector. At the same time, it's filled with puzzling bits that suggest a story.



An exhibition that opens at the Gallery August 14 tells how the painting's secrets have been given up one by one through the painstaking detective work of guest curator Pete Brown. *Walter Goodman's The Printseller's Window: Solving a Painter's Puzzle* brings together some two dozen related prints, photos, paintings and books. Among these are three works on loan from private collectors—a self-portrait of the artist in 1880, when he was 42 years old (shown below); *A Kitchen Cabinet*, a still life that he painted in 1882, the year before *The Printseller's Window*; and *Home of the Bamboo*, a genre painting from the same period.

Walter Goodman's The Printseller's Window: Solving a Painter's Puzzle remains on view through November 15. It is sponsored by the Thomas and Marion Hawks Memorial Fund, with additional support from Alesco Advisors and an anonymous donor.

Lecture

Thursday, September 17 at 7 pm, curator Pete Brown will speak on the exhibition. His lecture is included in Gallery admission.

About the artist



Walter Goodman (1838–1912) was born in London to a large and talented Jewish family. His mother, Julia Salaman Goodman, was a well-known painter and member of the Society of Women Artists; his father a tradesman. Goodman received his art training at the Royal Academy and for many years led the Bohemian life—settling for a time in Edinburgh, traveling the Continent, and working in Cuba and New York. In 1871 he returned to London, where he set up a studio. Although he painted such notables as the Duke of Edinburgh, his writer friend Wilkie Collins, and the most celebrated stage actors of the day, Goodman was never a financial success. Largely unknown, he died after a long bout with cancer in 1912, leaving a wife and five young children.

About the curator

Attorney Peter Ogden Brown is a long-time member of the Memorial Art Gallery's Board of Managers, of which he is a past president. As a member of the Gallery's Art Committee, he was instrumental in bringing *The Printseller's Window* to Rochester.

Catalog

The exhibition includes a softbound, fully illustrated catalog, \$15, with a foreword by director Grant Holcomb and an essay, artist biography and catalog raisonné by guest curator Pete Brown. It will be available at the Gallery Store in September.

Memorial Art Gallery hours and admission

The Gallery is open Wednesday-Sunday 11 am–5 pm and until 9 pm Thursday. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

General admission \$10; college students with ID and senior citizens, \$6; children 6–18, \$4. Always free to members, University of Rochester students, and children 5 and under. Half price admission Thursdays from 5–9 pm, made possible by the Democrat and Chronicle, with additional support from Thomson Reuters, ExxonMobil Chemical Company and Monroe County.

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