

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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FITZ HUGH LANE EXHIBITION AT NATIONAL GALLERY THIS SUMMER

Washington, D.C., March 31, 1988 - Sixty-one works by Fitz Hugh Lane, the 19th-century American artist who specialized in landscape and marine painting in the luminist style, will go on view in the West Building of the National Gallery May 15 to September 5, 1988. The exhibition has been organized by the National Gallery's departing deputy director, John Wilmerding, a noted scholar of American art long known as a specialist on Lane's life and art. Mr. Wilmerding will assume the Christopher Binyon Sarofim '86 Professorship in American art at Princeton University next September.

Paintings by Fitz Hugh Lane is the first comprehensive showing of the artist's work in more than two decades. The exhibition focuses on Lane's mature style in sequential groups of subjects he painted most -- Cape Ann, Gloucester, including the famous Brace's Rock series; Boston Harbor in Massachusetts; New York harbor and other scenes of coastal shipping; and various areas along the Maine coast, most notably Penobscot Bay and Mount Desert Island. "We are pleased to feature the extraordinary work of Fitz Hugh Lane at the National Gallery this summer," said director J. Carter Brown. "He painted some of the most memorable images of the New England coast in the nineteenth century."

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Fitz Hugh Lane started his career as a proficient topographer of town and harbor views and as a painter of ship portraits. Lane was interested in depicting the atmosphere of his topographical subjects, and his signature became a delicate treatment of light and space in a markedly horizontal format. Inspiring contemporary artists Martin Johnson Heade, Sanford Gifford and John Frederick Kensett, Lane imbued his subjects with a feeling of silence and the sublime through composition and color. This approach, called "luminism" in the 1940s by art historian John Baur, has been recognized in recent years as a central, rather than incidental, school in American art history. In the catalogue for his 1980 survey exhibition of the subject, American Light: The Luminist Movement 1850-1875, John Wilmerding described luminism as the culminating phase of the Hudson River School of early American landscape painting.

Mr. Wilmerding's more than twenty-year study of Lane has yielded much new information on the artist and the discovery of several previously unknown works in private collections. "I began curatorial work with an exhibition of Fitz Hugh Lane at the DeCordova Museum and the Colby College Art Museum in 1966," said Mr. Wilmerding. "It is fitting that my final exhibition before returning to academia is another major study of Lane. Now that the field of luminist painting has received widespread recognition in the universe of American art, we can begin to focus exhibitions on the work of individual artists in depth. Lane is particularly gratifying because of the historic significance of the topography he painted and his great sense of beauty."

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The nucleus of the exhibition has been selected from the permanent holdings of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Cape Ann Historical Association, Gloucester, Massachusetts, supplemented by loans from American public and private collections. A fully illustrated exhibition catalogue, published in softcover by the National Gallery and in hardcover by Harry N. Abrams, Inc., contains essays by Mr. Wilmerding, Elizabeth Garrity Ellis, Franklin Kelly, Earl A. Powell, III and Erik A. R. Ronnberg, Jr. The exhibition, which will travel to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, October 5 - December 31, 1988, is made possible by a grant from GTE Corporation.

National Gallery of Art

Washington, D.C.

PAINTINGS BY FITZ HUGH LANE Checklist

° = color transparency available
black and white photograph of every painting available

1. New England Inlet with Self Portrait, 1848°
oil on canvas
17 3/4 x 25 7/8 in.
Royal A. Basich
2. Gloucester from Rocky Neck, 1844
oil on canvas
29 1/2 x 41 1/2 in.
Cape Ann Historical Association
3. Ships in Ice off Ten Pound Island, 1850s°
oil on canvas
12 x 19 3/4 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. and M. Karolik Collection
4. Lanesville, The Mill, 1849
oil on canvas
18 x 26 in.
Private Collection
5. Good Harbor Beach, Cape Ann, 1847
oil on canvas
20 3/16 x 30 1/8 in.
Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Jesse H. Metcalf Fund
6. Gloucester Harbor, 1848
oil on canvas on panel
27 x 41 in.
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, the Williams Fund
7. Gloucester Harbor, 1852°
oil on canvas
27 1/4 x 47 1/2 in.
Cape Ann Historical Association
8. Fresh Water Cove from Dolliver's Neck, Gloucester, early 1850s°
oil on canvas
24 x 36 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. and M. Karolik Collection

(more)

9. Gloucester from Brookbank, late 1840s°
oil on canvas
20 x 30 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. and M. Karolik Collection
10. Gloucester Harbor, 1847
oil on canvas
23 x 35 1/2 in.
Cape Ann Historical Association
11. View of Gloucester from "Brookbank," the Sawyer Homestead, 1850s
oil on canvas
18 x 30 3/16 in.
The Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; Acquired through the generosity of the Sarah Mellon Scaife Family
12. Gloucester Harbor at Sunrise, 1850s
oil on canvas
24 x 36 in.
Cape Ann Historical Association
13. Gloucester Harbor at Sunset, late 1850s°
oil on canvas
24 1/2 x 38 1/2 in.
Private Collection
14. Sawyer Homestead, 1860
oil on canvas
23-1/2 x 40 in.
The Board of Trustees of the Sawyer Free Library
15. Three-Master on a Rough Sea, 1850s°
oil on canvas
15 1/2 x 23 1/2 in.
Cape Ann Historical Association
16. Stage Fort across Gloucester Harbor, 1862
oil on canvas
38 x 60 in.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers and Fletcher Funds, Erving and Joyce Wolf Fund, Raymond J. Horowitz Gift, Bequest of Richard De Wolfe Brixey, by exchange, and John Osgood and Elizabeth Amis Cameron Blanchard Memorial Fund, 1978
17. The Western Shore with Norman's Woe, 1862
oil on canvas
21 1/2 x 35 1/2 in.
Cape Ann Historical Association

18. Ipswich Bay, 1862°
oil on canvas
20 x 33 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift of Mrs. Barclay Tilton in memory of
Dr. Herman E. Davidson
19. Riverdale, 1863°
oil on canvas
21 1/2 x 35 1/4 in.
Cape Ann Historical Association
20. Babson and Ellery Houses, Gloucester, 1863
oil on canvas
21 1/4 x 35 1/4 in.
Cape Ann Historical Association
21. Brace's Rock, 1864°
oil on canvas
10 x 15 in.
Private Collection
22. Brace's Rock, Brace's Cove, 1864°
oil on canvas
10 x 15 in.
Daniel J. Terra Collection, Terra Museum of American Art, Chicago
23. Brace's Rock, 1864°
oil on canvas
10 x 15 in.
Mr. and Mrs. Harold Bell
24. Boston Harbor at Sunset, 1850-55
oil on canvas
26 1/4 x 42 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. and M. Karolik Collection by exchange
25. Boston Harbor at Sunset, 1850-55
oil on canvas
24 x 39-1/4 in.
Collection of Jo Ann and Julian Ganz, Jr.
26. Yacht "Northern Light" in Boston Harbor, 1845°
oil on canvas
18-3/4 x 26-1/2 x 3/4 in.
The Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, Vermont
27. Salem Harbor, 1853
oil on canvas
26 x 42 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. and M. Karolik Collection

28. Boston Harbor at Sunset, 1853
oil on canvas
24 x 39 in.
Private Collection
29. Boston Harbor, 1854
oil on canvas
23-1/4 x 39-1/4 in.
White House Collection
30. The Britannia Entering Boston Harbor, 1848°
oil on canvas
14 3/4 x 19 3/4 in.
Mr. and Mrs. Roger A. Saunders
31. Clipper Ship "Southern Cross" Leaving Boston Harbor, 1851
oil on canvas
25-1/4 x 38 in.
Peabody Museum of Salem
32. Shipping in Down East Waters, c. 1850
oil on canvas
17 3/4 x 30 in.
William A. Farnsworth Library and Art Museum, Rockland, Maine
33. New York Yacht Club Regatta, mid 1850s
oil on canvas
28 x 50-1/4 in.
Private Collection
34. New York Yacht Club Regatta, mid 1850s
oil on canvas
28 1/8 x 50 1/4
Estate of Alletta Morris McBean
35. The Yacht "America" Winning the International Race, 1851
oil on canvas
24-1/2 x 38-1/4 in.
Peabody Museum of Salem
36. New York Yacht Club Regatta, II, 1857°
oil on canvas
30 x 50 in.
Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Lane Stokes
37. New York Harbor, mid 1850s
oil on canvas
23-1/2 x 35-1/2 in. (approx.)
Private Collection

38. New York Harbor, 1860°
oil on canvas
36 x 60 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. and M. Karolik Collection
39. Three-Master on the Gloucester Railway, 1857
oil on canvas
39 1/4 x 59 1/4 in.
Cape Ann Historical Association
40. Merchant Brig under Reefed Topsails, 1863°
oil on canvas
24 x 36-3/8 in.
Collection Mrs. Charles Shoemaker
41. Becalmed off Halfway Rock, 1860°
oil on canvas
29 x 48 1/2 in.
From the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, Upperville, Virginia
42. Sunrise through Mist: Pigeon Cove, Gloucester, 1852°
oil on canvas
24-1/4 x 36-1/4 x 3/4 in.
The Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, Vermont
43. View of Norwich, Connecticut, 1847
oil on canvas
12 x 16-1/2 x 2 in.
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas M. Evans
44. Baltimore Harbor, 1850°
oil on canvas
23-15/16 x 36-1/8 in.
Private Collection
45. Ships off Massachusetts Coast, late 1850s
oil on canvas
15 x 23 in.
Private Collection, Virginia
46. Off Mount Desert, 1856°
oil on canvas
23 3/16 x 36 7/16 in.
The Brooklyn Museum, Museum Collection Fund 47.114
47. View of Indian Bar Cove, Brooksville, (?) 1850°
oil on canvas
11-1/2 x 18-1/4 in.
Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson E. Davenport

48. Fishing Party, 1850°
oil on canvas
20 x 30 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift of Henry Lee Shattuck
49. Lighthouse at Camden, Maine, 1850s°
oil on canvas
23 x 34 in.
Private Collection
50. Bar Island and Mt. Desert Mountains from Somes Settlement, 1850
oil on canvas
20-1/8 x 30-1/8 in.
Erving and Joyce Wolf Collection
51. Approaching Storm, Owl's Head, 1860°
oil on canvas
24 x 39 5/8 in.
Private Collection
52. Owl's Head, Penobscot Bay, Maine, 1862°
oil on canvas
16 x 26 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, M. and M. Karolik Collection
53. Christmas Cove, c. 1863°
oil on canvas
15-1/2 x 24 in.
Private Collection
54. Castine Homestead (Yellow House), 1859
oil on canvas
10 3/8 x 14 1/8 in.
Private Collection
55. Old Stevens Homestead, Castine, 1859
oil on canvas
12 x 19 1/2 in.
Andrew Wyeth
56. Castine, Maine, 1850
oil on canvas
21 x 33 1/2 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Bequest of Maxim Karolik
57. Entrance of Somes Sound from Southwest Harbor, 1852°
oil on canvas
23-3/4 x 35-3/4 in.
Private Collection

58. Blue Hill, Maine, mid 1850s°
oil on canvas
20 1/8 x 30 in.
Private Collection

59. Castine, 1850s
oil on canvas
20 x 33 1/4 in.
Courtesy of The Putnam Foundation, Timken Art Gallery, San Diego,
California

60. Castine from Fort George, 1856
oil on canvas
20 x 32 in.
Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, Lugano, Switzerland

61. Lumber Schooners at Evening on Penobscot Bay, 1860°
oil on canvas
24-5/8 x 38-1/8 in.
National Gallery of Art, Washington. Andrew W. Mellon Fund and Gift of
Mr. and Mrs. Francis R. Hatch Sr.

National Gallery of Art

Washington, D.C.

Paintings by Fitz Hugh Lane

Catalogue Information

Paintings by Fitz Hugh Lane complements the exhibition of 61 Lane works at the National Gallery of Art and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston with the following essays: "The Lure of Mount Desert and the New England Coast" by the exhibition curator, John Wilmerding; "Cape Ann Views" by Elizabeth Garrity Ellis; "Lane and Church in Maine" by Franklin Kelly; "The Boston Harbor Pictures" by Earl A. Powell, III; and "Imagery and Types of Vessels" by Erik A. R. Ronnberg, Jr. The catalogue features 70 color plates and some 100 black and white photographs. In addition, the volume contains an account of a summer sailing trip with Fitz Hugh Lane from a diary of 1852 by a Castine, Maine native, William Howe Witherle.

Paintings by Fitz Hugh Lane is published by the National Gallery of Art, 1988. It is available in softcover from the National Gallery for \$14.95 and in hardcover for \$29.95. The hardcover book is being distributed to the trade by Harry N. Abrams, Inc.

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FITZ HUGH LANE CHRONOLOGY

- 1804 Nathaniel Rogers Lane born on December 19 in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Name so recorded in town records, but soon after changed by his family to Fitz Hugh. Ancestors among first settlers on Cape Ann in 1623. Father, Jonathan Dennison Lane, a sailmaker.
- 1806 Became partially paralyzed in legs, probably from infantile polio; family believed he was poisoned by apple of Peru (now tomato) plant.
- 1816 Death of Lane's father. Family moved from Middle Street to house on Washington Street near entrance to Oak Grove cemetery. Learned rudiments of drawing and sketching. One of first dated works a watercolor after a drawing by E.D. Knight of the Burning of the Packet Ship "Boston".
- 1832 Part-time work as a shoemaker. Brief job with Clegg and Dodge, local lithographers on Sea Street, Gloucester. Went to Boston for formal instruction and apprenticeship with William S. Pendleton, proprietor of most important lithographic firm of the day.
- 1835 First dated lithograph, View of the Old Building at the Corner of Ann Street. At work executing trade card signs, advertisements, and music sheet cover illustrations.
- 1836 Thomas Moore succeeded Pendleton as head of the firm. Lane produced two music sheet illustrations, The Salem Mechanick Light Infantry Quick Step and The Nahant Quadrilles, and his first major landscape print, View of Gloucester.
- Later
1830s Publishes music sheet cover for Captn. E.G. Austin's Quick Step, and a number of scenic views, for example, of St. John, New Brunswick; Washington, D.C.; Norwich, Connecticut; Boston Common and Boston harbor.
- 1840 First oil paintings, including shoreline views around Cape Ann and The S.S. "Britannia" in Boston Harbor. Drew lithographs of figures, portraits, and interior scenes.
- 1841 Listed in the Boston Almanac under "Marine Painters," address: 17 School Street. Exhibited for sale an oil, Scene at Sea, at the Boston Athenaeum, and submitted Ship in a Gale for exhibition at the Apollo Association in New York.

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FITZ HUGH LANE CHRONOLOGY ... 2

- mid-1840s Completed oil views of Gloucester and Boston harbors, reflecting early influence of Robert Salmon's marine painting style. Published three-lithograph series, of views in similar format, of Gloucester, New Bedford, and Newburyport.
- 1848 Reputation fully established. Returned to Gloucester permanently. Set up his studio on first floor of the old Whittemore house on Washington Street.
- Late 1840s Painted extensively around Gloucester harbor and Cape Ann. First visit to Maine in summer of 1848. Pictures on view at the Art-Union in New York.
- 1849-1850 Purchased property on Duncan Street, overlooking water on Gloucester inner harbor. With his sister, Sarah, and brother-in-law, Ignatius Winter, began designing and constructing a seven-gable house of granite. Moved in with the Winters just after New Year's in 1850.
- 1850s Active in local civic affairs, participated in organizing Fourth of July celebrations, painted banners and signs. Extensive travel, including visits to New York and possibly San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- Summer 1850 Extensive sailing and sketching trip to Maine with his friend, Joseph L. Stevens, Jr. Painted in Castine, and sailed aboard chartered sailboat General Gates to Mount Desert Island. Produced first major Luminist paintings of Somes Sound.
- 1851 Beginning of the America's Cup competition. Lane painted at least two pictures of the yacht America. Continued with harbor scenes and ship portraits; received favorable criticism for work exhibited at the American and New England art unions.
- Mid-1850s Created an important series of Boston harbor views; new variety in landscape and shoreline combinations of Gloucester harbor pictures. Second extensive sailing trip to Penobscot Bay and Mount Desert areas.
- Summer 1855 Third Maine cruise with Stevens, resulting in paintings of Owl's Head, Camden hills, Blue Hill, and Mount Desert areas.
- Late 1850s Emergence of late style, new severity and serenity, more open and poetic compositions. Took on pupils, notably Mary B. Mellen, in painting lessons.
- 1860 Start of American Civil War. Lane painted Lumber Schooners at Evening on Penobscot Bay and Schooners Before Approaching Storm.
- 1862 Late style marked by greater openness and lucidity. Notable oils of this include Ipswich Bay, "Dream Painting," and The Western Shore with Norman's Woe.

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FITZ HUGH LANE CHRONOLOGY ... 3

- Summer 1863 Last visit to Maine. Painted Christmas Cove; also two unusual Gloucester landscapes: Riverdale and Babson and Ellery Houses.
- 1863-1864 Final series of paintings: Brace's Rock, Gloucester. Devastating fire along Gloucester waterfront.
- July 1864 Last sketching expedition around Cape Ann, accompanied by Joseph and Caroline Stevens. Last dated drawings: Eagle Cliff at Old Neck Beach, Manchester and Folly Cove, Lanesville. Became ill, remained in poor health through the spring of 1865.
- August 1865 Following a bad fall, had a major setback (presumably a heart attack or stroke). Lane died on August 12 in Gloucester. One Boston paper noted, "The death of this gifted artist may almost be considered a national loss, at least so far as art is concerned."

Adapted from Paintings by Fitz Hugh Lane, by John Wilmerding, et al. (National Gallery of Art, 1988).