

ON EXHIBIT AT THE HARNESS RACING MUSEUM



HORSE-DRAWN: THE SLEIGHS OF CURRIER & IVES

UNTIL THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY, HORSE-DRAWN SLEIGHS WERE AN ESSENTIAL MEANS OF WINTER TRAVEL. FROM THE PRACTICAL HAULING OF GOODS TO THE JOY OF TAKING PART IN A “SLEIGHING CARNIVAL,” THE ARTISTS OF THE ESTEEMED CURRIER & IVES PRINTING FIRM CAPTURED IT ALL IN CHARMING, WHIMSICAL DETAIL. THESE COLORFUL, FESTIVE SCENES PROVIDE US A GLIMPSE OF THE WINTER FASHIONS OF THE PERIOD AS WELL AS THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HORSE IN SOCIETY OF THE TIME. THE HARNESS RACING MUSEUM, HOME OF ONE OF THE WORLD’S LARGEST COMPILATIONS OF CURRIER & IVES EQUINE LITHOGRAPHS, IS PROUD TO PRESENT THESE HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR COLLECTION.



BEV AND GRACE LOPEZ: SCULPTING THE HORSE

ARTIST BEV LOPEZ (1922 - 2014) PAINTED AND SCULPTED HORSES FOR MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS. HE STUDIED PRIVATELY WITH SCULPTORS JAMES EARL FRASER AND BERTHOLD NEBEL, AND WITH MURALIST BARRY FAULKNER. COMMISSIONED IN 1952 BY E. ROLAND HARRIMAN, LOPEZ CREATED THE FIRST OF MANY STATUETTES COMMEMORATING HARNESS RACING’S GREAT HORSES, OWNERS, DRIVERS AND BENEFACTORS. LOPEZ’S GRANDFATHER, A HORSE BREEDER, AND HIS MOTHER, GRACE WATT LOPEZ, A RENOWNED SCULPTOR IN HER OWN RIGHT, BOTH GREATLY INFLUENCED YOUNG LOPEZ’S ARTISTIC SENSIBILITY AND CREATIVITY. AN OWNER AND RIDER SINCE HIS YOUTH, LOPEZ CLOSELY STUDIED THE INTRICACIES OF EQUINE ANATOMY AND FAITHFULLY RECREATED IN CLAY THEIR PRIZED BEAUTY AND POWER. THE CAREFUL APPLICATION OF COLOR EMPHASIZES ANATOMICAL PROPORTIONS AND THE EXACTING DEFINITION FOR WHICH MR. LOPEZ WAS KNOWN.



AN ARTISTIC HERITAGE: THE VAN ZANDTS OF ALBANY

THIS INSTALLATION COMPARES THE PAINTING STYLES OF THOMAS KIRBY VAN ZANDT (1814 -1886) WITH HIS SON WILLIAM GARRETT VAN ZANDT (1867-1942). THE VAN ZANDTS, WHOSE FAMILY ROOTS IN ALBANY, NEW YORK DATE BACK TO THE 1600S PRODUCED WONDERFUL FOLK AND FINE ART SCENES DEPICTING THE FARM ANIMALS AND HORSES OF THEIR UPSTATE NEW YORK REGION. THOMAS’ HIGHLY ESTEEMED ARTISTRY ATTRACTED COMMISSIONS FROM WELL-TO-DO LOCALS WANTING TO PAY HOMAGE TO THEIR PRIZE-WINNING LIVESTOCK OR HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE TEAMS. HIS SUCCESSFUL CAREER AS A PAINTER PROMPTED HIS SON TO CONTINUE THE FAMILY TRADITION AND PICK UP THE BRUSH AS WELL. THE TALENTED DUO GRAVITATED TOWARD THE RACETRACKS OF SARATOGA FOR EQUINE INSPIRATION. THE YOUNGER VAN ZANDT TOOK HIS INTEREST A STEP FURTHER BY PARTICIPATING AS A STARTER AT THE SARATOGA RACES AS WELL AS A BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE ALBANY DRIVING CLUB.

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