



NEW YORK STATE  
HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION



ANNUAL REPORT 2012



# MISSION

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**Welcoming and connecting people to our shared cultural heritage through exhibitions and programs that provoke, delight, and inspire.**

New York State Historical Association (NYSHA) has been welcoming and connecting people to our shared cultural heritage since 1899 through exhibitions and programs that provoke, delight, and inspire. NYSHA's collection, showcased in the Fenimore Art Museum, contains some of the best examples of American landscape, history, and genre paintings. Additionally, the Fenimore Art Museum houses the Eugene and Clare Thaw Collection of American Indian Art and one of the nation's most comprehensive and significant American Folk Art collections. NYSHA's Research Library holds thousands of original manuscripts and documents, as well as more than 80,000 volumes on American, New York State, and local history. Of note are first editions of James Fenimore Cooper's novels.



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COVER IMAGE: Willard Leroy Metcalf  
(1858-1925) *Child in Sunlight*,  
1915, oil on canvas, 25 1/8 x 21 in.  
Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of  
Mrs. Henriette Metcalf, 1979.73



The Fenimore Art Museum had another great year in 2012. Our featured exhibition, *American Impressionism: Paintings of Light and Life*, was the cultural highlight of the summer, and *Artist & Visionary: William Matthew Prior Revealed* broke new ground in Folk Art scholarship and drew critical praise. The Eugene and Clare Thaw Collection completed a spectacular national tour and the traveling masterpieces once again graced our galleries in a stunning exhibition, *To Great Acclaim*. Other exhibitions commemorated the sesquicentennial of the Civil War and delighted history-loving visitors to the museum, and our opera-related exhibitions featuring costumes and props from historic Metropolitan Opera productions of *Aida* and *Armide* enhanced our ongoing collaboration with Cooperstown's Glimmerglass Festival.

Our programs in 2012 were equally lively and engaging. Thanks to a major grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, our Iroquois site, *Otsego: A Meeting Place*, featured superb Native artists and was the centerpiece of our first Iroquois Cultural Festival. Our commitment to the youth of our state shined once again in the New York State History Day finals held on our campus. The many additional programs and activities kept our galleries alive with activity throughout the season.

As always, none of this would be possible without our talented and dedicated staff and volunteers, our highly committed Board of Trustees, and our generous donors, members, and visitors. Thank you all for another rewarding and exciting season in Cooperstown.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul S. D'Ambrosio". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PAUL S. D'AMBROSIO, Ph.D.  
PRESIDENT AND CEO



## EXHIBITIONS

### American Impressionism: Paintings of Light and Life

MAY 26 – SEPTEMBER 16

A rare grouping of 26 paintings and sketches from American Impressionist masters was the highlight of the summer season at the Fenimore. The exhibition showcased groundbreaking artists, including Childe Hassam, William Merritt Chase, Mary Cassatt, Theodore Robinson, John Henry Twachtman, and others. Nearly every noted American Impressionist from the height of the movement was featured. These adaptors of the French Impressionist style revolutionized the American art scene in the late 19th century and ultimately paved the way to a uniquely American style of painting. The exhibition also included a painting by French Impressionist Claude Monet, which displayed the techniques that influenced American artists of that time.

The artists represented in *American Impressionism: Paintings of Light and Life* were among the first generation of American painters to utilize the techniques of their French counterparts, such as a brighter palette and the use of broken brushwork. While using innovative techniques, they were traditional in their selection of subject matter, seeking out and painting colorful landscapes, beach scenes, urban views, and perspectives of small town life. The artists had a particular interest in the way light could be captured on canvas.

The artworks were on loan from several sources, including Arkell Museum (Canajoharie, NY), Florence Griswold Museum (Old Lyme, CT), Parrish Art Museum (Southampton, NY), and The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, NY). A fully illustrated catalog accompanied this exhibition.

### Heavenly Aida: Highlights From The Metropolitan Opera Spellbound: The Metropolitan Opera's Armide

In collaboration with Glimmerglass Festival's productions of *Aida* and *Armide*, we exhibited artifacts from productions of these operas at New York's Metropolitan Opera.

*Heavenly Aida* brought Giuseppe Verdi's grand opera up close through costumes worn by Louise Homer, Leontyne Price, Luciano Pavarotti and others. Jewelry, watercolor drawings of costumes, and photographs were among the 25 works displayed.

*Spellbound* brought the flavor of the Met's productions to the Fenimore through costumes, jewelry, watercolor drawings, and photographs, including the costume worn by Renee Fleming.

Also exhibited were preliminary sketches and mockups of Glimmerglass Festival's productions of *Aida* and *Armide*.



Josephine in the Garden (At the Fountain), ca. 1890, Theodore Robinson (1852-1896), 32 1/4 x 26 1/8 in., Arkell Museum at Canajoharie, Gift of Bartlett Arkell, 1946.



Armed's costume worn by Marilyn Home, courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera Archives.

## Artist and Visionary: William Matthew Prior Revealed **MAY 26 – DECEMBER 30**

*Artist and Visionary: William Matthew Prior Revealed*, the first exhibition devoted to this American folk artist, included over 40 paintings spanning his career from 1824 to 1856. Through the mastery of his craft and his pragmatic marketing strategy, Prior was able to document the faces of middle-class Americans throughout his lifetime, making art accessible to a previously overlooked clientele.

Prior (1806-1873) is best-known today as the figure who democratized American portraiture by creating a large number of inexpensive likenesses. But he was also an activist who responded to the events of his lifetime – the debate over slavery, new concepts about religion, and complex cultural issues that significantly altered American society. Prior's involvement with Millerism (early Adventism) was instrumental in his personal development, as well as, providing access to new clients, including many African Americans.

A fully illustrated exhibition catalog accompanied the exhibition. After the



*The Artist as a Young Man: Self Portrait*, William Matthew Prior (1806-1873), 1825. Oil on canvas, 24x20 in. Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, New York, museum purchase, 2010.

Fenimore showing, the exhibition traveled to the American Folk Art Museum, where it was on view January 24 – May 26, 2013.

The Henry Luce Foundation provided partial funding for the exhibition and catalog *Artist and Visionary: William Matthew Prior Revealed*.

**A special thanks to these individuals who sponsored this landmark exhibition:**

Mr. Jonathan Fielding and Mrs. Karin Fielding  
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Goodman  
Dr. Ivan Karp and Dr. Marilynn Karp  
Jane and Gerald Katcher  
Dr. Jeffrey Pressman and Dr. Nancy Kollisch  
Elizabeth and Irwin Warren  
Lucy and Mike Danziger  
Drs. Suzanne and Michael Payne  
Sotheby's

**Additional gifts were made by:**

Dr. Charles E. Burden  
Mr. Raymond C. Egan  
Susan and Henry Fradkin  
Dr. and Mrs. Arun Singh  
Mr. James D. Meltzer, Ph.D.

## Additional 2012 Exhibitions

*Tasha Tudor: Around the Year*  
October 1 – December 31

*Internal Landscapes: The Paintings of G.C. Myers*  
August 18 – December 30

*A Lineage of Iroquois Artistry*  
March 31 – December 30

A Return to Roots, 2004. G.C. Myers, Acrylic on paper, 6 x 9 in. Private Collection.



*Untitled*, 1973. Tasha Tudor, Illustration for a Christmas card. Watercolor on paper. Collection of Jeanette and Gerald Knazek.



## EXHIBITIONS

### Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the American Civil War

*Between the States: Photographs from the American Civil War*  
(March 31 – May 13)

This exhibition presented over 100 well-known Civil War images by photographers such as Mathew Brady and Alexander Gardner. Organized by the George Eastman House, the exhibition included reproductions from original albumen prints, ambrotypes, cartes de visites, cabinet cards, and tintypes.

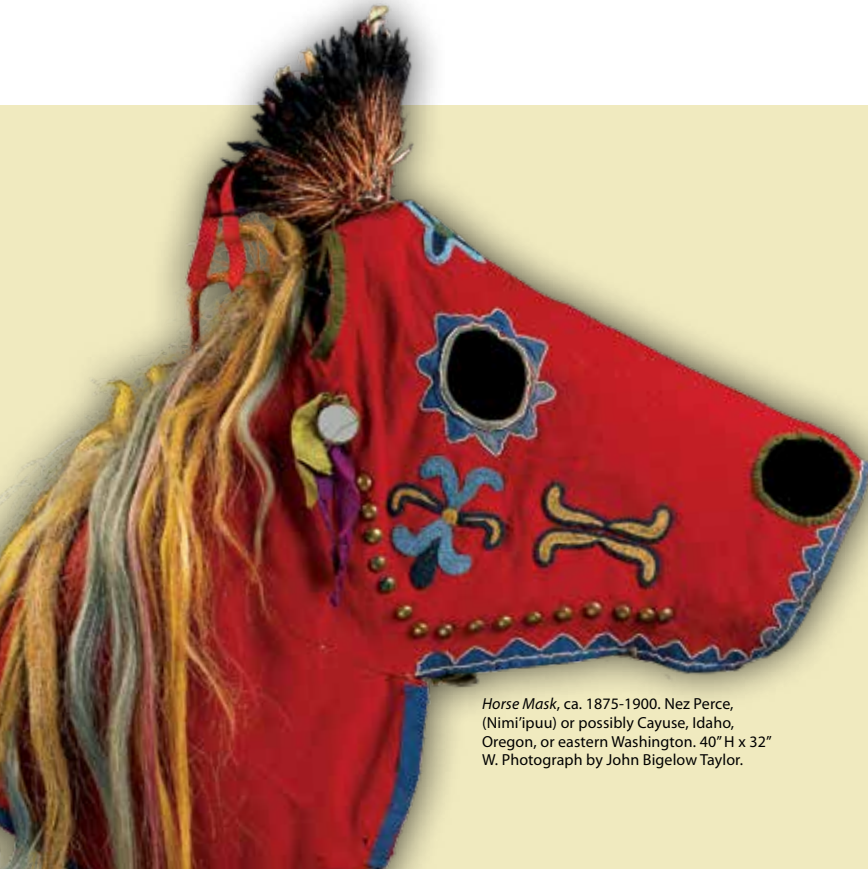
*Reclaiming Gettysburg: Kevin Gray's Modern Tintypes*  
(March 31 – August 5)

Kevin Gray's tintype montages expressed his individual perspective of Gettysburg history using a modernized version of a photographic technique popularized and perfected during the Civil War.

*On the Home Front: New York in the Civil War*  
(September 8 – December 30). This exhibition offered a unique grouping of artifacts, artwork, photographs, and clothing from our collections. Military and patriotic themes were reflected in all aspects of everyday life in upstate New York from children's toys, home decorations, and women's clothing.



Captain Thomas Scott, New York State Volunteers, with his wife and child, 1863, unidentified photographer, The George Eastman House Collection.



Horse Mask, ca. 1875-1900. Nez Perce, (Nimi'ipuu) or possibly Cayuse, Idaho, Oregon, or eastern Washington. 40" H x 32" W. Photograph by John Bigelow Taylor.

### To Great Acclaim: Homecoming of the Thaw Collection of American Indian Art

**MARCH 31 – DECEMBER 30**

From 2010-2012, an exhibition from the Thaw Collection toured across the country to great acclaim from the public and media. Over 100,000 visitors took advantage of the opportunity to see this superlative collection at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Dallas Museum of Art, and Indianapolis Museum of Art. In the words of Joe Horse Capture, Curator at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, "If you are ever going to see a Native American Art exhibit, this is the one."

In 2012, we welcomed the exhibition home in *To Great Acclaim*. Revealing the extraordinary range of art produced by Native Americans, *To Great Acclaim* surveyed the extraordinary achievements of North America's first artists in more than 100 objects of transcendent beauty, including ritual objects, ceremonial clothing, pottery, and basketry.



# Otsego: A Meeting Place and Native American Programs

In 2012, Native American interpretation soared to new heights as NYSHA implemented programming funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

With ongoing advice from our Native American Advisory Board, the Fenimore Art Museum held its first Iroquois Cultural Festival on May 26th and 27th. The event featured over 30 Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) artisans, interpreters, scholars, dancers, and storytellers. Joanne Shenandoah, Grammy award-winning Iroquois singer, performed at the Louis C. Jones Center. The festival drew over 1,000 visitors and sparked a summer-long interest in Iroquois culture.

In addition, over the summer the museum's Native American Artisan series highlighted seven Haudenosaunee artists who each spent three days at the museum, both in galleries and at *Otsego: A Meeting Place*. Award-winning artists created artwork on site, interacted with visitors, and spoke about how their Native traditions inform their work. Artisans included: Carla Hemlock (Quilting), Babe Hemlock (cradleboards), Natasha Smoke Santiago (pottery), Karen Ann Hoffman (beadwork), Ken Maracle (wampum), Penelope Minner (baskets), and Vincent Bomberly (stone carving).

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“I learned that Native Americans in Oregon had big statues to welcome guests. That statue was really, really big (not to mention magnificent)! But truly great things don't always come in large packages. I will always remember the itsy-bitsy baskets (in the Thaw Gallery)” –Age 12, *Montauk*

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE IROQUOIS INDIAN MUSEUM



## 2012 HIGHLIGHTS

### Research Library

With over 90,000 items in its collection, NYSHA's Research Library is a place where you can discover important moments in history, uncover stories from past generations, and access unique memorabilia.

In 2012, 253 books and 24 manuscripts were added to the NYSHA collection; 275 books, including trade catalogs and rural histories, were added to The Farmers' Museum's collection. Significant 2012 acquisitions included:

- A 1754 deed to land in the Lindsey Patent, Cherry Valley, N.Y., donated by a descendant of the original land owner.
- A New York State railroads collection of photographs, railroad records, and memorabilia. The focus is central New York railroads, particularly the Southern New York Railway (Oneonta and Mohawk Valley Trolley).
- Diaries of John Gifford, 1859 and 1866, outlining work in the Otsego Cotton Mill in Otsego County, including descriptions of wage protests by the weavers, a flood in the factory brook, and technical terminology of the mill business.
- Journal of David Gregor of St. Lawrence County, 1824-34. A detailed account of a Scottish immigrant's travels from Scotland to northern New York.

To make materials more accessible to the public, the Library focused on creating finding aids to its large manuscript collections by placing catalog records online in Pathfinder. In 2012, staff added over 50 of these catalog records. Of note is the Buchanan Hardware

Store collection, processed with a grant from New York State's Documentary Heritage Program. Buchanan Hardware was a business in Richfield Springs, N.Y. and operated during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Library also processed the Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital archive with funds provided by Bassett Healthcare.

Helping customers find materials for their research projects and making the public aware of the depth of the Library's collections is a large part of the Library's activities. During 2012, Library staff hosted two offsite programs, six tours of the Library, three onsite classes, and two displays.

Also, the Library coordinated with the Readex Company by loaning bound volumes of *The Albany Argus* newspaper so that a complete run of the title could be preserved on microfilm.

### LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

- Total 2012 Visitation: 8,000.
- The Library borrowed 294 items through inter-Library loan for our patrons.
- The Library lent 246 items to other Libraries.
- Library staff answered 328 research requests from the public.
- Approximately 6,000 Library books and microfilm were used by our patrons, including 3,170 books that circulated to staff and CGP students.



### Education Department

The Fenimore Art Museum's popular biweekly program Food for Thought brings together curators, artists, and educators with members and visitors for a lunch and lecture. In 2012, we hosted more than 500 participants over 16 Wednesday afternoons.

For the Conference on New York State History, over 200 historians, archivists and museum professionals gathered from June 14-16 at Niagara University. While the conference featured a variety of topics, the panels presenting original research to mark the bicentennial of the War of 1812 were of greatest interest. Keynote Speaker Alan Taylor, Professor of History at the University of California, Davis spoke about his book *The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels and Indian Allies*.

Art by the Lake took place on August 4<sup>th</sup> and attracted almost 700 members, visitors, and artists to what is becoming a signature summer event. Despite the warm weather, the crowd came out to see 14 featured landscape artists, 8 plein air painters rendering the lake's summer landscape, the museum's feature exhibitions, as well as, food and wine tastings.



## Collections Acquisitions 2012

### GIFTS

**World War II memorabilia**, Materials related to military service of Floyd Weeks of Cooperstown, New York. *Gift of Edith Weeks.*

**Photographs**, 1920-1930, Two black and white images of Hurd's Shoe store, Utica, New York. *Gift of The Farmers' Museum.*

**Coverlet**, 1832, Blue and white liberty pattern coverlet woven by A. Davidson, Ithaca, New York, for Almira A. Martin. *Gift of Henry and Rebecca Weil.*

**Cooper Collection**, 19th-century, Paintings, drawings, decorations and other items. Former possessions of James Fenimore Cooper. *Gift of Henry and Rebecca Weil.*

**Photographic Print**, 2002, Homer Benedict by John Gruen. *Gift of John Gruen.*

**Photographic prints**, 19th and 20th-centuries, 32 snapshots of 8 Pine Boulevard and various estates, Cooperstown, New York. *Gift of Margaret Karl.*

**Sculpture**, 1951, '51 International 1-ton Cattle Truck by Lavern Kelley. *Gift of Peggy Parsons.*

**Painting**, 1946, Christopher St, #1 by Ralph Fasanella. *Gift of Jane Ferrara in memory of Ronald A. Ferrara.*

**Sculptures**, The Ant, 1952; Bumblebee; Grasshopper; Cricket, by Henry DiSpirito. *Gift of Yvonne Chamberlain in memory of Robert Chamberlain.*



*Christopher St, #1, 1946, by Ralph Fasanella.*

### PURCHASES

**Print**, 1789, View of the West Bank of the Hudson River.

**Drawings**, ca. 1870, 13 pencil illustrations for James Fenimore Cooper novels by F.O.C. Darley.

**Photographic Print**, ca. 1875, Photograph of George Crum and two unidentified men. Crum, of Native American and African-American descent, is credited with inventing the potato chip in 1853 in Saratoga Springs.

### THAW COLLECTION ACQUISITIONS

**Jar**, ca 1350-1500, Mississippian culture, ceramic. *Gift of Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw.*

**Jar**, ca 1400, Caddoan Culture, ceramic. *Gift of Toby Herst.*

**Basket**, ca 1900, Chitimacha, Louisiana, Cane, natural dyes. *Gift of Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw.*

**Basket**, 1990-2000, Jane Pegahmagabow, Ojibwa, Ontario, Canada. Quill, dyes, bark. *Gift of Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw.*

**Jar**, 1990-2000, Peter Jones, Oneida, Iroquois, Ceramic. *Gift of Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw.*

**Breech Cloth**, ca. 1880, Omaha or Oto, Missouri or Kansas, Velvet cloth, beads, silk ribbon, threads, cotton backing. *Gift of Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw*

**Pipe Tomahawk**, late 18th-century, British made presentation Pipe Tomahawk for the Native American trade, wood, brass, brass wire, iron, bone. *Gift of Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw.*



PHOTO BY ZACH WINNIE

## 32nd New York State History Day

On Monday, April 23, 2012, NYSHA's Research Library, Fenimore Art Museum, and The Farmers' Museum hosted 458 middle and high school students as they shared their award-winning historical scholarship around the theme *Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History*.

Sponsored by NYSHA, the contest is the capstone of New York State's participation in National History Day, the nation's oldest and most highly regarded history program for students in grades 6 through 12. History Day inspires students to learn skills they need to succeed in life and motivates them to achieve a better understanding of our shared cultural heritage.

## 2012 HIGHLIGHTS



### Online Initiatives

#### 2012 Fenimore Art Museum Website Traffic

**311,064 Unique Visitors to website**

**746,356 Page views**

To maximize our online presence, the Fenimore Art Museum launched a new mobile website in May 2012. In just over seven months, it received more than 14,000 unique visits. Mobile sites have increasingly become a necessity in this smartphone age. The mobile website offers people an “on-the-go,” lighter version of our main website that is easy to navigate on a smaller screen - allowing quick access to key information such as hours and directions, as well as, exhibitions and programs. Visits to our mobile site should dramatically rise as mobile and tablet device use increases. To meet the demand, more content will be added in 2013 and beyond.

.....  
“My favorite part of the museum was the Thaw Collection and the amazing baskets that were there. They were so small that I thought no one could ever make that, but I learned about the people who made them and what they were used for.” *-12 year old*  
.....

### Visitation

Stellar exhibitions, memorable special events, and educational programs brought 48,493 visitors from around the region, nation, and world to our picturesque campus on the shores of Otsego Lake.

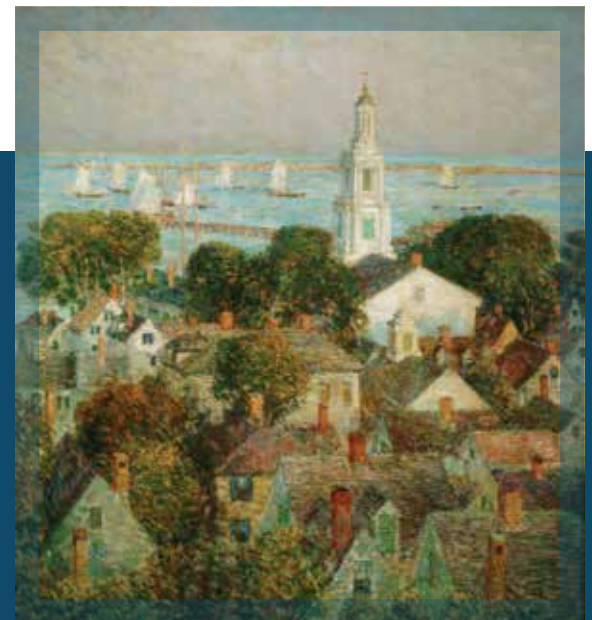
#### 2012 ATTENDANCE BY THE NUMBERS:

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Individual: 21,026  
Adult Group: 689  
Education: 5,057  
Programs: 2,092  
Special Events: 4,521

Library and Other: 11,712  
Under 7: 229  
Members: 3,167

**TOTAL: 48,493**



*Provincetown*, Childe Hassam (1859-1935), 1900, Oil on canvas, 24 1/8 x 22 1/8 in., Arkell Museum at Canajoharie.



# Thank You to our Amazing Volunteers!

In 2012, 184 volunteers contributed 9,977 hours of service to NYSHA! Whether it's assisting at events or helping administrative staff, our volunteers make an impact. The Annual Benefit Gala is made especially exciting through volunteer support. Additionally, Volunteer Docents educate themselves on exhibitions and share their knowledge with Fenimore visitors.

The Research Library's Book Repair Initiative has grown both in volunteer numbers and expertise since its start in 2010. Our volunteers meticulously repair books, maps and ephemera heretofore too fragile for review and make them available to the public. Clara Clack, an experienced teacher of book repair, has volunteered her expertise to other interested volunteers every other Tuesday morning. We hope to see continued expansion of this valuable program.

A special thanks to those volunteers who generously donated 100 hours or more of their time in 2012:

LEE CAMPBELL  
BARBARA CHAMBERLAIN  
CLARA CLACK  
ROBERT CONSIGLI  
HOWARD ELLIOTT  
EILEEN ELLIOTT  
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# FENIMORE SOCIETY

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Many thanks to the members of the Fenimore Society, whose generosity allows us to showcase exceptional art and offer inspirational programs in a picturesque setting. Your support and involvement makes a memorable impression.

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*“From the outside, the Log House looked tiny, but the Log House was pretty big. I can still remember the exciting cold chill run up my spine as I walked in the door.” –Age 9, Cooperstown*

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# ANNUAL GALA



PHOTO BY CARTER KEGELMAN PICTURED: SHELLEY GRAHAM AND JOAN KEGELMAN

## A Magical Night at the Museum!

The 9th Annual Benefit Gala, *A Magical Night at the Museum*, celebrated the magic of our treasured museums. The night itself was one to remember, as guests experienced the Fenimore Art Museum as never before by dining in the museum's galleries. Proceeds benefit our strong educational programs. Many thanks to the Gala Committee led by co-chairs Shelley Graham and Joan Kegelman, whose vision makes the Gala possible.

A special thanks to our Wizard, Enchanter, Magician, and Charmer sponsors.

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December 31, 2012

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Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 6,537,799
Receivable on investment security sold	954,516
Investments	30,151,178
Accounts receivable	41,671
Contributions receivable	156,523
Prepaid expenses	124,855
Inventories	263,064
Land, buildings, and equipment	5,627,342
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 43,856,948</b>

## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

### Liabilities:

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 162,573
Payable to The Farmers' Museum	113,598
Deferred revenue	169,889
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>446,060</b>

### Net Assets:

Unrestricted:	
Undesignated	6,367,859
Designated for investing	2,546,712
Temporarily restricted	
Accumulation of endowment earnings	31,513,912
Other	276,809
Permanently restricted	2,705,596
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>43,310,888</b>

**Total liabilities and net assets \$ 43,410,888**

*The New York State Historical Association is a private, non-governmental, non-profit educational organization that is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a 501 (c)(3).*

*Gifts to NYSHA are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowable by law.*

*For more information, NYSHA's IRS form 990 can be viewed at [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org).*