

CURRICULUM PACKET

Winter 2007



H.E. Boucher Mfg. Company, *Flying Cloud*, 1930, ship model, gift of George Jordan.

Models as Muse:

Roderick Buchanan, Christine Hiebert, Jennifer and Kevin McCoy, and David Opdyke (January 27–March 18)

Maritime history meets contemporary art (pages 2–9)



Timothy H. Sullivan, *Entrance to Black Canon, Colorado River, From Above*, 1871, albumen print, collection of Stephen C. Sherrill.

The Wheeler Survey:

Nineteenth Century Photographs by Timothy O'Sullivan and William Bell (December 23–March 8)

Early images of the American West (pages 10–11)



Kara Walker, *Alabama Loyalists Greeting the Federal Gun-Boats*, 2005, offset lithograph with screenprint, purchased as the gift of Katherine and Stephen C. Sherrill.

Kara Walker: Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated)

& From the Front Line (January 9–April 15)

Reinterpreting The Civil War & the African American experience (pages 12–14)

ADDISON GALLERY OF AMERICAN ART EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Phillips Academy, Main Street, Andover, MA

Julie Bernson, Director of Education & Rebecca Spolarich, Education Fellow

Contact (978) 749-4037 or rspolarich@andover.edu

FREE GROUP TOURS for up to 55 students are available on a first-come, first-served basis:

TUESDAY-FRIDAY, 8AM-4PM

PUBLIC MUSEUM HOURS: TUESDAY-SATURDAY 10AM-5PM & SUNDAY 1-5PM

Admission to the museum is free!

Arranging a Museum Visit

This Curriculum Packet is designed to help you connect the Addison Gallery's exhibitions with your classroom curricula and the **Massachusetts Department of Education's Curriculum Frameworks**. Museum visits and related activities developed for this packet address numerous subject areas that are often cross-disciplinary and therefore can combine two or more frameworks.

The Addison Education Department is glad to assist you in matching exhibition content with the frameworks listed below or others you may wish to use. We can also help you organize your museum visit and pre- or post-visit activities to correspond with your grade level and current classroom topics in **English & language arts, science, history & social studies, maritime history, and the visual & performing arts**.

How to Arrange a Class Visit

- Decide which exhibition(s) is/are most relevant for your class or group to see based on this packet, viewing the exhibitions, and/or talking with education department staff.
- Select several possible dates and times to bring your class to the gallery. (Tuesdays through Fridays, 8 AM – 4 PM). Visits, ranging from 45 – 90 minutes, may be accompanied by an art making or creative writing activity. Up to 55 students can be accommodated in the museum at one time.
- At least two weeks in advance and preferably more, contact **Rebecca Spolarich** at **(978) 749-4037** or **rspolarich@andover.edu** to schedule the visit and discuss ideas for guided tours and related activities that are particularly suited to your group.

How to prepare your class for a visit to the Addison

- Discuss the visit with your class before you come. This packet and a pre-visit to the museum can help you inform students about what they will see and do on their trip.
- Additional information about the artists and exhibitions is always available on request.
- In-class visits (usually including slide presentation and discussion) can sometimes be arranged.
- Mention that students will need to keep in mind: stay with the group, raise hands to ask or answer questions, no touching the artwork or the walls, no running, no food or gum.

What to expect when you are at the museum

- When you come in the front door of the gallery, we will greet you and direct students where to hang their coats and gather.
- After a brief introduction in the lobby, we will bring your students through the exhibition(s) of your choice. Students will be asked to discuss, interact with, and raise questions about the artwork that they see. We strongly encourage teachers to engage in the discussion to strengthen the connection between classroom and museum learning.
- If arranged in advance, the visit can conclude with an art making or writing activity.

Making the most of your visit

- Pre- and post-visit activities are the best way to get the most out of your museum visit.
- Project and discussion ideas provided in the Art & Writing Activities section of this packet will help you determine the best approach for the age level and subject of your class. (If this packet does not include information relevant to your class, we can help you make connections.)
- We are pleased to assist you in developing and executing extended projects that connect the classroom and the museum.

Models as Muse:

Roderick Buchanan, Christine Hiebert, Jennifer and Kevin McCoy, and David Opdyke



R. C. Anderson, *Santa Maria*, 1932, ship model, gift of William Cochran.

Why do model makers meticulously labor to immortalize the great sea vessels of the world's past?

As modelers – who may spend up to several thousand hours recreating a ship on a miniature scale – would claim, a ship is far more than a form of transportation. It is an intricate work of engineering, design, and beauty. It is a silent but key witness to the discoveries, wars, commerce, and peoples of a nation. It is a storyteller.

Featuring the art of five contemporary artists in addition to the Addison's famed ship model collection, *Models as Muse* illuminates the important role ships – and their models – play in American life, past and present. Using sculpture, video, drawing, and toy miniatures, Roderick Buchanan, Christine

Hiebert, David Opdyke, and Jennifer and Kevin McCoy respond to various subjects evoked by the models including the changing nature of industry and economic development, the dangers and curiosities of life aboard ships, and the engineering and innovation involved in ship design. From Opdyke's miniature scenes of undersea shipwrecks to Hiebert's abstract wall drawings, this exhibition promises to inspire young minds to think critically and creatively about the symbolism of some of the most remarkable sailing vessels in United States history.

Why does the Addison have a ship model collection?

The Addison's collection was assembled by museum founder Thomas Cochran seventy-five years ago with the ambition to teach young people about "the American maritime experience." Composed of twenty-four models vessels such as Columbus' *Santa Maria*, the pilgrims' *Mayflower*, and nineteenth-century high-speed merchant clippers like Boston's *Flying Cloud*, all of the models are built ¼": 1' in scale.

What might students do during their visit?

- trace the development of wooden ship design and function from the fifteenth through twentieth centuries
- relate the ships to events and innovations in American history, industry, and technology
- imagine a day in the life of a sailor
- learn how concepts of transportation, communication, and time were different 100+ years ago
- consider how maritime developments have affected the environment and the economy
- use math conversions to estimate the actual sizes of the ships
- examine the scientific principles behind ship design

Explore themes in *Models as Muse* →

SHIPS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

United State's history starts with a sailing ship. Beginning with Columbus' discovery of the Americas aboard the *Santa Maria* in 1492, one can trace 400 years of the nation's development through the stories of its wooden sailing vessels. Designed to serve many aspects of the country's economic growth – to transport goods and people, to fish and whale, to protect its harbors, and to relay information – ships traveled between states and countries all over the globe, creating a social and environmental impact on communities near and far, coastal and inland.

The fishing and whaling industries of New England played major roles in shaping the United States economy. Of local fishing in the late seventeenth-century one maritime historian wrote, "Puritan Massachusetts derives her ideals from a sacred book; her wealth and power from the sacred cod," (Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts*). In addition to the productive fishing industry, whaling supplied oil for candles and lamps as well as baleen which simulated modern plastic. Exemplifying the local whaling industry is the *Charles W. Morgan* which was built in New Bedford in 1841. Though her construction cost \$52,000, this lucrative vessel brought in over 54,000 barrels of oil and 152,000 pounds of baleen during her lifetime – a total worth of over \$1.4 million! Voyages lasted 1–4 years, carrying New England whalers as far as Hawaii and Alaska.



Edgar B. Hammond, *Charles W. Morgan*, 1931, ship model, gift of Dr. Henry T. Lee.

- How does the structure of the *Charles W. Morgan* serve the ship's function? Where did they process and store the whale oil and baleen?
- An average sperm whale grows up to 50 feet in length. This model of the *Charles W. Morgan* measures 26 ¼". If a ¼" = 1', how does the length of a whale compare to that of the ship?
- How did whaling create encounters with people from different continents and cultures? What kinds of interactions do you imagine New Englanders had with peoples in Hawaii and Alaska?
- Why did whaling become illegal in the United States in 1986? How have we replaced our need for whale oil to light lamps and baleen to provide flexible strength?

A CONTEMPORARY RESPONSE

The artwork of **David Opdyke** (b. 1969) explores the accumulating environmental and economic effects of ship use. In *Dredge*, Opdyke created a miniature undersea landscape littered with shipping containers and wrecked vessels from the *Mayflower* to the *Titanic* to the battleship *Enterprise*. His vision of the bottom of the ocean is informed by the hundreds of years of reports of sunken ships, lost cargo and lives, and the destruction of coral reefs and other marine habitats. The green murkiness and repeating sharp angles of the artwork cast an ominous pall to this graveyard of ships and their sunken treasures.

- From the wrecked ships in *Dredge*, what can you tell about the evolution of ship transport? How can you tell the older ships from the newer ones?
- What do you think David Opdyke used to make *Dredge*? Why do you think he made all of the ships and rocks the same color? What is the resulting mood he created?



David Opdyke, detail of *Dredge*, 2007, mixed media, courtesy of the artist.

SHIPBUILDING

The maritime economy also impacted life on land. One industry which tied land and sea together was shipbuilding. Shipbuilders established work sites in coastal cities where they had access to the sea, skilled laborers, and materials. This industry was central to the Massachusetts economy, centering on the Lower Merrimack where the greatest shipbuilding center of New England was located – constructing at least 1,115 vessels between 1793 and 1815 alone.

- *What Massachusetts cities do you know that once were shipbuilding centers?*
- *As the local shipbuilding industries died out, what industries took their place to keep people employed?*



Roderick Buchanan, still from *Shrinking the Clyde*, 2007, digital video, courtesy of the artist.

A CONTEMPORARY RESPONSE

Roderick Buchanan (b. 1965) of Scotland explores the deteriorating shipbuilding industry as it relates to the River Clyde – arguably the most important river for shipbuilding and trade in the British Empire. Changes in the shipbuilding industry have altered both the local economy and landscape. In his video installation, *Shrinking the Clyde*, Buchanan films the river and its shores from the sides of the traveling *Waverly*, an active pleasure steamboat. By projecting the view from each side of the river onto television screens in the gallery, Buchanan gives you the feeling and view of riding on the ship.

- *Why has the shipbuilding industry declined over the last 100 years? How are goods and people transported?*
- *Describe the kinds of communities you observe along the banks of the River Clyde. Why did they develop this way?*

A DAY IN THE LIFE

*"Down on the main deck/ workin' at the pumps,/ there's a starboard watch,/ just longing for their bunks./
Lookin' off to windward,/ they see a great swell,/ they're wishin' that the second mate would/ strike, strike the bell"*

- Refrain from "Strike the Bell" a traditional sea chantey sung by sailors

Why were sailors anxious for their mates to 'strike the bell'?

What was life like aboard a sailing ship?

Who were the people at sea and what did they do?

What dangers did sailors encounter?

Life aboard ships could be crowded or luxurious, rigorous or dull, exhilarating or lonely, but it was always different from life on shore. A seaman's experience was shaped by his role on deck, the type of vessel he traveled on, and the distance and purpose of his journey. Whether serving as a captain in the navy or as a crew boy shuttling gun powder up to the gun decks, sailor's concepts of time and space were radically different from our own.

Imagine life aboard the **Mayflower**. In 1620 the ship – whose length was less than that of 2.5 school buses! – left Plymouth, England, with 102 passengers aboard and traveled for 66 days across the Atlantic Ocean! During the voyage one woman gave birth, one man fell overboard and was rescued, another two died of illness, and the ship suffered a broken mast in a tumultuous storm.

- *What items would the Pilgrims have taken on board in order to survive for two months at sea? What kinds of food would they have eaten?*
- *How much privacy did the passengers and crew have from one another?*
- *Why is the **Mayflower** equipped with cannons?*
- *How does travel aboard the **Mayflower** compare to how you travel?*



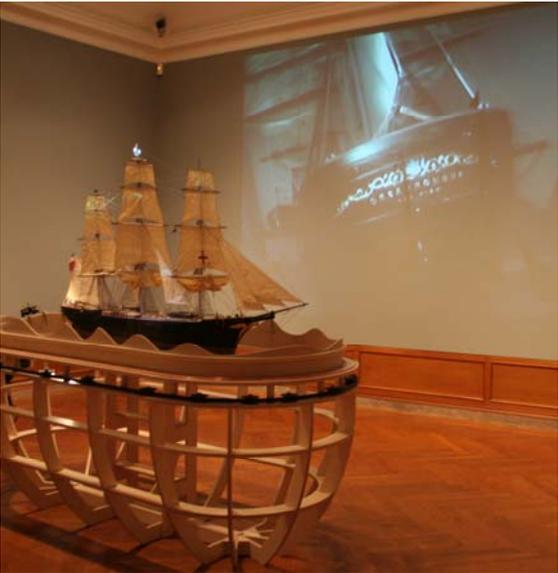
L.A. Pritchard, *Mayflower*, 1931, ship model, gift of Adolph G. Wigren.

As the story of the *Mayflower* shows, danger was an inherent part of any seafarer's life. In addition to constantly changing weather patterns and the unpredictability of the sea, sailors confronted the dangers posed by other seamen. Though none of the Addison's model ships are of pirate ships, some of the vessels represented were used to pursue and capture pirate, enemy, and slave ships. A vessel type called a privateer was a civilian ship converted into a naval vessel to hunt down enemy boats and confiscate stolen cargo. One such vessel, the *America*, began her life as a fishing vessel and was converted into a privateer in the War of 1812. Her top deck was removed, she was armed with 20 guns and her crew increased from 35 to 150. She captured over 27 British vessels, reclaiming over a million dollars in goods.



Capt. H. Percy Ashley, *America*, 1936, ship model, museum purchase.

- *In addition to the cannons, what else would have been added to the America to change her from a fishing vessel to a privateer?*
- *Images of ships, sailors, and pirates are prevalent in the media and in literature. What perceptions do you have of sailors and their lives? How can you determine if your perceptions are accurate?*



Kevin & Jennifer McCoy, *High Seas*, 2007, sculpture and video installation at the Addison Gallery of American Art, courtesy of the artist.

A CONTEMPORARY RESPONSE

In their artwork *High Seas*, Jennifer and Kevin McCoy (b. 1968 and 1967) simulate the sensation of being aboard a vessel in rough waters using camera, video projection, and one of the Addison's ship models. At the center of their work is the *Dreadnought*, a packet ship that transported goods and passengers long distances but which ultimately wrecked off the tip of South America in 1869. Their video projection allows you to imagine the experience on board during a severe storm at sea.

- *Would you have the courage and strength to climb a 100-foot mast and balance yourself on a tight rope to haul in the heavy sails while the sea tossed your ship up and down?*
- *What role on a ship do you think you are equipped for? A captain? first mate? cabin boy? doctor? cook?*
- *Why do you think that women were rarely among a ship's crew?*

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Throughout maritime history we can find the American impulse to continually improve upon ship design and performance to keep pace with competing nations. As economic needs shifted, materials depleted, and new energy sources discovered, ship design evolved accordingly. Perhaps the best example of an American shipwright's ability to meld form and function effectively was the development of clipper ships. Clippers exemplified the desire for speed – often at the cost of safety – by streamlining the hull to extremes and raising the sails to dangerous heights. The amazingly fast clipper ships were used to keep the United States competitive in trade and war, for enforcing slave trade laws, and for coast guard patrol.

What do the developments in ship design reveal about 19th century history and economics?

What principles of physics were used to develop faster and faster ships?

How is the desire for speed reflected in contemporary American products, activities, and means of transportation?



H.E. Boucher Mfg. Company, *Flying Cloud*, 1930, ship model, gift of George Jordan.

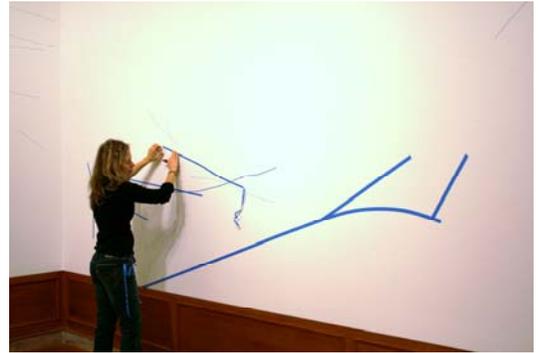
The most famous extreme clipper ship was Boston's *Flying Cloud* which was built in 1851 during the California Gold Rush. At this time the fastest way to California was not across the land but by sea. The *Flying Cloud* secured its place in history when it completed the trip from New York to San Francisco in 89 days, a world-record that was unbroken until 1989!

- *Why do you think the model maker chose to depict the **Flying Cloud** on the ocean with its sails up?*
- *How do the hull shape and sails of the **Flying Cloud** differ from other ships in the Addison collection? What effect do those differences have on the ships' function?*

A CONTEMPORARY RESPONSE

In her room-sized wall drawing, *Slack Away*, artist **Christine Hiebert** (b. 1960) creates free-flowing abstractions to suggest the forces at work in the movement of sea vessels. Using the airy space of the white wall together with lines drawn from blue painter's tape – her unique medium – she explores the sensations of slack and tension through curved and straight forms which hint at the rigging and movement associated with ships. Covering the walls of an entire gallery, the drawing envelops the viewer and gently guides his or her own movement through the space.

- *The movement of ships is created by manipulating the angles of wind and water. How does Hiebert manipulate the blue tape to convey the idea of movement?*
- *How does Hiebert's drawing relate to the lines of the ship models?*
- *What visual or physical sensations might you experience aboard a ship? Which of these sensations can you connect with the lines in Hiebert's wall drawing?*



Christine Hiebert installing *Slack Away* at the Addison Gallery of American Art.

ACTIVITIES for the museum or classroom

1. **Local maritime history** Chart the effects of maritime history in your area. Hint: Even inland towns are important in ship history; Andover provided shipbuilding materials (trees!) and Lawrence produced goods (textiles) for export.
2. **Giants and miniatures** Ask students to bring in things they played with as children that are very small, i.e. dollhouse furniture, toy trains and cars, etc. Discuss why we make so many things in miniature and then why there are many myths in our culture about extreme scale (i.e. stories of Jack and the Beanstock, Gulliver's Travels, etc.). Create your own story using scale as a theme. Option: Create drawings or a diorama to illustrate the story.
3. **Collaboration and poetry** In Christine Hiebert's wall drawing each line prompts the next. Write a collaborative poem about the ships. Have one student write a line and pass the poem to the next student to continue it.
4. **Write a sailor's journal** Select a ship in the Addison collection or one you are studying in school and choose a crewmember to personify. Write a first-hand account of one of your ship's missions noting the seas you travel and ports you visit, what you do and eat on board, and what it feels like to live on a ship.
5. **Build a ship model** Using any materials at hand, build a model that uses available information about an historic vessel or a ship you design yourself for your own purposes.
6. **Forces of Nature** Chart a graph or make a drawing or sculpture that expresses the physical dynamics of ship movement effected by water and wind.
7. **Models as muse** Select a ship from the Addison collection whose story or style most intrigues you. Create an artwork – a drawing, a video, a wall drawing, or a sculpture – that responds to some aspect of the history, construction, or aesthetics of the ship.

Evolution of American Sailing Ships in the Collection

1492

1500

1550

next page

SANTA MARIA

- ⚓ Merchant vessel built in 1480
- ⚓ Built to maximize cargo capacity
- ⚓ Chartered by Christopher Columbus in 1492 for his voyage to America upon which he discovered the New World



MAYFLOWER

- ⚓ Merchant vessel built in 1600
- ⚓ Built as a cargo ship for trade between England and other European countries
- ⚓ Chartered by Pilgrims for voyage from Plymouth, England, to New England landing at Cape Cod in 1620

1700

1750

1800

HANNAH

- ⚓ Fishing schooner built in 1770
- ⚓ Initially designed for speed, agility, and cargo capacity to meet fishing needs
- ⚓ Later converted into a block runner during the Revolutionary War in 1775 because of her incredible speed
- ⚓ Became one of the first ships of the United States Navy and also served during the Civil War



ANN MCKIM

- ⚓ Original clipper built in 1833
- ⚓ First original clipper ship; inspired by the innovative design of the Baltimore Clippers
- ⚓ First ship designed for speed: sharp bow, expansive sail plan, and concave hull section at bow and stern to cut through waves
- ⚓ Streamlined design and speed appealed to slavers who were illegally transporting slaves

Ship Models from the collection of the Addison Gallery of American Art: *Santa Maria* by R.C. Anderson, 1932; *Mayflower* by L.A. Pritchard, 1931; *Hannah* by Walter C. Leavitt, 1932; *Ann McKim* by Walter Simonds, c.1931, *Corsair* by Horace E. Boucher Mfg. Co., 1930; *Columbia* by Bryant K. Rogers with Frederick W. Snow, 1923; *Charles W. Morgan* by Edgar B. Hammond, 1931; *Flying Cloud* by Horace E. Boucher Mfg. Co., 1930; *America* by H. Percy Ashley.

of the Addison Gallery of American Art, 1480-1923

1600

1650

back a page

CORSAIR

Steam yacht built in 1899
Built for financier JP Morgan as a pleasure yacht equipped with both sails and propellers
Chartered by the United States Navy and equipped to serve in World Wars I and II

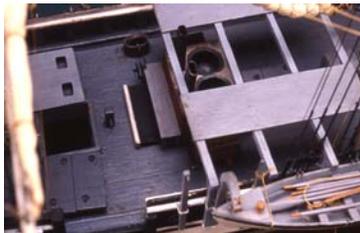


COLUMBIA

Fishing schooner built in 1923 with dories for the daily hauls
Exemplifies an “extreme Gloucester fishing schooner” with yacht-like characteristics for speed
Speed important as fish was packed on ice and hurried back to shore

1850

1900



FLYING CLOUD

Extreme American clipper built by the renowned shipwright Donald McKay of East Boston in 1851
Her narrow hull and large sail area made her one of the fastest ships ever known
Served in California Gold Rush, twice making the voyage from New York to San Francisco around the tip of South America in a record 89 days!

CHARLES W. MORGAN

- 🚢 Whaler built at New Bedford in 1841
- 🚢 Designed to stay at sea for 3-4 years and for processing and storing the whale blubber and whale baleen on board
- 🚢 Brought in 54, 483 barrels of oil and 152,931 pounds of whale baleen, a combined worth of over \$1.4 billion!
- 🚢 Enshrined at Mystic, Connecticut and is the only whale boat still in existence

AMERICA

- 🚢 Schooner yacht built in 1851
- 🚢 Designed wide and shallow for speed
- 🚢 In 1851 outperformed fifteen English yachts in the world's leading yacht race, which then became known as the America's Cup
- 🚢 Became a blockade runner during the Civil War and then a training ship at the Naval Academy at Annapolis, MD, where she is currently moored



RESOURCES

Books

Harlow, Frederick Pease. *The Making of a Sailor (or Sea Life Aboard a Yankee Square Rigger)*. (New York: Dover Publications, 1988). A first-person narrative of life aboard a sailing ship.

Kemp, Peter. *The Encyclopedia of Ships and Seafaring*. (Reference International Publishers Limited. 1980).
Comprehensive reference information and history on ship types, specific ships, and acclaimed seaman.

Labaree, William and others. *America and the Sea: A Maritime History*. (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1998).
Excellent overview of United States maritime history, including primary documents and social histories.

Museums

Peabody Essex Museum <www.pem.org> PEM, located in the heart of a Massachusetts shipbuilding and merchant port, has a large collection of maritime art and ship models built to various scales. Education tours are available and images of all items in the collection are available on their website.
East India Square, Salem MA 01970 (978) 745-9500 X3060

USS Constitution Museum <www.usconstitutionmuseum.org> Located in the navy docks near the mooring of the **USS Constitution**, the museum has excellent interactive exhibitions on ship life and history. Daily tours of the **USS Constitution** are also available.
Charlestown Navy Yard, MA 02129 (617) 426-1812

Essex Shipbuilding Museum <www.essexshipbuildingmuseum.org> Museum dedicated to the history of Essex's shipbuilding industry specializing in two-masted schooners.
66 Main Street, Essex MA 01929 (978) 768-7541

Mystic Seaport <www.mysticseaport.org> Features several historic wooden ships including the **Charles W. Morgan** and a preservation shipyard.
75 Greenmanville Avenue, Mystic CT 06355 (860) 572-5315

Web

Most of the museum's cited above have excellent web-resources, including education information and history. Here are a few specific sites to review.

All Hands on Deck! <www.allhandsondeck.org> Interactive educational site based around the **USS Constitution**. Includes a variety of curriculum-based activities and lesson plans on maritime culture.

Mayflower History Site <www.mayflowerhistory.com> Comprehensive site on the voyage of the **Mayflower**. Features primary documents and genealogy exercises.

Addison Ship Model Website <shipwiki.wikispaces.com> Phillips Academy's Oliver Wendell Holmes Library provides a database which outlines the history of each ship in the Addison's collection.

Video

Master and Commander. (Universal Studios. 2003).
The story of life aboard a British frigate during the Napoleonic Wars.

NOVA: Arctic Passage. (PBS Home Video. 2006).
Tells the history of a ship's quests to find a passage through the Arctic Circle. Available on the PBS website along with online and printable teacher materials.

Legendary Shipwrecks. (National Geographic. 1999).
Three-part series focusing on epic shipwrecks including ancient merchant ships. Available on the PBS website.

The Wheeler Survey: Nineteenth-Century Photographs by Timothy O'Sullivan and William Bell

Why did the government send teams of scientists and photographers to study the lands in the West?

What features of the West are highlighted in the Wheeler Survey photographs?

How did photography contribute to westward expansion?

INTRODUCTION

The fifty photographs in this exhibition chronicle the "Geographical Surveys West of the 100th Meridian" – expeditions funded by the United States Army and led by Lieutenant George M. Wheeler between the years 1871–74 to investigate the topography and inhabitants of the Southwest. Despite cumbersome equipment and harsh weather conditions, Timothy O'Sullivan and William Bell documented the discoveries of the surveys, creating some of the earliest photographic images of the West. Produced to promote national interest in westward expansion, these photographs are stunning examples of early photographic technology which also convey the spirit of Manifest Destiny.

Why photograph the West?

The West was entirely new to Timothy O'Sullivan and William Bell who explored canyons, deserts, and Native American settlements along with topographers, geologists, surveyors, meteorologists, zoologists, and other scientists to assess potential uses of the land. The Wheeler Survey was organized to map the region, record its physical features, note the lands which promised mineral, agricultural, and water resources, discern practical railroad routes and military sites, and ascertain the whereabouts and nature of indigenous inhabitants.

- *How does Bell's photograph, Perched Rock, Rocker Creek, AZ reflect an interest in scientific documentation? How is his composition also artistic?*
- *Why does Bell include a human figure in his composition?*
- *How would this photograph be useful to a geologist? a topographer? a surveyor?*



William Bell, *Perched Rock, Rocker Creek, AZ*, 1872, albumen print, collection of Stephen C. Sherrill.

What makes the photographs so beautiful?

In addition to documenting landforms and native inhabitants for research purposes, Lt. Wheeler asked Timothy O'Sullivan and William Bell to portray the natural beauty of the West. Upon seeing the albums and reproductions which were distributed in the East, Americans were awed by the size and grandeur of the canyons, mountains, and deserts in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, and California.

- *What details does Bell focus on in this composition? How does he use light and dark and what effect does this achieve?*
- *How do you imagine a Bostonian of the 1870s would have reacted to this image?*
- *What sensations does this vista inspire in you?*



William Bell, *Canon of Kanab Wash, Colorado River, Looking South*, 1872, albumen print, collection of Stephen C. Sherrill.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What ideas, myths, or peoples are generally associated with the American West? How do you think these earliest photographs of the West contributed to these associations?
2. What is Manifest Destiny? What interests and concerns may Americans and Native Americans have had about westward expansion?
3. What about these photographs might have encouraged settlement in the West? Would you like to move to these areas? Why or why not?
4. Survey teams hauled unwieldy photographic equipment over miles of unpaved, treacherous territory for months at a time. Do the photographs reflect the obstacles of their environment and available technology? Why or why not?
5. How are Native Americans represented in the photographs? What do the images show/not show about their culture?
6. Before the Wheeler Survey, Timothy O'Sullivan worked as a Civil War photographer. How do the Wheeler Survey photographs compare to the photographs and other images in the *Kara Walker* and *From the Front Line* exhibitions? How do the Wheeler Survey's government sponsored images compare with the popular media images?
7. How do the survey photographs compare to the model ships as representations of United States history and culture?

ACTIVITIES for in the museum or classroom

1. Explore a familiar place with your camera. Try to convey the character of the environment through your images thinking carefully about what details you will focus on and how you would like people to understand the place.
2. Reflect on the relationship between humans and nature as seen in the Wheeler Survey photographs. Write a poem or story to express your findings.
3. Create a travel album documenting a journey you have made. Arrange photographs and souvenirs together with writing to relate the breadth of your experience.
4. Research what else was explored and documented during the Wheeler Surveys (such as geology, topography, zoology, mineralogy) and how this information was used by the United States Army and government.

RESOURCES

Harper's Weekly: The American West <thewest.harperweek.com> Explore the role of this popular periodical in defining the West during the nineteenth century. Images and text available online.

Snyder, Joel. *One/Many: Western American Survey Photographs by Bell and O'Sullivan*. (Chicago, IL: The David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago, 2006). Catalogue published in conjunction with a Chicago museum's exhibition of Timothy O'Sullivan and William Bell's photographs similar to the Addison's current exhibition. Includes images and essays.

The West <www.pbs.org/weta/thewest> Extend class discussion about westward expansion with lesson plans on this extensive PBS website linked to the related television program (available on video). Includes a lesson on using western photographs and paintings with middle and high school students.

Truettner, William H., ed. *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier*. (Washington: The Smithsonian Institution Press and the National Museum of American Art, 1991). The catalogue for an enlightening exhibition which critiques the startling role of art in the evolution of western mythology.

Kara Walker: Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated)

and

From the Front Line



Kara Walker, *Exodus of Confederates from Atlanta*, from *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (annotated)*, 2005, offset lithograph with screen-print, gift of Katherine and Stephen C. Sherrill.

INTRODUCTION

Artist Kara Walker (b.1969) reinvents the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century art form of the silhouette to boldly address issues of race, representation, sexuality, and violence in the American past. In this series of fifteen large-scale, lithograph-silkscreen prints Walker questions the accuracy of popular media's representations of people and events during the Civil War – particularly the experiences of African Americans – and presents a revision of this divisive and resounding era in United States history. Intentionally provocative, the artist's images will compel students to confront the themes of slavery, war, freedom, and stereotyping in a new light and to look more critically at the role of the mass media in American culture.

Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War

In each print Kara Walker superimposes her silhouettes of African American figures over Civil War illustrations from *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War*. This two-volume book published in the late 1860s attempted to comprehensively relate the events of the Civil War, referencing illustrations and reports produced in *Harper's Weekly*, a popular periodical of the time. Walker draws attention to the invisibility of African Americans in the *Harper's* illustrations and interjects her silhouetted figures in various scenes to construct complex dialogues between two United States histories – the seen and the unseen. The stories Walker's silhouetted figures tell, however, are quite different than those seen in the *Harper's* depictions. Ambiguous and sometimes violent or sexualized, the figures remind the viewer of the many aspects of United States history that are either ignored or censored by popular media which continues to be the main source of news and information today.

- *From where do you get the majority of your local and world news?*
- *Describe the kinds of information these sources typically report on (i.e. town issues, crime, health, sports, etc.). What news do these sources not report on?*
- *Do news sources always consider both sides of the story?*

Kara Walker and the Silhouette

Moving from the West Coast to Atlanta, Georgia as a teenager, Kara Walker experienced an identity upheaval as the lasting effects of slavery and racism in the South conflicted with her perception of herself, her race, and her gender. As an African American woman born in the late twentieth century, Walker has developed a way to challenge history and racial concerns through her art. Asking all Americans to confront the many evils of slavery often suppressed or ignored, Walker cleverly employs the silhouette – an all-black portrait profile – to construct graphic narratives relating the African American experience in antebellum America. Not commonly accessible to African Americans during this period, the silhouette makes for an ironic, powerful vehicle through which Walker composes her provocative visual statements.

- *Why do you think Kara Walker choose the Civil War as the subject of this series of prints?*
- *How do Walker's figures express an alternative experience of an historical event?*
- *Why do you think that Kara Walker uses the silhouette as her preferred art form?*
- *What stereotypes of African Americans are apparent in Walker's images? How do the images counter or reinforce these stereotypes?*

A Closer Look: "Deadbrook after the Battle of Ezra's Church."

This illustration from *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War* depicts a ghastly scene of fallen soldiers after a battle in a woodland area. One man's body floats down a river while another lays strewn on the riverbank. A part of the scene yet simultaneously detached, a silhouetted young woman appears to float while bending over the figures, her body bare and arms outstretched. Her hair is tied in tight knots and her mouth rests agape but expressionless. She seems to gesture toward the dead soldiers but her message is unclear.



Kara Walker, *Deadbrook after the Battle of Ezra's Church* from *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated)*, offset lithograph with screen-print, gift of Katherine and Stephen C. Sherrill.

- *What can you tell about the historic event being illustrated? What does the illustrator show/not show you about the event?*
- *Compare and contrast the action and mood in the silhouette and the illustration. How does the silhouette change or enhance the mood and understanding of the event?*
- *What significance does the color black have in Kara Walker's artwork?*

From the Front Line

To complement Kara Walker's work the Addison presents *From the Front Line*, a selection of photographs, illustrations, drawings, and paintings that provide alternative images of the Civil War. Illustrators Winslow Homer and Thomas Nast's depictions for *Harper's Weekly* include scenes of camp life, soldiers in battle, women's experiences on the home front, and stereotypical images of African Americans involved in the war.



Winslow Homer, *The Army of the Potomac - Our Outlying Picket in the Woods*, 1862, wood engraving on wove paper, gift of Mrs. Frederick P. Taft.

- *What types of peoples and subjects were pictured in Harper's Weekly? And which are not?*
- *Compare and contrast how men and women are pictured and characterized. What about whites and African Americans?*
- *What do you think the editors of Harper's Weekly wanted their readers to know and think about the Civil War?*

Revising History: Kara Walker & *Models as Muse*

Kara Walker prompts us to question preconceived notions of history and identity in her art, but her philosophy can apply to all forms of history-telling, including the exhibitions in the Addison Gallery. For instance, the ships in *Models as Muse* were originally assembled to illustrate American maritime history, but a careful inspection reveals an incomplete story.

- *What aspects of American maritime history are not represented in the collection? Consider Native American vessels, slave ships, pirate ships, battleships, etc.*
- *Why did the museum founder choose to include – and not include – particular ships in the collection?*

Final Reflections

- *What aspects of United States history may be the most challenging to relate accurately? Why?*
- *How would you compare contemporary media images and reporting to that of the Civil War era?*
- *How does bias in the media create and perpetuate people's understandings of the world and its people?*

ACTIVITIES for in the museum or classroom

1. Choose an image from a contemporary media source relating a news event that is important to you. What message does the image alone convey? What aspects of the story may be untold in this context? Provide additional information about the event by creating an artwork or piece of writing which adds your perspective to the news story.
2. Select a memory from your past that involved you and at least one other person. Write a narrative of this experience first from your perspective and then from the other person's. How does his/her experience of the same moment differ from yours? Why? Option: Ask the person involved to do the same and exchange your narratives.
3. What people or events are newsworthy in your local area? Become a photojournalist and research your topic. Compose your story and support it with photographs. Consider how you will present the many sides of your story.
4. Research a critical moment in United States history solely through visual representations of it in popular media sources, i.e. the Vietnam War, lynching, the bombing of the World Trade Center, etc. Do the sources provide an accurate and comprehensive telling of the event? Explain in an essay.
5. Create a diagram/list outlining various contemporaneous perspectives of the Civil War (a Union soldier, a slave owner, a runaway slave, a Confederate soldier's wife, etc.) and consider the ways these people experienced the same event differently through a narrative, dialogues, or a play.

RESOURCES

Art21 <www.pbs.org/art21/artists/walker/index.html> Website devoted to contemporary art featuring a biography, multiple interviews, and film clips covering several periods of Walker's work.

Conversations with Contemporary Artists <www.moma.org/onlineprojects/conversations/kw_f.html> Website of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City featuring images and information related to the artist.

Culture Shock <www.pbs.org/wgbh/cultureshock> PBS site which asks students and teachers to consider the ethical advantages and disadvantages of using controversial art as a learning tool. Includes a helpful essay titled, "Using Art and Controversy to Teach History."

Dixon, Annette. *Kara Walker: Pictures from Another Time*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Museum of Art, 2002). An exhibition catalogue featuring several images, essays, and an in-depth interview with the artist.

Ethnic Notions. (California Newsreel. 2004). Film outlining the origins and evolution of African American stereotypes in American popular culture.

Guerney, Alfred H., ed. *Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War*. (Avenel, NJ: Gramercy Books, 1996). A reprinting of the 1860s publication by the editors of *Harper's Weekly* magazine.

Jenkins, Wilbert L. *Climbing up to Glory: A Short History of African Americans During the Civil War and Reconstruction*. (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 2002). The author relates the journey of average African Americans as they struggled to reinvent their lives following the Civil War and the abolition of slavery.

Yacovone, Donald. *Freedom's Journey: African American Voices of the Civil War*. (Chicago, IL: Lawrence Hill Books, 2004). A compilation of writings by African Americans who lived during the Civil War.