From Sea to Shining Sea
Currier & Ives Prints from the ConAgra Foods Collection

October 1 through January 15 at Joslyn Art Museum

(Omaha, NE) – Designating themselves “Printmakers to the People,” Nathaniel Currier (1813–1888) and James Merritt Ives (1824–1895), offered their audience affordable color prints that remain as a vivid picture of nineteenth-century America. On view at Joslyn Art Museum, October 1 through January 15, is an exhibition of 31 prints by Currier and Ives from the ConAgra Foods Collection.

In their endeavor to provide the general public with “the best and the cheapest, and the most popular pictures in the world,” Currier and Ives advertised themselves as visual journalists of the nineteenth century, helping to construct many of the most prominent artistic themes of the post–Civil War republic. Although the company initially illustrated news events, its output grew to encompass a broad range of subjects, including images of farmers, frontier pioneers, Native Americans, and industry, in the process creating an enthusiastic endorsement of American progress.

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Currier and Ives landscapes portrayed the changing face of the American economy, representing both scenes of industrial development and bucolic celebrations of Eastern farmland. Steamboats carried the products of emerging national commerce down the Mississippi while railroads raced across the prairie. Embracing Manifest Destiny and the nation’s expansion to the Pacific, the firm published scenes of the West as an inviting Edenic garden. Wagon trains rolled across the wide expanses of the Great Plains and over the majestic Rocky Mountains while pioneer families gathered outside picturesque woodland cabins. When prairie fires and violent natural forces were depicted, they emphasized a monumental struggle of civilization against untamed wilderness. Currier and Ives’ images heroicized the pioneer and farmer as citizens fulfilling a democratic ideal as the nation forged its way westward.

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Trek name: CURRIER & IVES      Keyword: JAMCAI

Pictured In This Release:


Joslyn Art Museum is a major regional resource for the collection, preservation, and interpretation of the visual arts. Dedicated to excellence and celebrating art in all its variety, the Museum maintains a collection of art historical significance, ranging from antiquity to the present, with special emphasis on 19th- and 20th-century European and American art. Through its collection, exhibitions, and education programs, Joslyn Art Museum seeks to foster appreciation and enjoyment of art for the benefit of a diverse audience.

The Museum was a gift to the people of Omaha from Sarah Joslyn in memory of her husband, George, who made his fortune as president of the Western Newspaper Union. The Museum’s original 1931 building is one of the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in the nation, with 38 types of marble from seven countries. The Walter and Suzanne Scott Pavilion, a 58,000-square-foot addition built in 1994, was designed by renowned British architect Norman Foster, Baron Foster of Thames Bank, as his first U.S. commission. The Museum features galleries, a 1,000-seat concert hall, fountain court, education technology gallery, lecture hall, classrooms, library, café, and shop.

www.joslyn.org  |  (402) 342-3300  |  2200 Dodge Street  |  Omaha, NE 68102
Museum Admission: $8 adults; $6 senior citizens (62+) and college students (with ID); $5 ages 5-17; free for children four and younger and Joslyn members. The general public is admitted free on Saturdays, 10 am to noon. Group rates available for 10 or more with advance reservations. Call (402) 661-3833 or e-mail groupsales@joslyn.org. Increased admission for some special exhibitions. Museum Hours: Tues-Sat, 10 am-4 pm; Sun, noon-4 pm; closed Mon and major holidays. Extended hours for some special exhibitions.