



Press Release

**MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
RECEIVES A \$150,000 GRANT FROM THE  
ROBERT DAVID LION GARDINER  
FOUNDATION**



**Funds to Be Used to Update the Museum Collection Digitization Lab  
and Digitize the Harry T. Peter Papers**

NEW YORK, NY (November 2020) - The Museum of the City of New York has been awarded a \$150,000 grant by the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation. The funds will be used to embark on a project to digitize the Harry T. Peters papers – consisting of manuscripts, correspondence, ephemera, publications, prints, and photographs, and to upgrade the Museum’s nearly 10-year-old digital lab equipment in order to most effectively and efficiently continue the ongoing effort to digitally photograph its approximately 750,000-object collection and share it publicly via the online Collections Portal.

“We are so grateful for this generous grant, and thank the Gardiner Foundation for their support,” says Whitney W. Donhauser, Ronay Menschel President & Director, Museum of the City of New York. “These funds will help us enhance our digitizing efforts and help us make these archival materials from Peters’ research related to Currier & Ives and other American printmakers, as well as documentation of his other civic and cultural pursuits, accessible to scholars, students, and the greater public, anywhere and anytime.”

Through this project, the Harry T. Peters Collection will join the 210,000 objects - including the Currier & Ives print collection donated by Peters - in the Museum collection with high-resolution digitized images accessible worldwide via the online [Collections Portal](#).

Since 2011, all of the Museum’s collections digitization is conducted in the Museum’s onsite digitization lab, and the equipment, including a Hasselblad H4D 50MS camera, has been in use for nearly 10 years. While the Museum continues to adhere to all digital photography standards, digital imaging technology has advanced considerably. As a result of The Robert David Lion Foundation’s support, the Museum will be able to upgrade the digital lab equipment, including a Hasselblad H6D camera body, Scor

lights and new Hasselblad lenses; hire a part-time project collection fellow to facilitate the digitization of the Harry T. Peters Collection; and further efforts to catalog and photograph the collection.

#### ABOUT HARRY TWYFORD PETERS

Harry Twyford Peters (1881-1948), who had homes in New York City and Islip, Long Island, was an ardent collector of American prints and a leading authority on the firm Currier & Ives, a prolific American printmaking firm founded in 1834 by Nathaniel Currier (1813-1888) and operated out of New York City.

Collectors and the public credit Peters with recognizing the historic and artistic value of American lithographs during an era when they had fallen out of favor, and in turn generating a new wave of interest. He is the author of three books on lithography: *Currier & Ives: Printmakers to the American People* (Doubleday, 1929), *America on Stone: the Other Printmakers to the American People* (Doubleday, 1931), and *California on Stone* (Doubleday, 1935). The two-volume set of *Currier & Ives: Printmakers to the American People* is the accepted catalog raisonné of the firm's work. The Harry T. Peters Collection contains multiple drafts of the manuscripts for Peters' published and unpublished works, which provide evidence of Peters' writing process and the evolution of the texts. As an authority on Currier & Ives, Peters corresponded with staff members of museums, libraries, and historical societies, and received letters from the public requesting information. Also, part of the collection are nearly 1,200 lantern slides of prints, paintings, and objects that Peters used as visual aids in his illustrated lectures, or that he created as part of his research. These are not currently proposed for digitization due to copyright restrictions on the works depicted in the slides, however they will remain available for research.

Peters was an avid sportsman with a passion for hunting, horses, and dogs. In 1925, he became Co-Master of Foxhounds of the Meadow Brooke Hunt in Long Island, New York, a position he held into the 1940s; he was an active member of the Grolier Club, American Antiquarian Society, and New-York Historical Society; and he served as a member of the Fuel Administration during World War I and as Civilian Defense Director for Suffolk County during World War II. The collection documents Peters' sporting, cultural, and social activities through pamphlets, invitations, and photographs.

#### **About The Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation**

The Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation, established in 1987, primarily supports the study of New York State history. Robert David Lion Gardiner was, until his death in

August 2004, the 16th Lord of the Manor of Gardiner's Island, NY. The Gardiner family and their descendants have owned Gardiner's Island since 1639, obtained as part of a royal grant from King Charles I of England. The Foundation is inspired by Robert David Lion Gardiner's personal passion for New York history. For more information visit: <https://www.rdlgfoundation.org/>

### **About the Museum of the City of New York**

The Museum of the City of New York fosters understanding of the distinctive nature of urban life in the world's most influential metropolis. It engages visitors by celebrating, documenting, and interpreting the city's past, present, and future. To connect with the Museum on social media, follow us on Instagram and Twitter at @MuseumofCityNY and visit our Facebook page at Facebook.com/MuseumofCityNY. For more information, please visit [www.mcny.org](http://www.mcny.org).

### **Press contact:**

Meryl W Cooper, [mwcooper@mcny.org](mailto:mwcooper@mcny.org), 917-974-0022

Robin Carol, [rcarol@mcny.org](mailto:rcarol@mcny.org), 541-510-2357