



The National Museum of American Illustration
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NMAI'S 'MAXFIELD PARRISH: THE RETROSPECTIVE' OPENING MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND-The National Museum of American Illustration (NMAI) announces a milestone exhibition for the 2012 Summer Season – *Maxfield Parrish: The Retrospective* – debuting Friday, May 25, and on display through September 2, 2012.

Maxfield Parrish (1870-1966) was best known for romantic images with an unmatched richness, captured by his uncanny use of color incorporating ultra-saturated hues and often times an intense cobalt blue. His paintings were created using alternating layers of color and transparent varnish over a monochromatic underpainting, sometimes totaling as many as 60 layers. This incredible technique was superb for period reproductions using the now archaic four color printing process. The resultant luminosity of Parrish's original artworks must be seen in person to be fully appreciated for they are uniquely breathtaking with great depth and intense colors unmatched by any other artist before or since. Amongst those on display will be the artist's magnum opus, the *Florentine Fete* murals, 18 separate canvases each 10'8" tall, as well as his smallest work, *The Tallwood Pearl*, painted on a 1 1/2" diameter Mother of Pearl button.

Parrish's work as a professional illustrator encompassed the years between the mid-1890s and mid-1960s. This *Retrospective* features works from all periods of his career including – his early periodical and book illustrations with fantastical romantic images, commercial advertising with compelling works which sold well almost any products due to this artist's endorsement, depictions of fairy tales like the Brothers Grimm's *Frog Prince*, and the popular Edison Mazda (General Electric) calendars which hung everywhere one went, from the barber shops to law offices, they were omnipresent. His 'girls on rocks' images were ubiquitous in the 1920s, with an estimated one of every four American households having a Parrish print on display. His art sold a seemingly endless number of products, including Jell-O, Fisk tires, light bulbs, chocolate, soap, cameras, bicycles, silverware, cosmetics, and root beer.

Maxfield Parrish: The Retrospective opens May 25th, the commencement of NMAI's Summer Season, and will remain on display through September 2nd. The NMAI is open Fridays through Sundays, from 11am to 5pm for General Admission and also Memorial Day, with guided tours every Friday at 3pm. All other times year-round are by advance reservation.

During the Parrish exhibition, NMAI will continue to exhibit highlights from last year's *Norman Rockwell: American Imagist* traveling exhibition, recently acclaimed in England as **"the best art exhibition in London for 2011."** NMAI is also highlighting works by author Tom Wolfe from *In Our Time*, his first museum art exhibition ever, comprised of works from his book by the same name, lampooning 1970s American culture.

For more information and/or images, contact NMAI at T: 401.851.8949 ext. 18, email art@americanillustration.org, or visit www.americanillustration.org.

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The National Museum of American Illustration (NMAI) was founded in 1998 by Judy Goffman Cutler and Laurence S. Cutler to house their art collection from the 'Golden Age of American Illustration.' The NMAI, a private, nonprofit organization, is an independent, educational, and aesthetic organization with the goal to present the best venue to appreciate the greatest collection of illustration art.