“Under Cover” a stunning new exhibit of the work of preeminent gay artist J.C. Leyendecker and how he shaped American Culture
The New York Historical Society currently has a stunning Exhibition that examines the work and influence of J.C. Leyendecker (1874–1951). He was a gay preeminent illustrator and commercial artist who helped shape American visual culture in the first three decades of the 20th century through captivating advertising campaigns including the legendary “Arrow Collar Man” and countless covers for the Saturday Evening Post. His illustrations for a mainstream audience often had unspoken homoerotic undertones, his work is especially revealing for what it says about the cultural attitudes towards homosexuality of the period.

“Under Cover: J.C. Leyendecker and American Masculinity deepens our
understanding of the struggle for full civil rights as Americans of the LGBTQ+ community,” said Dr. Louise Mirrer, president and CEO of New York Historical. “The exhibition is part of New-York Historical’s ongoing commitment to tell stories of Americans whose lived experience, though important and consequential to our history, is so often absent from textbooks in schools and colleges.”

**Under Cover: J.C. Leyendecker and American Masculinity** showcases 19 of the artist’s original oil paintings and a wealth of related ephemera and features both Leyendecker’s editorial work, such as magazine covers, as well as commercial illustrations that appeared in the pages of popular publications, on roadside billboards, in store windows, and on mass transit. His aesthetic influence extended to Norman Rockwell, his colleague and eventual successor as the Post’s premier illustrator. The exhibition is organized into two primary sections: one exploring Leyendecker’s depictions of the male body, either semi-nude or clad in body-revealing garments, and a second focusing on his images of male intimacies, often of men sharing sexually charged looks. The model for many of his illustrations was Charles Beach, his lover and eventual business manager.

Under Cover: J.C. Leyendecker and American Masculinity on View until
The New-York Historical Society
170 Central Park West
at Richard Gilder Way (77th Street)

Posted by queerguru at 10:59