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INVENTING ACADIA
Painting and Place in Louisiana

NEW ORLEANS, LA – The New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) presents *Inventing Acadia: Painting and Place in Louisiana*, on view November 16, 2019 through January 26, 2020. The first major exhibition on Louisiana landscape painting in more than 40 years, *Inventing Acadia* explores the rise of landscape painting in Louisiana during the 19th century, revealing its role in creating—and exporting—a new vision for American landscape art that was vastly different than that to be found in the rest of the United States.

“*Inventing Acadia* showcases how 19th century landscape painters from across the globe came together in Louisiana to form a new school of landscape painting that rivaled any other in the country,” said Susan Taylor, NOMA’s Montine McDaniel Freeman Director. “Offering a newly expansive view of the American landscape and its people, *Inventing Acadia* is the first exhibition to place Louisiana landscape painting in a wider national and international context.”

From the early 19th century onwards, Louisiana’s dense forests and tangled, impenetrable swamplands—branded as *Acadie*, or Acadia—came to represent America’s fascination with untamed wilderness. In Louisiana, artists encountered a landscape utterly unlike the Northeastern forests and mountains around which the very idea of the American landscape had been formed. Louisiana drew painters from France, New York, Boston, Mexico and the Caribbean, who made the region a testing ground for new ideas about landscape representation. This resulted in landscape paintings that brought American art into conversation with a new type of terrain, as well as a more international set of artistic and cultural references. Far from a regional phenomenon, *Inventing Acadia* shows how Louisiana landscape painting was part of a national--and even international--landscape conversation.

Inventing Acadia: Painting and Place in Louisiana will be accompanied by a site-specific contemporary art installation in NOMA’s Great Hall by the artist Regina Agu, created in partnership with A Studio in the Woods, through an artist residency, which will open to the public on Tuesday, November 19. For her project, Agu will create a large-scale photographic panorama that will wrap the museum’s Great Hall, based on her experiences revisiting the sites of many of the historical landscape paintings in the exhibition.

Exhibition Catalogue

Inventing Acadia: Painting and Place in Louisiana will be accompanied by a major scholarly publication distributed by Yale University Press featuring five thematic essays from emerging scholars who present new approaches to the field of 19th century landscape painting. Katie A. Pfohl will place Louisiana landscape art into a broader national and international context, Kelly Presutti

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will consider the influence of Barbizon painting in France on artists in New Orleans, Anna Arabadan-Kesson and Mia L. Bagneris will examine the connections between landscape representation in New Orleans and the Caribbean and global histories of colonialism and slavery, Aurora Avilés García will explore the artistic interchange between Mexico and New Orleans during the 1884 World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, and Ryan Dennis will contribute an interview with the artist Regina Agu on her Great Hall installation.

Additional Information

[Press-approved images are available here.](#)

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#inventingacadia

Website: www.noma.org

Inventing Acadia: Painting and Place in Louisiana is organized by the New Orleans Museum of Art and is sponsored by Hyatt Regency New Orleans, the Eugenie and Joseph Jones Family Foundation, The Robert Lehman Foundation, Bill and Martha Gunther, Robert J.A. and Norris S.L. Williams, Delta Airlines, Neal Auction Company, Sally E. Richards and Amanda Winstead Fine Art. This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. The accompanying publication is made possible by Roger Ogden and Ken Barnes. Research for this exhibition was supported by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

About NOMA and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses more than 40,000 works of art encompassing 5,000 years of history. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing special exhibitions, are on view in the museum's 46 galleries Tuesday through Friday from 10 AM to 6 PM, select Fridays from 10 AM to 9 PM, Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM and Sundays from 11 AM to 5 PM. NOMA offers docent-guided tours at 1 PM Tuesday - Sunday. The adjoining Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden features work by more than 85 artists, including several 20th and 21st-century master sculptors. NOMA's Besthoff Sculpture Garden is free and open to the public seven days a week: 10 AM to 6 PM. The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk. For more information about NOMA, call (504) 658-4100 or visit www.noma.org. Museum admission is free on Wednesdays for Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation. Children 12 and under receive free admission. Teenagers (ages 13-19) receive free admission courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

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