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WINSLOW HOMER and the Demi-Monde

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Winslow Homer (1836-1910) invites us into the urban environments of Boston and New York, where he chronicled in print for the popular journals of the times the ordinary happenings of daily life in America's fastest-growing and crowded inner city and its environs. With comfortable and shaded picnic areas, its nearby shoreline and accommodating beaches, and venues for horse racing, Boston had become almost overnight a metropolitan city. By the mid-nineteenth century, when Homer lived in the heart of the commercial district, Boston was the fastest-growing metro city on the eastern seaboard. The town, once known as the beacon on the hill for its saintly living, now with unprecedented growth, experienced almost overnight an influx of strangers that included "pickpockets, crooks, and women of the night."

We follow Homer's demi-monde into the parks and playgrounds as he shares with us, through the medium of prints and paintings, multi-layered stories involving the city's underworld and her houses of prostitution. Several are identified by a name that would have been well-known to the gentlemen who frequented, for example, the establishment of Josey Woods. In prints created for the popular press, Homer asked his first viewers and all of us over a century later to take another look and, if necessary, to step back, broaden the view, and observe all the details. As we shall see in this presentation, Winslow Homer, the American artist from Boston, leaves nothing to chance. He has a story to tell and wants us in on the secret. MLH

Biography:

Dr. Loudon-Hanes is a painter and an art historian. She joined the faculty of Findlay College in 1986. Her doctoral research in American Culture Studies at Bowling Green State University under the direction of Dr. Dawn Glanz offered a fresh perspective on nineteenth-century urban women as identified in the illustrations and paintings of American artist Winslow Homer (1836-1910). As a promise made to Dr. Glanz in 1994, Marie recently published her research entitled Winslow Homer and the Demi-Monde. In her paintings, she manipulates form and color and plays the resulting imagery against the shifting and seasonal patterns of light and dark as defined by the natural environment. A collection of her paintings -currently on exhibit in Findlay at Objects of Desire Artful Living -reflects the vastness and multicolored shifting landscape of the Negev Desert, Israel. She retired from the University of Findlay in 2021 as Professor Emeritus and earned her MDiv in 2023 from Winebrenner Theological Seminary. She currently pastors a Presbyterian congregation in Fostoria, Ohio.