

HOUSATONIC MUSEUM OF ART

For Immediate Release

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HOUSATONIC MUSEUM OF ART PRESENTS LANDMARK EXHIBITION CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF F. LUIS MORA

NEVER-BEFORE-EXHIBITED DRAWINGS AND EXTRAORDINARY WORKS FROM MAJOR MUSEUM COLLECTIONS COME TOGETHER IN BRIDGEPORT TO HONOR AMERICA'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY

BRIDGEPORT, CT – The Housatonic Museum of Art (HMA) presents *Making his Mark in Connecticut: The Creative Process of F. Luis Mora*, a landmark exhibition exploring the life, legacy, and artistic vision of the first Hispanic member of the National Academy of Design.

Opening September 9, the exhibition invites visitors inside the remarkable journey of an artist whose work helped shape American visual culture. Born in Uruguay before immigrating to the United States as a child, Mora ultimately settled in Gaylordsville, CT, where he built a distinguished career and left an enduring mark on the state's artistic heritage.



Developed in honor of America's 250th anniversary, *Making his Mark in Connecticut* examines themes of immigration, community, history, and how the places we call home shape the stories we tell through art. From quick pencil sketches to finished masterpieces, visitors will witness the evolution of an artist's ideas in ways rarely available outside of museum archives. This exhibition is curated by Dr. Cynthia Roznoy and is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue.



At the heart of the exhibition are never-before-exhibited preparatory drawings from the collection of Benjamin Ortiz and Victor Torchia, Jr. that trace F. Luis Mora's creative process from first sketch to finished work. In conversation with major loans, including *The National Academy Jury of 1907* from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Jeanne Cartier* from Yale University Art Gallery, and works from the Florence Griswold Museum, these rare drawings offer an intimate look inside the mind of an often-overlooked American artist in one of the HMA's most ambitious exhibitions to date.

"Art has a unique ability to help us understand history through the lives of the people who shaped it," said Jennifer Reynolds-Kaye, Ph.D., Director of the Housatonic Museum of Art. "F. Luis Mora's story is one of creativity, resilience, and belonging. As we commemorate America's 250th anniversary, we hope visitors leave with a deeper appreciation for his extraordinary artistic legacy and the many voices that continue to shape Connecticut's story."

The public is invited to a free opening reception on Wednesday, September 9, from 5:30 to 7pm at the Housatonic Museum of Art, following a media and VIP preview from 4pm-5pm.

The exhibition is supported by Connecticut Humanities, America 250 | CT, the Wyeth Foundation for American Art, CT State Housatonic, the Housatonic Community College Foundation, Elizabeth Fray, and additional supporters.

For more information about the Housatonic Museum of Art, visit HousatonicMuseum.org.

Image 1: F. Luis Mora (Uruguayan American, 1874–1940), *Punta Delgado, Azores, Portugal*, ca. 1924. Watercolor on paper, 10 × 14 in. Collection of Benjamin Ortiz and Victor P. Torchia, Jr.

Image 2: F. Luis Mora (Uruguayan American, 1874–1940), *Jeanne Cartier*, ca. 1916–17. Oil on canvas, 72 1/2 × 36 1/4 in. Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Walter C. Crawford, B.A. 1929, 1969.49.

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About the Housatonic Museum of Art

The Housatonic Museum of Art (HMA) holds one of the largest art collections of any community college in the United States with over 7,000 artworks. The focus of the HMA is modern and contemporary American and European art, including Pablo Picasso, Andy Warhol, Romare Bearden, Cindy Sherman, and Jenny Holzer. The collection also includes artwork from Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Unlike most campus museums, the HMA displays selections of its collection throughout CT State Housatonic. Visitors also enjoy the special exhibitions and programs offered in the Burt Chernow Galleries. Free and open to the public. For more information, visit HousatonicMuseum.org.