

EVERHART MUSEUM

NATURAL HISTORY, SCIENCE & ART

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The Everhart Museum Opens New Fairy Tale Exhibit

Scranton – December 16, 2008: The Everhart Museum will open *Fairy Tale Art: Illustrations from Children's Books* on February 6, 2009. This traveling exhibition, on loan from Smith Kramer Fine Art Service (Kansas City, Mo.) was curated by Sylvia Nissley and will be on display at the Everhart through May 25, 2009. Financial assistance for bringing this exhibit to the Everhart is provided by Penn Security Bank & Trust Co. and Mr. & Mrs. Joseph F. Curtin.

Fairy Tale Art offers a magic journey to a timeless, enchanted, dream-like world. The exhibit features fifty-nine original illustrations from well-loved classic fairy tales, as well as modern variations. Included are traditional stories such as "The Firebird," "Cinderella," "Sleeping Beauty," and "Little Red Riding Hood" alongside modern interpretations such as "Cinderella's Dress," "Child of the Faerie: Child of the Earth," and "The Hungry Coat." Magical settings for these stories are expressed in a variety of medium: watercolor, acrylic, colored pencil, and mixed media. Some of the award-winning artists in *Fairy Tale Art* include Kinuko Y. Craft, DEMI, Jane Dyer, Marilee Heyer, Trina Scharf Hyman, Jim LaMarche, Barry Moser, and Susan Paradis.

Nezka Pfeifer, curator of the Everhart, "mined" the museum collections to locate objects interpreting classic fairy tales. Many cultures have tales featuring knights, damsels in distress, and familiar elements such as the classic Cinderella story or the occupations of weaving and spinning. Visitors to *Fairy Tale Art* will discover the material culture of fairy tales as found in the Everhart's collections, as well as some "magical" objects which will surely inspire children of all ages.

The word "fairy" originates from the Latin word, "fatum," to enchant; and in French "fee" or "feerie" is defined as illusion. The fairy tale creates a world saturated with beguiling characters in chimera settings. In this world magic is as commonplace as archetypal heroines triumph over the woes of hard dull lives; princes arrive and servants are transported to palaces. The promise of living happily ever after seals the ending.

In many fairy tales, the heroine was given magical powers and miraculous rescues. For years these stories were told to adults to uplift them from the world of drudgery by sharing a glimpse of another land. Before these spoken tales became recorded narratives, the details of the stories were modified in the retelling over centuries.

Similar stories were often told by diverse cultures. For example, the Cinderella tale has over three hundred variations. The story can be traced back to preliterate China where the foot binding practice is reflected on the emphasis of the tiny foot that fit the shoe presented by the prince. The Chinese version was first recorded in 850 A.D. As each storyteller retold the tale the story was continuously changed. In the late 17th Century, Charles Perrault of France published "Cendrillon." Perrault added the pumpkin, the fairy godmother and the glass slippers to this more popular version. In the Brothers Grimm's version recorded in 1812, the stepsisters cut off their toes to fit the shoe presented by the prince. Such details and other violent versions were omitted over the years as the story was modified for children.

In today's world, fairy tales can smooth the uncertainties of our world with a magic carpet ride that transports both child and adult to the realm of wonder and enchantment. These sometimes strange and wonderful stories have particular appeal because few shared narratives persist in our "global village." The fantastic illustrations in ***Fairy Tale Art*** help fill the human longing for something beautiful, new and wonderful.

Complementing ***Fairy Tale Art*** is the Gallery One exhibition, ***Happily Ever After?: Student Art at the Everhart***, which highlights the work of area students who rewrote unexpected endings to their favorite fairy tales in humorous and thought-provoking artworks. Through these collaborative efforts, the Everhart nurtures creativity and showcases artistic excellence in the community. The schools involved in this exhibition include: Abington Heights High School, Blue Ridge Elementary School, John Marshall Elementary School, Moscow Elementary Center, Mountain View Elementary School, Scranton High School, and South Scranton Intermediate School.

Closed during the month of January 2009, the Everhart Museum will reopen on February 1, 2009 on the following schedule: Noon-4:00 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Monday; 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Saturday; and Noon-5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$5/adults, \$3/students & seniors, \$2/children 6-12, and free to Everhart Museum members. For more information, contact the museum at 570-346-7186 or email general.information@everhart-museum.org.

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About the Everhart Museum: Founded in 1908, the Everhart Museum of Natural History, Science & Art is the largest general museum in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The Everhart Museum, located in Nay Aug Park in Scranton, is a not-for-profit institution dedicated to the collection, care and display of a diverse array of artifacts, including natural history, science and fine arts. Through our exhibits and programs, the Everhart Museum has become an invaluable regional resource for educational and cultural opportunities. General support for the museum is received from the Lackawanna County Office of Education & Culture, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and the City of Scranton. For more information on the museum visit our website at www.everhart-museum.org or contact us at 570-346-7186.