



In This Issue

[Upcoming Exhibition:
American Neoclassical
Sculpture](#)

[New Acquisition: GREED](#)

[Newly-designed Webpage:
Electronic Resources](#)

Follow the Athenæum!



Quick Links

[Contact Us](#)

[Renew Membership](#)

[Find a Book](#)

[Ask a Question](#)

[Children's Library](#)

[Exhibitions](#)

[Events Calendar](#)

Featured Events

Please check the [calendar](#) or your booklet for the full winter schedule. If you find these events interesting, you

Director's Letter

Over the past few months, all of us at the Boston Athenæum have embarked on a focused assessment of the needs of our members, employees, and visitors. While the process of defining and prioritizing our plans for the years ahead is ongoing (as described in the **First Report on the Operational Planning Process**, available on our website), I'm excited to share some small, but we hope meaningful, improvements that we expect to complete by summer.



The enhancements will start at the 10½ entrance. To streamline the experience of checking coats and bags, and to deepen the beauty of our elegant vestibule, we will be replacing the temporary coat racks and coat-check area with handsomely designed, discreetly installed millwork storage lockers. Our security desk will move nearer to Circulation, a position better suited to our guards' essential work. In the first-floor Bow Room, new books will move from the freestanding shelves (which will be used elsewhere) onto the walls, thereby freeing valuable space for readers, event overflow seating, and receptions. Also In the Bow Room, and in more than twenty other locations throughout our building, the placement of new lamps, seating, and work surfaces will yield additional reader spaces.

To that same end, our colleagues on the third floor have generously offered to consolidate certain workspaces to transform that sunny, high-ceilinged space into a quiet floor, one which we hope will become as beloved a sanctuary for readers and writers as the fifth floor deservedly remains. Newspapers will move to the quiet third floor, and out of the first-floor Gordon Room—a space imperfectly positioned for silence, given its placement between the vestibule and lecture hall, and its frequent use for receptions. To ensure the early-morning access to newspapers that many members enjoy, we will begin to open our entire building (rather than the Gordon Room only) at 8:30 a.m. starting at a date to be announced.

In a portion of the space currently devoted to the display of

may wish to browse these **books related to events.**

Book Talk: Neil L. Rudenstine, ***Ideas of Order: A Close Reading of Shakespeare's Sonnets***

Thursday, Feb. 5,

Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Cancelled Concert: **Frank Glazer**

Sunday, Feb. 15,

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Book Talk (Rescheduled):
Colin Calloway, ***The Victory with No Name: The Native American Defeat of the First American Army***

Wednesday, Feb. 18,

Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Exhibition Opening
Reception: ***American Neoclassical Sculpture***

Wednesday, Feb. 25,

5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Book Talk: Charles Spencer, ***Killers of the King: The Men Who Dared to Execute Charles I***

Thursday, Feb. 26,

Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Children's Movie: ***The Sword in the Stone***

Saturday, Feb. 28,

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Athenæum

newspapers, our curators will begin to present a changing selection of choice treasures from our collections, including new acquisitions. Members will still be welcome to read, write, look, and think in the Gordon Room, an exquisite space that promises to recover still more of its historic ambiance in the months ahead. In addition, at certain times of day, visitors (our prospective members) will also be permitted to enter it, to learn more about our distinguished history and current activities. In time, we hope it will become the logical first room to visit when bringing friends and family to see 10½, or when curious to see what gifts and purchases have been added to our shelves.

Elizabeth E. Barker, Ph.D.
Stanford Calderwood Director

Credit for image above: Elizabeth E. Barker on the second floor spiral staircase (Mark Ritter, 2014)

Upcoming Exhibition: American Neoclassical Sculpture at the Boston Athenæum

The establishment of the Boston Athenæum in 1807 as a place for the advancement of American culture coincided with the rise of Neoclassicism as the aesthetic-of-choice, first in Europe and then in the new United States. As an artistic movement, Neoclassicism dominated western art from the 1750s when major archaeological sites at Pompeii, Herculaneum, and elsewhere were discovered, and the second quarter of the nineteenth century when Romanticism, an outgrowth of Neoclassicism, came into vogue. In the United States, with its pretensions to a democracy modeled on Greco-Roman and Enlightenment ideals, the design language of the classical world seemed perfect for the translation of heady ideas into visual, accessible reality. Thus the proliferation of ancient forms (columns, capitals, acanthus leaves, ideal faces, perfect torsos) in the American fine arts during the late eighteenth century and into the first half of the nineteenth.



Almost as soon as it was founded, the Boston Athenæum began to acquire objects, slowly at first and then, starting in the 1820s, with increasing vigor. Among these early acquisitions were sculptures: free-standing or in relief, made of plaster or marble. These included fine, full-size copies of approved ancients such as the Venus de Medici and the Apollo Belvedere, as well as idealized figures and busts of important historical personages modeled and carved by leading modern European neoclassicists such as Antonio Canova, Sir Francis Chantrey, Jean-Antoine Houdon, and Bertel Thorvaldsen. With the maturation of

Encyclopædists

The new group, **Athenæum Encyclopædists**, will meet Thursday, February 12, 2014, at 6:00 p.m. in the Trustees' Room.

The objective of this group is to review, improve, and extend Wikipedia content that pertains to the history and collections of the Boston Athenæum. Those interested may contact **Mary Warnement** with their questions or simply show up at a regular meeting any second Thursday of the month.

New Electronic Resource: Loeb Classical Library

The Athenæum is pleased to announce another addition to its electronic resources: the **digital Loeb Classical Library**. Designed to be carried easily in one's pocket, the original red and green volumes were intended by James Loeb to make classics of Latin and Greek literature accessible to a wide audience as both objects and ideas. Now that effort has been expanded, and the classics can be read wherever a member has an internet connection.

Fellowships

The Boston Athenæum offers competitive fellowships to those interested in using its collections for research or creative purposes. There are

sculpture in America beginning in the 1820s, the work of native sculptors began to be represented in the Athenæum's collection. Eventually, this included works by the three "founders" of American neoclassic sculpture, Horatio Greenough, Thomas Crawford, and Hiram Powers, as well as examples by their followers Richard S. Greenough, Thomas R. Gould, Harriet Hosmer, Chauncey B. Ives, and William Wetmore Story, among others. At the same time, the Athenæum was featuring works by American sculptors in its annual art exhibitions and, by the time of the Civil War, had established a reputation as a reliable patron of American sculpture. Indeed, by 1860, the Boston Athenæum owned one of the largest publically-accessible collections of sculpture in the country.

The exhibition, **American Neoclassical Sculpture**, opens February 26, 2015, and brings together many of the masterworks of American neoclassic sculptures from the Athenæum's collection for the first time. The exhibition installation will include sections that summarize the ancient roots of Neoclassicism; early European interpretations of it; the rise of Neoclassicism in America; the tension between the classical and the real in portraiture and in images of children during this period; the Neoclassicist's preference for themes from literature and religion; and the special role that Boston, and the Boston Athenæum, played in the patronage of American sculptors during the first half of the nineteenth century.

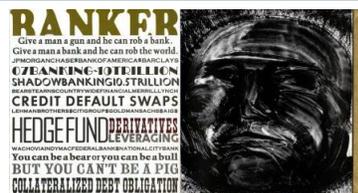
David B. Dearing, Ph.D.
Susan Morse Hilles Curator of Paintings & Sculpture & Director of Exhibitions

Credit for image above: Thomas Crawford (1813-1857), Anacreon, Ode LXXII, marble, (1842). Boston Athenæum, Gift of several subscribers, 1843. (Photograph by Jerry Thompson)

New Acquisition: GREED

A powerful and highly political new artists' book, **GREED**, was recently given to the library by Anne C. and David J. Bromer. It was created in 2013 by Claire Van Vliet, the highly respected and creative proprietor of the

Janus Press in Newark, Vermont. One of an edition of 120 copies, it incorporates four distorted black and white portrait lithographs done by Van Vliet of propagandists, lobbyists, bankers, and Joe Public. These images are paired with fold down panels printed with provocative talking points in various unusual display type-faces including large antique wooden type. The book is bound and boxed in glittery gold paper which evokes the subject of money and the unsavory methods that are used to accumulate it



different deadlines:

February 15

The Boston Athenæum and the Massachusetts Historical Society offer the **Suzanne and Caleb Loring Fellowship on the Civil War, Its Origins and Consequences** with a stipend of \$4,000 for research residencies of at least four weeks at each institution.

April 15

1. **Mary Catherine Mooney Fellowship**
2. **Caleb Loring, Jr. Fellowship**
3. **American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Fellowship**
4. **American Congregational Association-Boston Athenæum Fellowship**
5. **Mudge Teacher Fellowship**

Check the **fellowship webpage** for details, requirements, and conditions of each.

Staff Book Recommendations

Caught snow-bound at home without adequate supplies of books? Do not let that happen again. The **staff recommendations for Winter 2015** are available and if nothing there suits your fancy, please consult a reference librarian.



Anyone may make an appointment to see *GREED* in the **Vershbow Special Collections Reading Room**.

Stanley Ellis Cushing
Anne C. and David J. Bromer Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts

Credit for image above: Claire Van Vliet, *Greed* (Vermont: Janus Press, 2013). Boston Athenæum, Gift of Anne C. and David J. Bromer, 2015

Newly-designed Webpage: Electronic Resources

Reference librarians, especially at the Athenæum, often must help members find information in esoteric sources, but there are certain websites returned to again and again. Links to these have been offered on a page of "selected electronic resources" for several years; however, in an effort to connect members more efficiently with information, the Athenæum now offers a **streamlined webpage**, combining subscription electronic resources with recommended websites.



The main page offers the choice of linking to an **alphabetical list** or a list arranged **by genre**. If you know the exact title you want, the alphabetical list is for you. If you wish to peruse what may help with a particular subject, then the genre list would be better. Each title offers a dropdown option with "additional information" to explain what may not be obvious by title. The main page also offers quick links to the most popular, like the *Boston Globe* and *New York Times*.

Also, the many titles previously available under the collected heading, Gale Resources, are now listed individually. The link still takes you to the main Gale page, listing all offerings, but you should be able to use the "find on a page" function in your browser to quickly connect with the one you want.

When you are in the Athenæum, you will link seamlessly; when outside the building, you will usually be prompted for your surname and membership ID number. Contact a **reference librarian** if you have any questions about the sources or difficulty using them.

Mary Warnement
William D. Hacker Head of Reader Services