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Concord Museum Announces New Exhibition Featuring Historic Needlework from the 1700s and 1800s

Interwoven: Women's Lives Written in Thread opens September 29, 2023

(CONCORD, MA – August 14, 2023) On September 29, 2023, the Concord Museum will unveil the new exhibition *Interwoven: Women's Lives Written in Thread*, featuring select items from its extraordinary collection of historic needlework samplers from the 1700s and 1800s, many of which have never previously been on view. Created by young women raised or educated in the Boston area and particularly Middlesex County, the needlework samplers explore how young women created records of their own lives and experiences, written in thread.

“We are delighted to share these rarely-seen needlework samplers, which provide a fascinating picture of young women’s lives in the early republic,” said Lisa Krassner, the Concord Museum’s Edward W. Kane Executive Director. “These remarkable samplers reflect the importance of family, community and education to these young women and give us a unique window into their lived experiences.”

Interwoven: Women's Lives Written in Thread will explore the history of needlework and embroidery, its importance as an art form, and its significance to women in the 18th and 19th centuries. Intended to showcase young women’s accomplishments, the hand-worked samplers captured the stories of their lives. “The exhibition includes samplers created by girls as young as 10 years old who were learning and practicing how to stitch letters, numbers, simple decorations and inspirational quotes. Other samplers created by young women are much more elaborate,” said David Wood, Curator of the Concord Museum. “For many of these young women, their samplers are the only objects that survive from their lives.”

Exhibition stories and themes will explore the education of privileged young women in the mid-1700s to 1800s and how family wealth and the presence of enslaved domestic labor provided them with the leisure time to pursue decorative arts. Visitors will learn how women recorded family history and the loss of loved ones through needlework and will see how the samplers incorporated the importance of community and a strong sense of place. The exhibition will also share information about the global trade in needlework materials such as linens, dyes and silk, and how and where these materials were produced.

The exhibition gallery will include areas for hands-on and interactive activities. Exhibition programs will connect the history of samplers to contemporary work through visiting artists, demonstrations, workshops, and more.

Exhibition Sponsors

Major support for this exhibition is provided by The Coby Foundation, Ltd.

About the Concord Museum

The Concord Museum connects people to Concord's multi-faceted history and its continuing influence on American cultural, political, environmental, and literary life. Founded in 1886, the Museum presents centuries of objects from Concord and surrounding areas for everyone to experience and explore. These objects let us bring to life the stories of the diverse people who lived in Concord since its earliest days. Every day, Concord's \ history comes alive in our collections, exhibitions, and programs. As historians, we know that history is never stagnant. We continually discover new things about our past, inspiring people to make connections between the past, present, and future.

Exhibition Press Preview

Thursday, September 28, 2023, 1-4 p.m.

Media are invited to attend an exhibition tour led by the curator. Please RSVP to schedule your tour during the Press Preview or at a later date.

Please direct RSVPs and questions to Barbara Evangelista, Director of Marketing, Concord Museum, bevangelista@concordmuseum.org or 978-369-9763 x 229.

Press materials may be downloaded from [Dropbox](#). Please email bevangelista@concordmuseum.org if there are any issues with the Dropbox link.