

Celebrating the Spirit of Rockwell Kent

The Plattsburgh State Art Museum and the Center for Interdisciplinary & Area Studies are delighted to invite you to join us for a series of events *Celebrating the Spirit of Rockwell Kent*, on **Friday, March 4th and 5th**.

The event will begin on the afternoon of Friday, March 4th and will convene with international scholars who will address aspects of Rockwell Kent's Greenland Adventures. The celebration will conclude on March 5th with a tour of Rockwell Kent's Farm in Au Sable Forks.

For those that are unable to travel, two of our speakers will be available via webinar LIVE. Please see below for a complete list of events and synopsis of lectures.

Schedule of Events

Tours

Rockwell Kent Gallery, Feinberg Library

10am and 11am

(If your class would like to participate, please reach out early as there is limited space for large groups.)

Lectures

Yokum Room 200

3pm-4:00pm

“Pursuing beauty in bewilderment at its profusion”: Reflections on Gender and Sexuality in Rockwell Kent’s Greenland Materials.

Susan Vanek & Jette Rygaard: '

The paintings, writings, and other artistic materials produced by Rockwell Kent during his time in Greenland are some of his most iconic works, displaying vast, mountainous expanses as well as intimate glimpses into quotidian. At a time when travel to the island was highly restricted, these works provide insight into not only the history of the island but often-unseen everyday life and activities. However, it must be remembered that the materials Kent produced are situated within a particular time, place, and perspective, produced by a visitor to Greenland, and, while beautiful, offer a subjective view of life in the country.

This presentation explores the representation of gender and sexuality in Kent's Greenland works, focusing on the depiction of women as “beautiful and unmoral”, caretakers of men and objects of desire. Revealing far more about norms in the United States in the early 20th century than understandings of gender and sexuality in Greenland at the time, Kent's descriptions nonetheless fit well within a broader common narrative that positioned Indigenous women as knowable and childlike but also exotic – a trope in which constructions of gender and sexuality were key and continues to permeate representations of Arctic Peoples today. This presentation interrogates these representations and their lasting legacy as well as our role as researchers when approaching such one-sided historical accounts.

4:00-5:00pm

Meet the Artist

Denis Defibaugh and Jetta Rygaard

North by Nuuk: Greenland After Rockwell Kent

Burke Gallery

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Photographer Denis Defibaugh, a retired photography professor at Rochester Institute of Technology and Dr. Jette Rygaard, an emeritus professor at the University of Greenland were part of a team that received a grant from the National Science Foundation that proposed to follow Kent's path through Greenland documenting the changing people, history, and landscape.

During their time in Greenland, Defibaugh taught photographic workshops to children and youth in each of the study communities to teach photographic techniques and encourage youth to take their own pictures. Combining visual, historical and anthropological methods, the research team worked with communities to gain an understanding of Kent's time in Greenland as well as changes in the life of each community from the 1930s until today.

Banners of the Children's photographs from the workshops in Illorsuit, Uummannaq, Sisimiut and Nuuk will be mounted and Denis and Jette will answer questions about their experience.

5pm-6pm

New light on the friendship between Rockwell Kent and Knud Rasmussen.

Erik Torm

Author: *When the Colour Ceases to be Just a Color | Rockwell Kent's Greenland Paintings*

Research Fellow Uummannaq Polar Institute

Knud Rasmussen was a famous Danish polar explorer and anthropologist. He has been called the "father of Eskimology" and was the first European to travel the entire Northwest Passage via dog sled. He was the son of a Danish missionary, the vicar Christian Rasmussen, and an Inuit-Danish mother, Lovise Rasmussen. Although never formally educated, Rasmussen's contributions to anthropology and polar exploration are recognized by academic authorities worldwide. He died having recorded and documented vast knowledge about the native people of the Arctic.

In the archives of the Royal Library in Copenhagen are some handwritten letters from Kent to Peter Freuchen and Dagaard-Jensen, which only a few have been aware of. The lecture is about the content of these letters.

6:00pm – 8pm

Wine Down at The Rockwell Kent Gallery--Feinberg Library

Wind down our day celebrating Kent and his spirit of exploration at The Rockwell Kent Gallery. A selection of speakers across disciplines will offer short meditations on the theme of journey and exploration in their personal, intellectual, and professional lives, while also sharing selections from Kent's work. Meet, mingle, and explore this lovely space and the work of this important artist.

SATURDAY March 5th

Asgaard Farm Tour

10-12pm

The Plattsburgh State Art Museum is pleased to partner with the SUNY Plattsburgh **Center for Earth and Environmental Sciences** and **Asgaard Farms** to host this event.

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There will be buses for student guests without transportation but please sign up early as spaces are limited. (Buses will leave SUNY Plattsburgh Myers parking lot at 9am and return by 12pm.)

Non student guests will provide their own transportation for this event.

Please share with your colleagues and students and encourage them to join us for this special event. Limited space is available for students on CEES and university Vans, so students should be encouraged to register with the museum in advance for a space. Please email artmuseum@plattsburgh.edu

Other visitors will provide their own transportation.

Leading up to this celebration Kent scholars have generously donated two books about Rockwell Kent for a **FREE raffle for students** that will be drawn on the 4th. It is their hope that these donations will spur the interest of our student scholars and promote the prestigious collection that is part of the permanent art collection. Students may submit their raffle during museum hours in the Rockwell Kent Gallery Tuesday-Sunday noon until 4pm. The books are "Salamina" and "The Rockwell Kent Anthology."