

'Norman Rockwell's America...In Newport'



Dulwich Picture Gallery visitors viewing Norman Rockwell's renowned 1967 painting, "Russian Schoolroom."



Dulwich Picture Gallery visitors viewing vintage Saturday Evening Post covers illustrated by Norman Rockwell.

NEWPORT, R.I. — Following the conclusion of the National Museum of American Illustration's (NMAI) exhibit "Norman Rockwell's America...in England" at London's Dulwich Picture Gallery at the end of March, the exhibition will travel home to Newport, R.I., for its Memorial Day weekend debut at NMAI, retitled "Norman Rockwell's America...in Newport."

The Rockwell exhibition at Dulwich, England's oldest art museum, was the major event of their 200th anniversary celebration (1811–2011). Dulwich is known for having one of the world's greatest Old Master collections. Few realize that Norman Rockwell was strongly influenced by artists such as Rembrandt, van Eyck and Vermeer. For the first time, visitors were able to see Rockwell's paintings displayed alongside works by Canaletto, Gainsborough, Raphael, Rembrandt, Rubens, van Eyck and others, making this venue particularly poignant. "Norman Rockwell's America...in England" was the first Rockwell exhibition ever held in the United Kingdom.

Record-setting attendance with rave reviews marked the London debut and have continued since. London's *Saturday Review* deemed the exhibition "Completely Exceptional." The *Telegraph* described Rockwell's illustrations

as "pure genius." After the show's installation and opening, Ian Dejardin, director of Dulwich Picture Gallery, remarked, "I am struck by just how excellent the show is — elegant in conception and perfect in balance and scale. I've said it before, and I say it again — You did us proud."

"Norman Rockwell's America...in Newport" exhibits a remarkable collection of more than 40 original works spanning six decades, providing a comprehensive look at his career. Rockwell's heart-warming depictions of everyday life made him the best-known and most beloved American artist of the Twentieth Century. He lived and worked through some of the most eventful periods in the nation's history, and his paintings vividly chronicled those times.

A simultaneous exhibition will show illustration artworks by the noted author Tom Wolfe from his 1980 book, *In Our Time*. Tom Wolfe is best known for his literary contributions as an award-winning author and journalist, and little known for his accomplished illustrations. This exhibition, which virtually rediscovered Wolfe's unheralded work as an illustrator, continues due to popular demand, having been partially exhibited last season. Wolfe's images offer his audience the same acerbic wit and

social critiques for which he is so well known in his distinctive prose.

In Our Time's illustrations are sourced from Wolfe's archives and stem primarily from his examination of fluctuating cultural norms of the 1970s, the "Me Decade." Some illustrations are as humorously subtle as Jules Feiffer or Shel Silverstein, others as comically frightening as Charles Addams, while others rank as editorial cartooning comparable to Gary Trudeau and Paul Szep, and still others are thought provoking and timeless visual commentary, yet depicted in a temporal context (as one would expect of this author/illustrator — the critic of his times).

NMAI's 2011 season begins May 28 (Memorial Day weekend) and ends September 4 (Labor Day weekend). During the season, the museum will be open Saturdays, Sundays and Memorial Day from 11 am to 5 pm on a general admission basis. NMAI is open year-round for guided tours on Fridays at 3 pm sharp; all other times for group tours or VIP tours by advance reservation.

For information or to make a group or VIP tour reservation, call NMAI at 401-851-8949, ext 18, email art@americanillustration.org or visit www.americanillustration.org.