

PRESS RELEASE



Art and Memory: The Role of Medals

Conference organized by the Medal Collectors of America and the Massachusetts Historical Society
Saturday, November 10, 2018, 8:00AM - 6:30PM, at the MHS, 1154 Boylston Street, Boston, MA
Dinner afterward (at Brasserie JO), 7:00PM – 9:00PM

The Medal Collectors of America and the Massachusetts Historical Society have teamed up to organize an unprecedented conference on medals and medal collecting this fall in Boston. The theme, *Art and Memory: The Role of Medals*, was chosen to have wide appeal, with social events added to provide some fun, and encourage discussion among medal collectors and others who are not yet collectors, all in an extraordinary location.

This conference will include a series of presentations on the role medals have played in American history, the evolution of medallic art, and the ways medals have reflected American culture up to the 21st century. Presenters will include:

- Len Augsburger, Coordinator, Newman Numismatic Portal, Washington University in St. Louis, will speak on the history of medal books
- Anne Bentley, Curator of Art & Artifacts, Massachusetts Historical Society, will speak on the Society's extensive medal collection and its fascinating history
- Jonathan Brecher, co-author of "So-Called Dollars: An Illustrated Standard Catalogue", will speak on So-Called Dollars as a reflection of nineteenth and early-twentieth century American culture
- Patrick McMahon, Director of Exhibitions, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, will speak on the early work of Victor David Brenner, sculptor of the Lincoln Cent and many medals
- Alan Stahl, Curator of Numismatics, Princeton University, and previously curator for many years at the American Numismatic Society, will speak on the role of medals in American history

In addition, two panel discussions will focus on the artistic beauty and collectability of medals. One panel discussion will cover the stylistic developments from Renaissance medallic art to contemporary art medals ("The Art of the Medal"). The second panel will explore the individual passions that drive numismatists to build their unique collections ("Why Collect Medals?"). Panelists will include several noted numismatists: John W. Adams, Q. David Bowers, Cory Gilliland, Scott Miller, Ira Rezak, Rob Rodriguez, John Sallay, and Stephen Scher.

Anne Bentley will also arrange a special exhibit of medals from the fabulous MHS collection, including the unique Comitia Americana set of silver medals presented by Thomas Jefferson on behalf of Congress to George Washington in 1790, the unique gold Manly medal, a silver Columbia and Washington medal, and many more rare and extraordinary pieces.

Founded in 1791, the Massachusetts Historical Society is the nation's first historical society and an invaluable resource for American history, life, and culture. In addition to its incomparable numismatic holdings, the MHS collections are particularly well-known for extensive holdings of personal papers from three presidents: John Adams, John Quincy Adams, and Thomas Jefferson. The collections contain many famous documents including Paul Revere's own account of his famous ride and Abigail Adams's famous "Remember the Ladies" letter to John Adams, where she advocates for the rights of women to be included in the founding of the United States, among many other treasures.

The Medal Collectors of America is a national organization dedicated to the study and collection of artistic and historical medals. The MCA was founded in August 1998 at the Portland, Oregon convention of the American Numismatic Association to bring together those interested in collecting, research, and the publishing on all types of medals. Its quarterly publication, *The MCA Advisory* and the MCA website provide a forum for research, news, and views in the field of medallic art. For further information on the MCA and MHS, please see www.medalcollectors.org and www.masshist.org.

Registration for this conference is now open at www.masshist.org/medals. Early registration is highly recommend as space is limited and pre-registration will be required. A cocktail reception at the MHS will conclude the conference in the late afternoon, followed by an optional dinner at Brasserie JO, a celebrated French bistro just a 10-minute walk from the MHS. There is a \$75 per person conference fee, including lunch and the cocktail reception, with dinner afterward optional at an additional \$95 per person.