



**American Federation of Arts**

**For Immediate Release**

Contact: 212.988.7700

**AMERICAN ARTS & CRAFTS MOVEMENT AND ARTHUR WESLEY DOW'S INFLUENCE  
EXAMINED IN MAJOR TRAVELING EXHIBITION  
Arthur Wesley Dow and American Arts & Crafts**

Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for the Arts at Stanford University, Stanford, CA  
July 14--September 19, 1999

Terra Museum of American Art, Chicago, IL  
October 9, 1999--January 2, 2000

Blanden Memorial Art Museum, Fort Dodge, IA  
July 7--October 1, 2000

(April 1999)--*Arthur Wesley Dow and American Arts & Crafts* is the first exhibition to examine the far-reaching effects of Arthur Wesley Dow's (1857--1922) influence as both an innovative artist and one of America's greatest art educators. It begins its national tour at the new Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University, opening to the public on July 14, 1999. It remains on view through September 19, 1999 before traveling to the Terra Museum of American Art, Chicago, and the Blanden Memorial Art Museum, Fort Dodge, Iowa.

The exhibition, organized by The American Federation of Arts with guest curator Nancy Green, chief curator, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, comprises eleven prints and four photographs by Dow and over 110 works in a variety of mediums by his students, disciples, and colleagues. Dow's influence extended to some of the leading painters, printmakers, photographers, ceramicists, and furniture-makers of the first half of the century. Those represented in the exhibition include painters Georgia O'Keeffe and Max Weber; printmaker Pedro de Lemos; photographers Alvin Langdon Coburn and Gertrude Käsebier; ceramicist Adelaide Alsop Robineau; Newcomb and Overbeck potteries; and the Byrdcliffe Colony, Woodstock, New York.

Throughout his lifetime, Dow developed a personal style that assimilated the influences of Japonisme, synthesisism, and Impressionism, with a simplification of forms and a flattening of color. The exhibition is arranged chronologically to highlight the development of Dow's ideas and practices and their reflection in the work of his students.

In 1899, Dow produced *Composition: A Series of Exercises in Art Structure for the Use of Students and Teachers*. The manual, a 1913 edition of which is included in the exhibition, was widely read and changed the way art was taught--from grade school to college level--for the next five decades. It is widely recognized as having laid the stylistic foundation for the American Arts & Crafts movement.

During a 30-year teaching career at such institutions as Columbia University Teachers College, the Art Students League, the Pratt Institute, and his own Ipswich Summer School of Art, Dow stressed the integration of mediums and, as he wrote in a preface to *Composition*, that the "study of composition of Line, Mass and Color leads to appreciation of all forms of art and the beauty of nature." His tenet, to create beautiful, finely crafted objects for both practical use and aesthetic contemplation, resonates in each work on view.

The exhibition is organized by The American Federation of Arts. Support has been provided by the National Patrons of the AFA. It is a project of ART ACCESS II, a program of the AFA with major support from the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

**PUBLICATION**

The catalogue accompanying the exhibition addresses Dow's influence on turn-of-the-century art, his contribution to the Arts & Crafts movement, and his commitment to teaching. Nancy Green's essay examines Dow's printmaking and the origins of the American Arts & Crafts style. Jessie Poesch, Professor Emerita, Tulane University, discusses American art pottery. *Arthur Wesley Dow and American Arts & Crafts* is published by The American Federation of Arts. 208 pages, 9 1/2 x 9", 142 color illustrations; hardcover, \$27.50.

**THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ARTS:**

Celebrating its 90th anniversary in 1999, the AFA is the nation's oldest and most comprehensive non-profit art museum service organization. The AFA provides its more than 550 member institutions with traveling art exhibitions and educational, professional, and technical support programs developed in conjunction with the museum community. Through these programs, the AFA seeks to strengthen the ability of museums to enrich the public's experience and understanding of art.