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For Immediate Release

Staten Island makes it to Gracie Mansion: Staten Island Museum a Major Lender to *New York 1942*

(Staten Island, NY – March 27, 2017) Why 1942? Because that's the year in which Mayor Fiorello (Little Flower) La Guardia and his family moved into the gracious, newly renovated 1799 mansion that has since housed eleven mayoral families.

Chirlane McCray, the current First Lady of New York City, suggested that although the Federal style of the house should be respected, the art within it should reflect the people of New York City today. With that precept in mind, this is the second year-long, curated exhibition in a series and the first to truly reflect all five boroughs of the City.

The three works that the Staten Island Museum has on loan are dispersed throughout the mansion and will be seen by tour groups from elementary schools to adults from NYC, the USA, and the world.

The first is *Refugees* by Arnold Hoffmann, a 1944 watercolor depicting the flight of families from World War II. Hoffmann, an immigrant from Odessa himself, was very concerned about the impact of war and several of his pieces in the Staten Island Museum's collection deal with themes related to war and the devastation it brings.

"Chirlane singled this piece out as one of her favorite in the exhibition, and in our brief chat we realized that we had a personal connection through our fathers, both veterans who served in Europe during World War II," said Robert Bunkin, Staten Island Museum Curator of Art.

Also on loan is a painting by Cecil Bell. Bell was an artistic fixture on Staten Island and one of his most popular images is his gouache painting entitled *Shine!* which depicts one of the Italian immigrant shoe-shine men who used to ply the Staten Island Ferry. This painting hangs over a federal-style mantelpiece in one of the original rooms of Gracie Mansion, a far cry from the usual 19th century ancestor portrait or landscape that one expects to see in such a setting.

Last but not least, a recent acquisition that Staten Island Museum visitors may recognize from its appearance in the exhibition *Staten Island SEEN*, is *New York Harbor (seen from Staten Island)* by Louis Bouché. This oil on canvas depicts the working shores of Staten Island, with Manhattan in the distance.

"It's exciting to get our collection out to diverse audiences, and to be part of this lively project," Bunkin added.

Paul Gunther, Executive Director of the Gracie Mansion Conservancy said, *"Staten Island was a crucial location in the nation's fight against global fascism from 1942 to victory in 1945. It is both fitting and thrilling that artworks from the Museum's collection are on view to help tell the story of this exceptional interlude in New York's history Gracie's 75th anniversary as the official home of our mayors offers a unique place to do so."*

For more information on Gracie Mansion, the "People's House" and its programs visit NYC.GOV/GRACIETOURS.

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About the Staten Island Museum

Founded in 1881 and celebrating its 135th year, the Staten Island Museum, New York City's only general interest museum, engages visitors with interdisciplinary exhibitions and educational programs that explore the dynamic connections between natural science, art, and history based on its diverse collections. The Museum serves over 219,000 adults and school children at the Museum and in the community. At the Staten Island Museum at Snug Harbor, visitors can explore 3 floors of interdisciplinary exhibition, Remember the Mastodon: A Richmond County Savings Foundation Exhibition, Staten Island SEEN, Opening the Treasure Box, and From Farm to City.

The Staten Island Museum in St. George, located two blocks from the Ferry Terminal, visitors can embark on a voyage through time in the Staten Island Ferry exhibit; see rocks glow in the dark in the Hall of Natural Sciences; and experience the lives of Staten Island's first inhabitants. Staten Island Museum is owned by the City of New York and benefits from public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. For current exhibits, visit StatenIslandMuseum.org.

Visit the Staten Island Museum

Staten Island Museum at Snug Harbor
1000 Richmond Terrace

Staten Island Museum in St. George
75 Stuyvesant Place

Monday – Friday, 11:00am – 5:00pm
Saturday, 10:00am – 5:00pm
Sunday, 12:00 – 5:00pm

\$5 Adults/ \$3 Seniors and Students
Free for Museum Members and children under 12

One ticket allows admission to both the Staten Island Museum at Snug Harbor and in St. George when used in the same day.