

For Immediate Release

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Masonic Temple Now Open for Limited Tours, New Art Exhibition

Philadelphia, PA (Oct. 22, 2020) – The Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania, which maintains and preserves the historic Masonic Temple, located at One North Broad Street in Philadelphia, has reopened for limited public tours and a Masonic-themed art exhibition.

For the time being, guided tours of the Masonic Temple are available for individuals and groups of up to 10 people, Tuesday through Saturday, at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Contact 215-988-1917 to schedule a tour or find more information about tours [here](#).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, visitors to the Masonic Temple are required to wear masks and social distance. Temperatures will be checked at the front entrance to the building. Motion-activated hand sanitizers have been installed in the building.

The annual Grand Exhibition, *An Open Art Competition: Embodying Masonic Values*, is now on view through Dec. 5, in the Grand Ballroom and other areas of the building. Both amateur and professional artists, 18 and older, were invited to submit original entries to the contest by Aug. 6.

Since 2018, the Masonic Library and Museum’s “Embodying Masonic Values” open art competition has provided an opportunity for the art community to explore Masonic values through art. Cash prizes (\$200) are awarded to winners in five categories: oil, three-dimensional, drawing and print-making, water-based medium and digital imagery.

Thirty entries were submitted for this year’s art contest; nineteen are on view in the exhibition. Jurors include Travis Simpkins, artist; William Scott Noel, painter; and Moe A. Brooker, painter. Jeff Dion, artist, coordinated the judges.

The \$1,000 Best in Show Prize was awarded to Mark Schreiber for his piece, “Philadelphia 2018 from the Schuylkill River.” The \$500 Grand Master’s Prize went to Ryan Flynn for his piece, “The Master and the Apprentice.”

Due to COVID-19, the Grand Exhibition Gala was cancelled. In past years, the artwork was auctioned off at the gala. This year, a number of the works are available for purchase. Visit [here](#) for information about purchasing artwork or contact the gift shop at 215-988-1877, Tuesday – Saturday, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Images of the entries are on view [here](#). High-resolution images are available by request.

For more information on Freemasonry, visit [here](#).

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About the Masonic Library and Museum

The **Masonic Library and Museum of Pennsylvania** (Masonic Library and Museum) maintains and preserves the historic Masonic Temple, located at One North Broad Street, Philadelphia; operates the John Wanamaker Resource Center, a public circulating library and museum within the Masonic Temple; conducts educational programs for Pennsylvania Masons and the public concerning the history, philosophy and activities of Freemasonry; and restores, preserves and maintains monuments representing the heritage of Freemasonry throughout Pennsylvania.

The **Masonic Temple** in Philadelphia was constructed in 1873. It has been called one of the great “wonders” of the Masonic world. Adorned with some of the finest artifacts of Freemasonry and magnificent lodge rooms based on themes of the ancient architectural world, the Masonic Temple displays historical Masonic traditions and values. For more information on the Temple, [visit here](#).

Located within the Temple is the **Wanamaker Resource Center**, which houses thousands of texts and artifacts relating to the history of the Masonic fraternity in Pennsylvania and beyond. Founded in 1908, the center was dedicated by Brother John Wanamaker, a prominent Philadelphia merchant who served as the first Chairman of the Library Committee. The center’s collection consists of more than 30,000 items. Some of these include Brother George Washington’s Masonic Apron, which was presented to the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania in 1829 by the Washington Benevolent Society; two letters in Washington’s own hand, addressed to his Masonic brethren; and Brother Benjamin Franklin’s Masonic sash, worn in 1782, when he was Venerable (Worshipful Master) of the Loge des Neuf Soeurs (Lodge of the Nine Sisters or Muses) in Paris and when he guided Brother Voltaire. For more information on the center’s artifacts, visit [here](#).

The center has one of the finest collections of books and Masonic records for the study of Freemasonry. The importance of collecting and cataloging seminal works in the history of Freemasonry has remained a focus of the institution since its inception. Housed within the stacks are thousands of volumes covering all aspects of Freemasonry and its history, philosophy and contributions to civil society. The center is a place of interest for members and academics alike, providing research and lending services in an effort to advance knowledge and understanding of the fraternity, its meanings and its place in history. One of the center’s prize possessions is an incunabulum, or book printed before Dec. 31, 1499. For more information on the collections of books and records housed within the John Wannamaker Resource Center, [visit here](#).