



# AMERICAN SPIRIT: the legacy of Currier & Ives

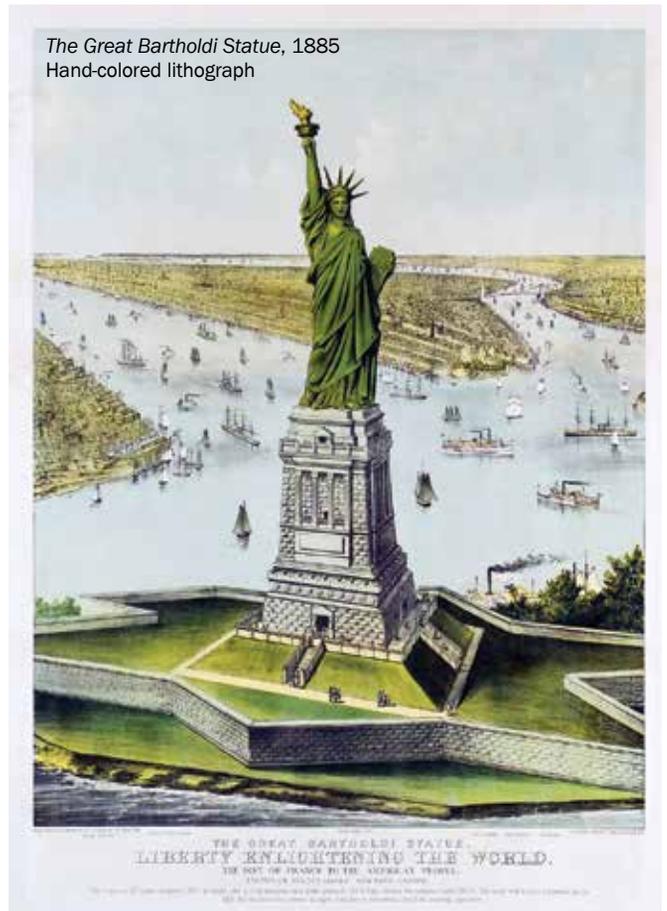
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Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, MA

For many, the mention of Currier & Ives conjures up images of horse-drawn sleighs, the holidays and rural winter scenes. Iconic artwork depicting idealized nineteenth-century American life, Currier & Ives' prints have hung in homes and businesses across America for decades and continue to grace the front of many a greeting card.

*Washington Crossing the Delaware*, undated  
Hand-colored lithograph



*The Great Bartholdi Statue, 1885*  
Hand-colored lithograph



To commemorate the friendship forged between France and the United States during the American Revolution, sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi was commissioned to design the Statue of Liberty (also known as "Liberty Enlightening the World").

Nathaniel Currier (1813-1888) and James Merritt Ives (1824-1895) were publishers, not artists. Partnering in 1852, the two men successfully capitalized on rapid advances in the printing industry and enhanced distribution methods to make and sell prints at prices affordable to the general public.

Currier & Ives commissioned art from a number of artists—including such prominent artists as Eastman Johnson, Arthur Fitzwilliam Tait, and George Durrie. In the seventy-two years that Currier & Ives was in business, the company produced more than 8,000 lithographs.

*The Express Train*, undated  
Hand-colored lithograph



The Boston and Albany Railroad at Greenbush (East Albany) NY.

*Preparing for Market*, 1856  
Hand-colored lithograph



PREPARING FOR MARKET.

Idyllic scenes like this presented the American farm in an attractive light to the public.

*Note: All works of art represented here are courtesy of: Michele and Donald D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, Massachusetts. Gift of Lenore B. and Sidney A. Alpert, supplemented with Museum Acquisition Funds.*