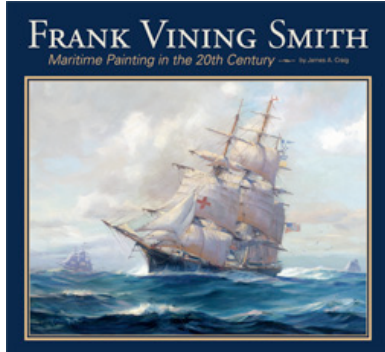


Hard Press Editions



Frank Vining Smith: Maritime Painting in the 20th Century

by James A. Craig

11"x12", Hardcover cloth bound; 172 pages; 85 color plates and 85 b/w plates
by James A. Craig, Introduction and Essay by Peter Williams

Deluxe leather bound edition available

Published by Hard Press Editions

Publication Date: June 2010

Distributed in the United States and Canada by National Book Network, Inc.

Distributed outside North America by Antique Collectors' Club, Ltd.

Retail Price: US \$65

Print Run: 3,000

ISBN-13: 978-1-55595-329-4

ISBN: 1-55595-329-8

Frank Vining Smith: Maritime Painting in the 20th Century presents a definitive survey of America's last true marine artist. Smith is perhaps best known for his majestic Clipper Ships, their billowing sails surging along white crested waters. Rich in symbolism and technically accurate in every way, Smith's vessels have been captivating audiences for decades. Yet, as both author James Craig and essayist Peter Williams attest, Smith was a prolific artist and illustrator whose subject matter went beyond his portrayal of the nautical world to include works depicting the great outdoors in a career that spanned both World War I and World War II and beyond.

Author James Craig has taken an interest in Frank Vining Smith following the completion of his first book, *Fitz H. Lane: An Artist's Voyage through Nineteenth Century America*. "Lane had been the premier American marine painter of the 19th century. Frank Vining Smith the premier American marine artist of the 20th century. Like Lane, he was from Massachusetts, had been raised around the sea since childhood, and was known for his versatility, color palette, and realism, capturing every line of rigging, sail plan, and line of a ship's hull with unerring accuracy." Craig's writing offers serious scholarship and an invitation to rediscover Smith's life and work, in response to great public interest and rising auction figures.

Born in Whitman, Massachusetts in 1879, Frank Vining Smith spent many a summer at Monument Beach in Falmouth and made Hingham, Massachusetts his home. When hopes

to enter the Navy in his youth were dashed due to poor eyesight, he wisely embraced his passion for painting incorporating it with his love of nautical vessels and the seashore. He enrolled at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (where he studied under Frank Benson, Philip L. Hale & Edmund C. Tarbell.) He studied in Canada for a time where he attended the Central Ontario School of Art and, finally, in New York City where he signed up for classes at the Art Students League.

Author James Craig introduces us to Smith's often overlooked work as a commercial illustrator which sustained and enriched his painting career. At the age of twenty-three, Smith began working as an illustrator for the *Boston Herald* and did advertising work for the *Boston Journal*. Smith won several prizes for his magazine and newspaper illustrations depicting a variety of outdoor themes that ran in *Outdoors*, *Field & Stream*, and *Yachting*. His illustrations not only helped to characterize these major national publications, but also came to define a generation enjoying a newly found sport of "leisure and the great outdoors." Many of Smith's illustrations are reproduced in this book for the first time.

Smith's first major solo exhibition came in 1921 resulting in consistent sales and resounding reviews. It wasn't until 1926, at the age of 47, that he began to paint full-time. With the onset of World War II, came a surge of patriotism and, for Smith, a blossoming list of patrons and commissions. His clients included such captains of industry as Josiah K. Lilly Jr. (of Eli Lilly Pharmaceuticals fame), fine art connoisseur and museum founder Julian de Cordova and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.



To every work, Smith brought his unique combination of playful palette, keen eye and technical mastery to transform what would normally be a very staid and common scene of antiquity into one that was vibrant and undoubtedly modern.

This extensive collection is a celebration of Smith's nostalgia and admiration for the great outdoors, sportsmanship, maritime traditions and the sea.

A comprehensive exhibition is scheduled to debut at the [Heritage Museums & Gardens](#), [June 26 through October 31, 2010](#).

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