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Iconic 'Washington Crossing the Delaware' Painting Now Resides in Minnesota



The Met's version of "Washington Crossing the Delaware" by Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze.
(Wikipedia)

A version of Emanuel Leutze's famous image of "Washington Crossing the Delaware" has moved from Washington, DC, to its new home at the Minnesota Marine Art Museum in Winona. The nearly 3-by-6-foot painting from 1851 was unveiled Sunday at a private event and goes on public view this week at the museum. "It looks just terrific," museum co-founder Mary Burrichter told the Star Tribune. "We had people crying in the audience last night when we unveiled it. People were gasping and didn't know what to say."

In 2006, Burrichter founded the marine art-themed museum with her husband, Bob Kierlin, whose company Fastenal is valued at \$15 billion.

German-born Leutze (1816–1868), who grew up in America, but painted the image in Germany, depicted a romanticized scene of a heroic Washington standing in a rowboat as it crosses an icy Delaware River to approach the enemy for a key battle in the Revolution. The surprise attack on Christmas Eve of 1776 turned the tide of the war. The well-known and more massive (149 in × 255 in.) version of the work is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Leutze's first version was destroyed by British bombs on a German museum during World War II. MMAM's Leutze painting was owned by a private collector who had loaned it to the White House for the past 35 years. It hung in the West Wing.

New York-based art dealer John Driscoll was behind the transaction. The price has not been revealed.

"People know this image ... It is tucked deep inside our psyche," said Andrew Maus, the museum's Executive Director, to the Post-Bulletin. The painting is on loan to the MMAM from the Burrichter/Kierlin Marine Art Collection.