



NEWS RELEASE

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Knights of Columbus Museum Unveils Piranesi's 18th Century Rome *New exhibition examines artist and print maker's etchings of the Eternal City*

(NEW HAVEN) – Rome's famous structures and ruins are the subject of a new exhibition opening May 23 at the Knights of Columbus Museum.

Venice native Giovanni Battista Piranesi, a trained draftsman, traveled to Rome in 1740 in the entourage of the Venetian ambassador to the papal court. Finding little opportunity in the architectural trade, he turned to printmaking as a source of income and creative expression.

Piranesi's Vedute di Roma (Views of Rome), a collection of some 135 signature etchings, became widely popular among tourists as mementos of their visit. His popularity earned him recognition not only as an artist, but as an architect and archaeologist as well.

Among the familiar Roman landmarks featured in the exhibition are the Colosseum, the Pantheon, Trevi Fountain, Castel Sant'Angelo, the Piazza del Popolo and Saint Peter's Basilica.

Also on display will be two original plates, as well as several tools, used in the printmaking process.

According to the exhibition's curator, Talia Avisar, the majority of printmakers at the time were not artists but rather skilled workers who copied drawings of others onto copper plates.

"In the hands of Piranesi," she explained, "printmaking was elevated to the level of fine art. He was intimately involved in the process from its initial conception through its final execution onto the printed page."



Etchings of the Eternal City: Piranesi's Rome will be on exhibition until November 9, 2008.

The Knights of Columbus Museum is located at 1 State Street in New Haven and is open daily during the summer from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Museum admission and parking are free. For information, call 203-865-0400.

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