



C D A P R O G R A M

Cleveland Decorative Arts
www.clevelanddecorativearts.org

Sunday May 21, 2023 11:30 AM

Lunch followed by Lecture

Joint Meeting with the Rowfant Club

3028 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115

Chris W. Lane

Chromolithography: Art for the People

A chromolithograph is a colored image printed with numerous applications of lithographic stones, each using a different color ink. The wide-spread use of chromolithography in America began following the Civil War, and in the next half decade millions of chromolithographs were made and sold throughout the country.



Many early chromolithographs were elaborately made, using upwards of 20 or more stones to create a rich and sophisticated image. These chromolithographs were intended to duplicate watercolors or paintings, allowing the middle class to hang "art" in their home at an affordable price. Chromolithographs were one of the most important artistic elements in the life of many Americans in the later nineteenth century

At the end of the century and into the early twentieth century, chromolithography was primarily used to create "cheap and cheerful" colored images, and these inexpensive and simple prints created a bad name for this process, giving "chromos" a reputation as the poor man's prints. This has unfortunately led many to overlook the importance of the high-quality chromolithographs from earlier in the century, something this lecture will hopefully begin to correct.

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