

# The Jenks Society Presents THE LOST MUSEUM



*Currier Gallery of Art main-level gallery installation of American collection (detail), c. 1930. Postcards, Box 1, Office of Public Relations and Marketing, Currier Museum of Art Reference Library and Archives. Witkin added a plywood table to this early American tavern scene to ask why curators had left out an important part of the story.*

## ARTISTS WE ADMIRE: Andrew Witkin

The Currier Museum of Art in Manchester, New Hampshire, invited artist Andrew Witkin to delve into the museum's collections exhibitions and help the public understand the ways that curators and others had shaped them over the years. "The result of that invitation," writes Nina Gara Bozicnik, the curator of the installation, was to reveal "the museum's role in the process of creating history" and "to give visitors new ways of thinking about historical material and their experiences in museums. The exhibition also explores changes in museum practices and how knowledge shifts over time, opening up the Currier and the stories it tells to re-examination."

Witkin explored the museum's archives and then made minor changes to exhibits to help visitors think about the creation of collections and exhibitions in new ways. For example: a plywood table added to an early American tavern scene "provokes the question of why such a historically significant object was missing in the first place... and calls attention to the artifice of the vignette. A pairing of a 1930 postcard of plaster casts "preciously displayed" with a contemporary image of those casts used as props in the museum's teaching gallery to call attention to the way that museums' ideas of value have changed over time.