

Merkel Family Foundation

Fall 2006

Distinguished Lecture Series

The Charles M. Russell Center
of the University of Oklahoma
School of Art

presents

Joni Kinsey

Professor, American Art

School of Art and Art History

University of Iowa



Thomas Moran, *Valley of Babbling Waters*
(chromolithograph)
Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska

Thomas Moran and the Chromolithograph Controversy

Friday, December 8, 2006 at 7 p.m., free and open to the public
Pitman Auditorium, Catlett Music Center, 500 West Boyd
(enter on Elm Avenue)

followed by a reception at 8 p.m
at the **Charles M. Russell Center, Old Faculty Club**
409 West Boyd Street



Charles M.
RUSSELL CENTER
for the Study of Art of the American West

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**THOMAS MORAN AND
THE CHROMOLITHOGRAPH CONTROVERSY (FREE ART
LECTURE BY UNIVERSITY OF IOWA PROFESSOR)**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NORMAN – The Charles M. Russell Center for the Study of Art of the American West at the University of Oklahoma School of Art will present a lecture by Joni L. Kinsey, professor of American art history at the University of Iowa, specializing in American western art. She will speak at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 8, 2006, in Morris R. Pitman Recital Hall of the Catlett Music Center, located at 500 West Boyd St.

The lecture is part of the Merkel Family Foundation Distinguished Lecture Series and will be followed by a reception at the Charles M. Russell Center in the Old Faculty Club, 409 W. Boyd St. Both the lecture and reception are free and open to the public.

In her illustrated lecture “Thomas Moran and the Chromolithograph Controversy,” Kinsey will examine the first color prints of Yellowstone National Park, created in the early 1870s by one of the most important artists of the 19th-century American West. Printed through the then state-of-the-art reproduction process called “chromolithography,” the images offer a vivid glimpse into many spectacular areas of the region at the same time as they provide a remarkable case study of aesthetic controversy. Hailed by many for their remarkable color and exceptional quality, and dismissed by others for having been mechanically produced, the prints were embroiled in a vehement debate about the merits of reproductions vs. original art, a dispute that ultimately affected their subsequent reputation and established a hierarchy of media that has persisted to the present.

Kinsey is a leading authority on the art of Thomas Moran and the American West and has published a number of books, including *Thomas Moran and the Surveying of the American West* (Smithsonian, 1992), *Plain Pictures: Images of the American Prairie*, (Smithsonian, 1996), and *Thomas Moran’s West: Chromolithograph, High Art, and Popular Taste* (University Press of Kansas, 2006).

Founded in 1998, the Charles M. Russell Center for the Study of Art of the American West is the first such university-based program in the nation. The center is dedicated to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge in the field of American art history as it relates to the western United States. Through its resource holdings, national symposia, lecture series, course offerings and outreach programs, the Russell Center actively engages students and the public in developing a better understanding of, and appreciation for, 19th- and 20th-century Euro-American and Native American artistic traditions. Special focus is given to the art of Charles M. Russell and his contemporaries. For more information on the Russell Center, visit <http://art.ou.edu/russellcenter/>. For accommodations on the basis of disability, call 325-5939.

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Editors: please find attached a scan of the chromolithograph *Valley of Babbling Waters*, by Thomas Moran, in the collection of the Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska. This breathtaking vista is one of the early views of America's first national park, Yellowstone National Park, and represents a printmaking controversy that continues to the present day to be the topic of a free art lecture by Dr. Joni Kinsey, which is offered as part of the Russell Center's Merkel Family Foundation Distinguished Lecture Series.