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Lisa Minardi Appointed as Editor of *Americana Insights*

April 2023 – Scholar, author, and curator Lisa Minardi will serve as the new editor of *Americana Insights*, a non-profit and free online publication focused on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Americana and American folk art. Minardi will succeed founding editor Robert Shaw, who retired at the start of 2023.



Minardi leading a tour of the folk art gallery at Historic Trappe's Center for Pennsylvania German Studies.

A distinguished scholar, author, and curator, Minardi brings a wealth of knowledge in the fields of Americana and academic publishing to *Americana Insights*. She also serves as executive director of Historic Trappe and its Center for Pennsylvania German Studies, a role she will retain in tandem with her new position as editor of *Americana Insights*. Noting her passion for all things Americana, Minardi says she is “excited for the opportunity to present new scholarship and join an amazing team dedicated to producing a publication of the highest quality.”

A native of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, Minardi is a specialist in the history and material culture of southeastern Pennsylvania. She holds a BA in history and museum studies from Ursinus College, an MA from the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture, and is a PhD candidate in the History of American Civilization Program at the University of Delaware, where she is researching the German-speaking community of early Philadelphia for her dissertation.



Paintings gallery at the Center for Pennsylvania German Studies at Historic Trappe where Minardi is executive director. Courtesy of Historic Trappe, photo by Gavin Ashworth.

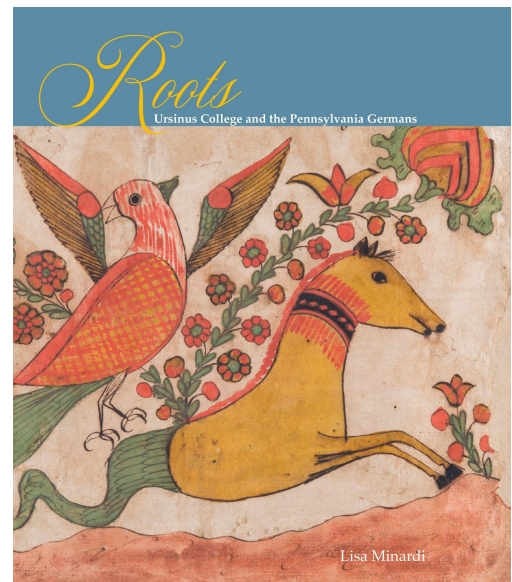
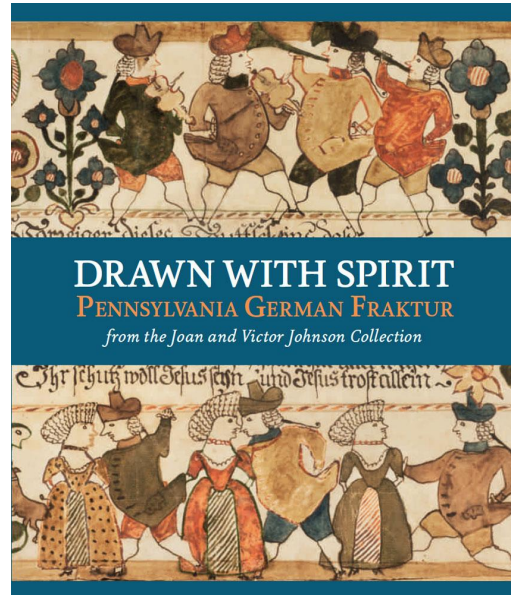
Curatorial Work, Publications, and Professional Activities

Minardi is the author of numerous publications on Pennsylvania German folk art and has curated more than a dozen exhibitions.

- From 2006 to 2016 she was an assistant curator at Winterthur Museum, where in 2011 she co-authored the book *Paint, Pattern & People: Furniture of Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1725–1850* and helped organize the companion exhibition.

- Also in 2011, she curated the exhibition *Pastors & Patriots: The Muhlenberg Family of Pennsylvania* at the Philip and Muriel Berman Museum of Art at Ursinus College and wrote the accompanying catalog.
- In 2015, she served as consulting curator and catalog author for the Philadelphia Museum of Art's *Drawn with Spirit: Pennsylvania German Fraktur from the Joan and Victor Johnson Collection*.
- That same year, she curated the Winterthur exhibition *A Colorful Folk: Pennsylvania Germans & the Art of Everyday Life*, authoring the accompanying catalog, and curated the exhibition *Quill & Brush: Pennsylvania German Fraktur and Material Culture* at the Free Library of Philadelphia.
- Minardi has written four major articles for the journal *American Furniture*:

- "From Millbach to Mahantongo: Fraktur and Furniture of the Pennsylvania Germans" (2011);
- "Philadelphia, Furniture, and the Pennsylvania Germans: A Reevaluation" (2013);
- "Adam Hains and the Philadelphia-Reading Connection" (2014);
- "Sulfur Inlay in Pennsylvania German Furniture: New Discoveries" (2015).



- Her most recent book, *Roots: Ursinus College and the Pennsylvania Germans*, was published by Historic Trappe in 2019 in conjunction with a special exhibit for the college's 150th anniversary.
- Her current research focuses on David Ellinger, a self-taught artist and antiques dealer from Trappe who helped popularize Pennsylvania German culture in the mid-twentieth century. She

guest curated the exhibit “Out of the Heart: The Life and Art of David Ellinger” for Arcadia University in 2022 and is currently developing a spinoff exhibit on Ellinger for Historic Trappe, opening in fall 2023.

- A frequent lecturer, Minardi teaches a course on Pennsylvania German folk art for the Barnes Foundation.

Work with Historic Trappe



The Henry Muhlenberg House exterior and furniture gallery. Courtesy of Historic Trappe, photos by Gavin Ashworth.

Since 2003, Minardi has been involved with historic preservation work in the town of Trappe, Pennsylvania. As a college student, she helped found the Speaker’s House, a nonprofit organization that rescued from demolition the historic home of Frederick Muhlenberg (1750–1801)—first Speaker of the US House. She served as the organization’s executive director from 2014 to 2019. In 2017, she chaired the town’s three-hundredth anniversary steering committee and organized the exhibition “Revolution at Home: The Muhlenberg Family of Pennsylvania.” In 2018, she was appointed director of collections and exhibitions for the Trappe Historical Society.

In 2020, Minardi spearheaded the merger of the Trappe Historical Society and the Speaker’s House, becoming the founding director of what is now known as Historic Trappe. She now oversees three historic houses associated with the Muhlenberg family as well as the Center for Pennsylvania German Studies. The center includes five exhibition galleries featuring a wide range of furniture, fraktur, needlework, pottery, and much more. It also houses a research library and archives focusing on Americana, local history, and genealogy. Highlights include a large Pennsylvania German manuscript collection donated by Dennis and Linda Moyer; research files on Pennsylvania German textiles

compiled by Trish Herr; and the Americana library of William K. du Pont. Minardi's current projects at Historic Trappe include building up the collection and continuing to share it online, as well as completing the restoration of the Speaker's House for the America 250 celebrations in 2026.



About *Americana Insights*

Americana Insights is a print and online publication dedicated to the study of Americana and American folk art. It was founded in 2021 by collector Jane Katcher, with the invaluable collaboration of dealer-specialist David A. Schorsch, her longtime friend and mentor in the field, and the assistance of a distinguished advisory board of museum professionals and published scholars.



Detail of Thomas Earl, "The Mariner's Compass," from his 1740–41 copybook. Featured in the three-part essay series on Earl by Deborah M. Child. <https://americanainsights.org/essays>

The mission of *Americana Insights* is to inspire, extend, and enhance appreciation and knowledge of traditional American folk art and Americana among collectors, students, scholars, and the general public.

The publication has produced seventeen scholarly articles to date and continuously seeks new submissions of original research focused on a single object or group of objects, or individual creator or group of artists or craftspeople. Accepted work receives a generous honorarium.



Sign for the Canal Hotel, Port Jervis, New York, c. 1826. Featured in “A Sign of the Times: Stephen St. John’s Canal Hotel Sign” by Pamela and Brian Ehrlich. <https://americanainsights.org/essays/canal-hotel-sign/>

The On Now section of the website gathers current museum exhibitions, public programs, and virtual learning of all kinds. Its Resources page offers a directory of nearly 150 institutions with collections of American folk art, decorative arts, Americana, and related archival material.



Left: Ridgway Medal, New York, 1855. Right: William Matthew Prior (1806–1873), *Young Woman with Cameo Brooch*, New England, c. 1835. Featured in “Jewelry in American Folk Portraits” by Eileen M. Smiles. <https://americanainsights.org/essays/jewelry-folk-portraits/>

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