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WINTERTHUR, DE (May 9, 2023) – A devotional manuscript made in the 1780s that is too fragile to display is being digitized and will be available to the public in 2024. On May 12, scholars and advisers will gather at Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library to discuss what the manuscript has revealed so far. They will share their work and perspectives on the manuscript and how it helps them better understand life and art in an early American borderland: the town of Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

The study day, from 9 am to 12:30 pm, is free to attend, but participants must register in advance at:

<https://tinyurl.com/denig>

Early in 2020, Winterthur was given this extraordinary leather-bound illuminated manuscript made by Ludwig Denig (1755–1830), a shoemaker and apothecary who lived in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The Denig manuscript combines intricate ink and watercolor drawings, personal and devotional texts, and sheet-music hymns, forming a compelling record of art and life in 18th-century America.

“Our job is not only to preserve the manuscript but also to curate it and make sure it’s available and relevant to a wider audience,” said Marie-Stéphanie Delamaire, Curator of European and American Art at the Carnegie Museum of Art. Delamaire, who previously served as Curator of Fine Art at Winterthur, is leading the project. “There’s nothing like it anywhere,” she added.

To experience the manuscript requires carefully leafing through more than one hundred sheets of brittle paper. Given the document’s fragility, each turn of the page threatens its physical integrity. To preserve this remarkable object while

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The manuscript reflects the life and times of Ludwig Denig, a Pennsylvania German man born during the French and Indian War. He was a child at the time of the 1763 massacre of the Conestoga Indians in Lancaster, which took place within blocks of his home. Denig also served as a private during the Revolutionary War.

The manuscript was a gift to Winterthur from Alessantrina and David Schwartz and the Schwartz Foundation. An interdisciplinary team has been working on the project, which is funded by the Getty Foundation and the Schwartz Foundation.

Study day presentations and presenters include:

- “The Materials and Art of the Denig Manuscript”: Marie-Stéphanie Delamaire and Joan Irving, Assistant Director of Conservation and Senior Paper Conservator, Winterthur
- “Ludwig Denig: Cosmic Cobbler”: Alexander L. Ames, Director of Outreach and Engagement, Rosenbach Museum & Library
- “Denig and the Specter of the Seven Years’ War”: Will Fenton, Associate Director of Research at the Center for Spatial and Textual Analysis, Stanford University
- “Denig’s Omnivorous Musical and Spiritual Inspirations”: Christopher Herbert, Assistant Professor of Music and Vocal Area Coordinator, William Paterson University of New Jersey

The study day will begin with an introduction by Chris Strand, Charles F. Montgomery Director and CEO of Winterthur. It will conclude with a roundtable of discussion and reflections about the project with the above-named speakers as well as noted scholars and community leaders.

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ABOUT WINTERTHUR MUSEUM, GARDEN & LIBRARY

Winterthur—known worldwide for its preeminent collection of American decorative arts, naturalistic garden, and research library for the study of American art and material culture—offers a variety of tours, exhibitions, programs, and activities throughout the year. Admission includes a self-paced house tour, exhibitions, a narrated tram ride (weather and space permitting), and the Winterthur Garden.

Winterthur is located on Route 52, six miles northwest of Wilmington, Delaware, and five miles south of U.S. Route 1. Winterthur is committed to accessible programming for all. For information, including special services, call 800.448.3883 or visit [winterthur.org](https://www.winterthur.org).

For immediate release

Press Contact: Jason Brudereck
Communications Manager
jbrudereck@winterthur.org









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