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## ANTIQUES

## Two-Ton Hercules Mosaic, Rock Steady in Newark



Hildreth M. Dunn

The Rock of Gibraltar, shown on a huge mosaic panel designed by Hildreth Meière for a Prudential Insurance building, was recently rediscovered and moved to the Newark Museum.

By EVE M. KAHN

Published: October 4, 2012

PLAINFIELD, N.J. — A symbol of unshakable corporate strength, weighing two tons, has been cut apart for easy transport. The piece, a 1960s panel of a marble mosaic depicting Hercules sailing past the Rock of Gibraltar, was removed two decades ago from a Prudential Insurance office tower in Newark. Recently rediscovered in storage, it has been donated to the [Newark Museum](#), and it goes on view in a central courtyard there this month.

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In its new niche “no one’s going to remove it, hopefully,” said Anthony D. Schiavo, a mosaic artist who worked on the original Prudential installation with the designer, the Art Deco artist Hildreth Meière. Her daughter, Louise Meière Dunn, and granddaughter, Hildreth Dunn, who run the [International Hildreth Meière Association](#) in Stamford, Conn., brought in Mr. Schiavo to help move the marble chips that he had assembled as a young artisan at a Long Island City, Queens, company called V. Foscato.

A few weeks ago the slab, which measures about 13 by 11 feet, was briefly laid out in a factory parking lot in this northern New Jersey town. Under Mr. Schiavo’s watchful

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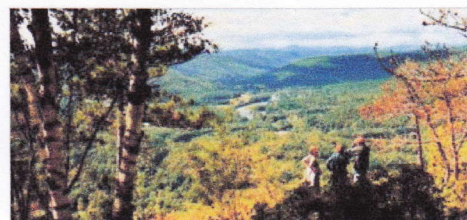
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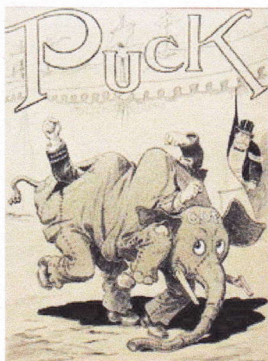
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Hess Fine Art Auctions  
A 1911 political cartoon by Louis M. Glackens is part of a collection of newspaper cartoons to be auctioned.

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Lawrence Webster  
One of Maud and Miska Petersham's illustrations for the children's book "The Poppy Seed Cakes."

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Mary Petersham Reinhard Collection  
Maud and Miska Petersham, book illustrators, at their Woodstock, N.Y., home in the early 1950s.

Hofmann for the lobby at 711 Third Avenue, between 44th and 45th Streets in Manhattan, have been restored. Gauzy color blocks from the 1950s, designed by Lucia [Salemme](#), were salvaged at 220 Central Park South and are in storage awaiting a safe new home.

## NEWSPAPER CARTOON CACHE

Charles L. Howard, a railroad executive and inventor, had an obsessive hobby: He wrote to newspaper cartoonists asking for originals of their drawings and then framed the works for display at his office. He died in 1957, and his descendants filed away about 800 paper images of Dick Tracy, Mickey Mouse, corrupt Congressmen and foreign dictators.

The family has consigned the drawings for a series of sales at [Hess Fine Auctions](#) in St. Petersburg, Fla. The next round, including 1880s caricatures of politicians victimizing the working class, by Thomas Nast, and 1910s tableaux of infighting Republicans, by Louis M. Glackens, will be held on Oct. 18.

eye, a team sliced it in two so it would fit through the museum doors.

Stephen Miotto, a mosaic artist based in Carmel, N.Y., and his assistant Miro Matusek sawed and drilled along a line marked in red crayon. The panel vibrated, and stone dust filled the air. But only a few chips broke free and needed to be repaired.

Ms. Dunn, the granddaughter, lay on the damp asphalt to photograph the blades biting through the mortar.

"My grandmother was adventurous too," she said. Beginning in the 1910s, Meière traveled for hundreds of commissions at offices, homes and religious and government buildings scattered from Rhode Island to Southern California.

The marble, in shades of green, purple, ivory and gray, was quarried in Ireland, Italy, Belgium and Turkey. Mr. Schiavo said that the palette would glow again after a bath in mild acid and water.

He remembers Meière as regal but kind and diplomatic. While the Foscatto crew was laying out marble stripes to realize her image of Gibraltar cliffs and waves, he said, "She was smart enough to let the other artists decide."

At the museum the panel hangs near a cafe and two abstract 1930s murals that Arshile Gorky painted for a Newark Airport building. In a few months two other sections of the Prudential mosaics will be installed at the [Center for Hellenic Studies](#) in Washington.

Catherine Coleman Brawer, a historian who is working on a Meière monograph with the author Kathleen Murphy Skolnik, said in a recent phone interview that she has discovered Meière's 1933 travel diary notes about visiting Gibraltar. "It is somehow thrilling to pass through that channel," Meière wrote about the scenery that eventually inspired the Prudential design.

Foscatto mosaics around New York have been overhauled in recent years. Grids and [swerves](#) designed by Hans



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