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**GREAT AMERICAN IMPRESSIONIST PAINTER**  
**HONORED WITH NEW POSTAGE STAMPS**

**Four Works by Mary Cassatt Latest in American Treasures Series**

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Thousands of stamp collectors attending the nation's largest annual event dedicated to their hobby waited patiently today to be the first to purchase four new commemorative postage stamps honoring the paintings of American Impressionist Mary Cassatt.

The Mary Cassatt stamps are now available from the U.S. Postal Service at StampShow 2003, which runs through Sunday at the Greater Columbus Convention Center, and at Columbus Post Offices. Tomorrow more than 38 million booklets, each containing 20 Cassatt stamps, will be available at Post Offices across the country.



“These stamps feature touching portraits by one of America’s most beloved and popular artists,” said dedicating speaker Mary Anne Gibbons, vice president and general counsel for the Postal Service. “These miniature paintings will grace millions of envelopes reminding everyone that stamps are part of American history and teach us to appreciate our culture and heritage.”

American Philatelic Society President Dr. Peter McCann; American Stamp Dealers Association President Elizabeth Tope; Postal Service Eastern Area Vice President Alexander Lazaroff and Postal Service Columbus District Manager Roger Nienaber assisted Gibbons with the dedication.

The following four Cassatt paintings are featured on the stamps: “Young Mother” (1888) and “On a Balcony” (1878/79) from The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.; and “Children Playing on the Beach” (1884) and “Child in a Straw Hat” (circa 1886) from the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Mary Stevenson Cassatt was born May 22, 1844, in Allegheny City, Pa. (now part of Pittsburgh). She attended the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia and continued her studies in Europe, settling permanently in Paris during the mid-1870s.

In 1877, at the invitation of Edgar Degas, who became her friend and mentor, Cassatt joined the circle of revolutionary French painters known as the Impressionists.

Recurring themes in Cassatt's paintings, pastels, prints and etchings include children engaging in various pastimes and contemporary women pursuing everyday activities such as entertaining visitors, and reading and caring for children. Paying careful attention to pose and gesture, she developed a vigorous, innovative style and rendered her subjects with a refreshingly unsentimental intimacy. By the end of the

19<sup>th</sup> century Cassatt was a pre-eminent artist in both the United States and France, where she died on June 14, 1926.

Earlier Postal Service tributes to Cassatt were: a stamp issued in 1966 featuring her painting "The Boating Party" (1894); a 1988 addition to the Great Americans series bearing her portrait; and a stamp issued in 1998 as part of the Four Centuries of American Art pane, highlighting "Breakfast in Bed" (1897).

The American Treasures series began in 2001 with the issuance of the Amish Quilts stamps, showcasing beautiful American fine arts and crafts. The 2002 addition to the series featured artwork by John James Audubon.

To see the Mary Cassatt stamps, visit the Postal Service Web site and open this press release at [www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm](http://www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm).

Current U.S. stamps, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available by toll-free phone order at 1 800 STAMP-24. A selection of stamps and other philatelic items are available at the online Postal Store at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). In addition, custom-framed art prints of original stamp art are available at [www.postalartgallery.com](http://www.postalartgallery.com).

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 140 million homes and businesses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$66 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The Postal Service delivers more than 43 percent of the world's mail volume — some 203 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year — and serves 7 million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.