



# THE ROSENBACH MUSEUM & LIBRARY

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## Summer Exhibition Spotlights Early American Manuscripts at the Rosenbach Museum & Library

For immediate release

**JUNE 23, 2003 - PHILADELPHIA, PA** - The Rosenbach Museum & Library announces its summer exhibition produced in celebration of the grand opening of the National Constitution Center. *Cities Without Citizens: Statelessness and Settlements in Early America* opens July 8 in the Maurice Sendak Building at 2008 DeLancey Place.

### **Cities Without Citizens: Statelessness and Settlements in Early America**

*Cities Without Citizens*, curated by Aaron Levy of Slought Foundation, juxtaposes historical materials from the Rosenbach collections with contemporary works to examine the cities, settlements and peoples of early America and illuminate how our nation's past connects with contemporary life. As a commentary on art, archiving and human rights, the exhibition re-indexes Rosenbach holdings according to four social parameters—settlement, citizenship, discipline, and liquidation. "*Cities Without Citizens* presents an inquisitive look at the processes and idiosyncrasies of building and liquidating a city in both early and modern times," says Levy. "How did early American settlers determine borders? How did they identify citizens versus outsiders, criminals and slaves, and further negotiate the respective freedoms and limitations of each? And how are these functions handled in modern-day contexts?"

The exhibition also explores theories of curatorial innovation, prompting the question of how one might renew or reinvent an archival collection. Levy approached the project with an acute awareness of the delicate balance between innovative interpretation of historical objects and the conscientious preservation of heritage. Contributing artists include forensic photographer Lars Wallsten, the disaster relief architectural team of Gans & Jelacic, and installation artist Katrin Sigurdardottir. Aaron Levy is Executive Director and Curator of Slought Foundation, an arts organization, gallery, and archival resource engaging contemporary life through critical theories about art.

*Cities Without Citizens* is the second phase of a two-part Slought Foundation project, and will culminate with a published compilation of essays by contemporary artists and theorists in conjunction with the four veins of the exhibition, plus illustrative examples from the Rosenbach collections. The exhibition runs through September 28.

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The Rosenbach will host an opening reception for *Cities Without Citizens* on Wednesday, July 9, 5:30-7:30pm. The event is free and open to the public. The Rosenbach is a historic house, museum, and research institution, which offers changing exhibitions and programs inspired by its world-renowned collections of rare books, manuscripts, and fine and decorative art.