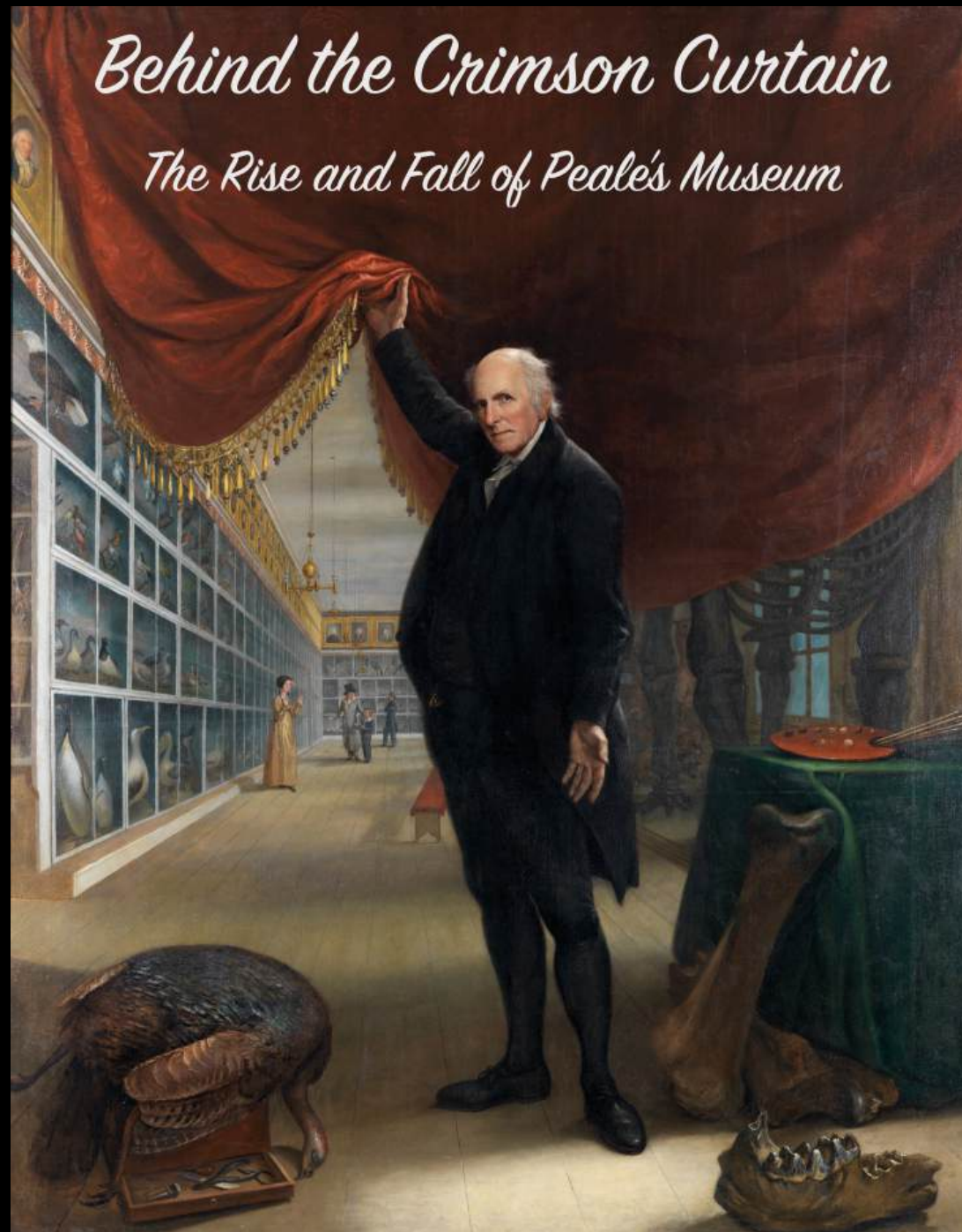


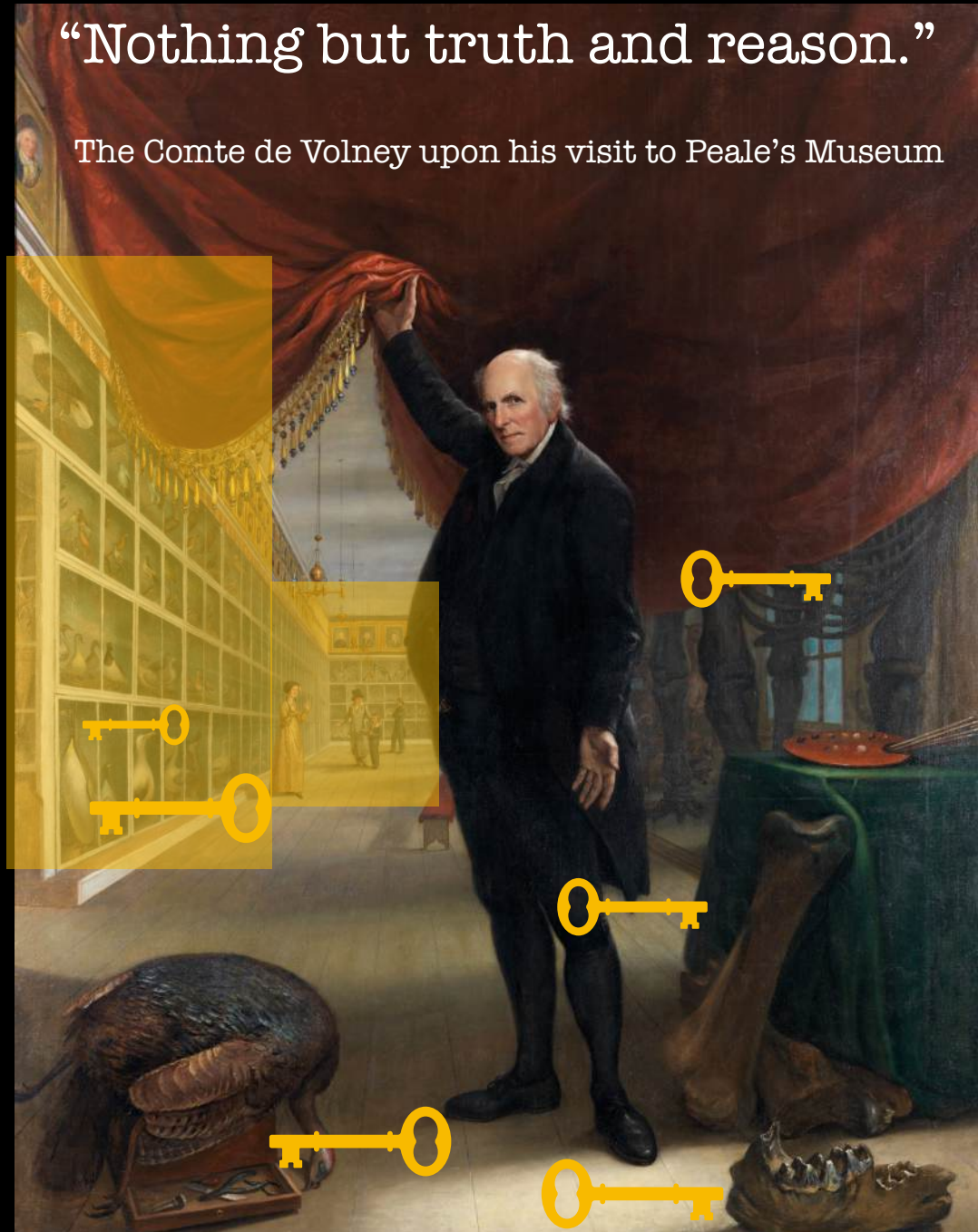


"The Artist in His Museum." Charles Willson Peale. 1822.

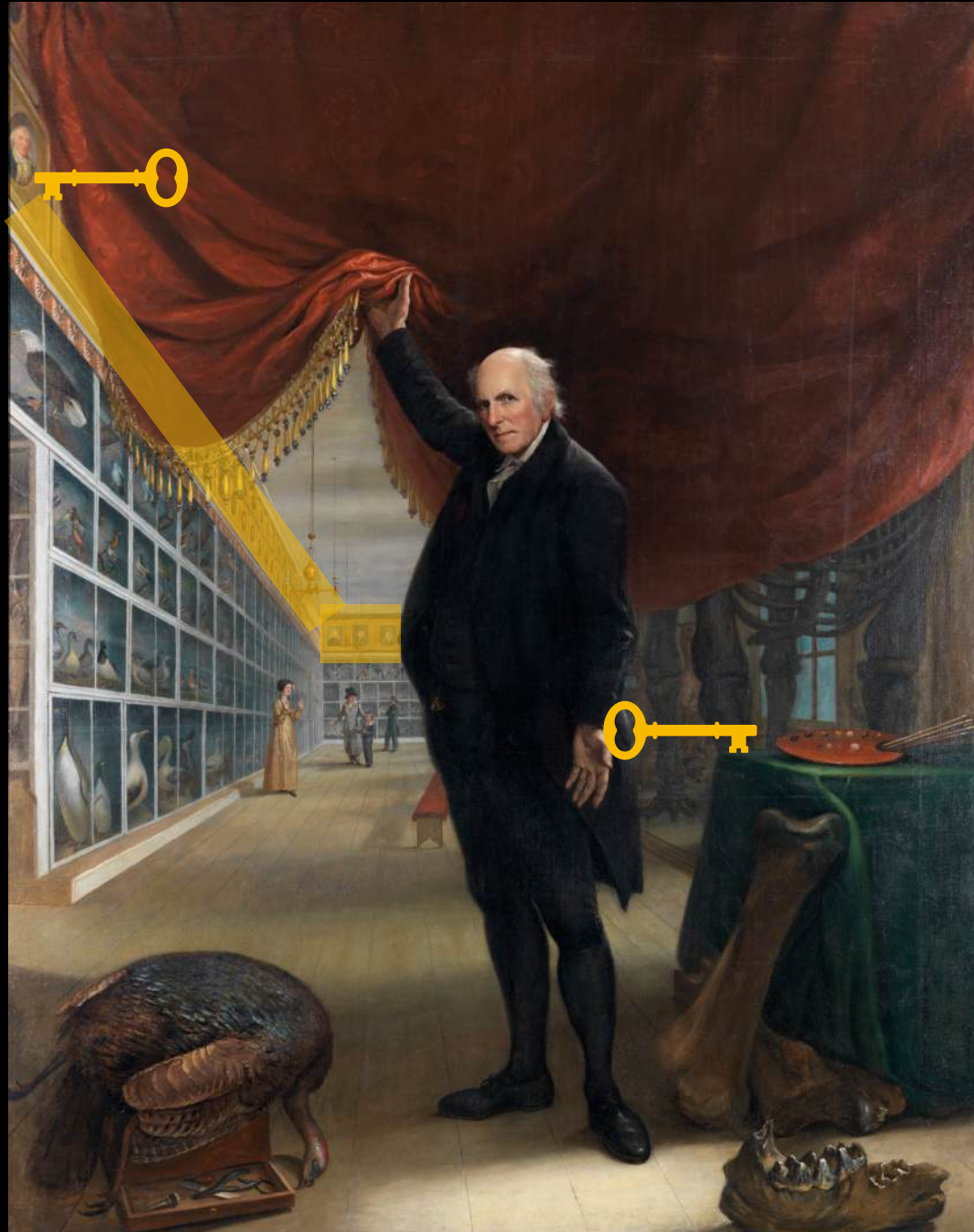
Peale's Enlightenment Shrine

“Nothing but truth and reason.”

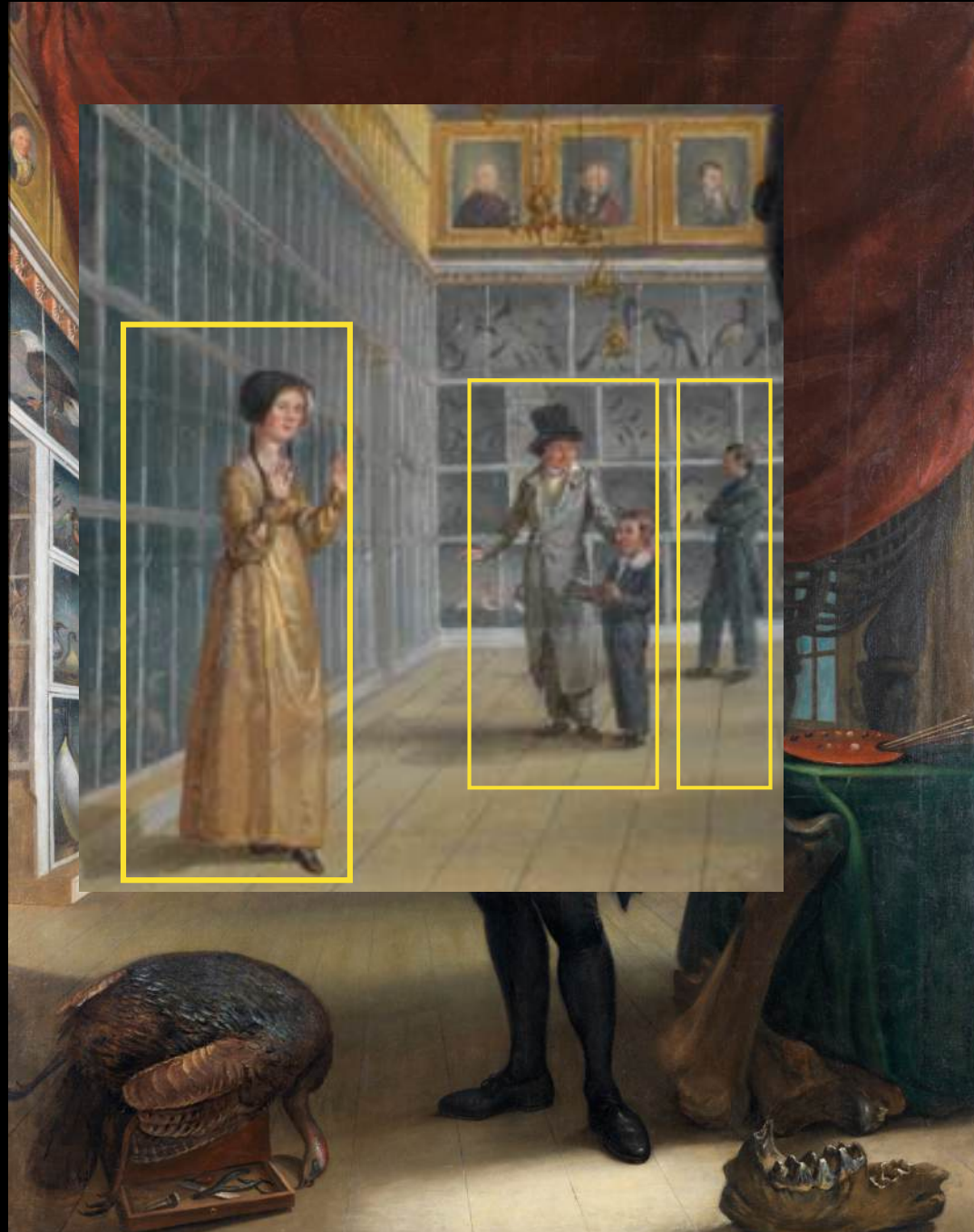
The Comte de Volney upon his visit to Peale's Museum



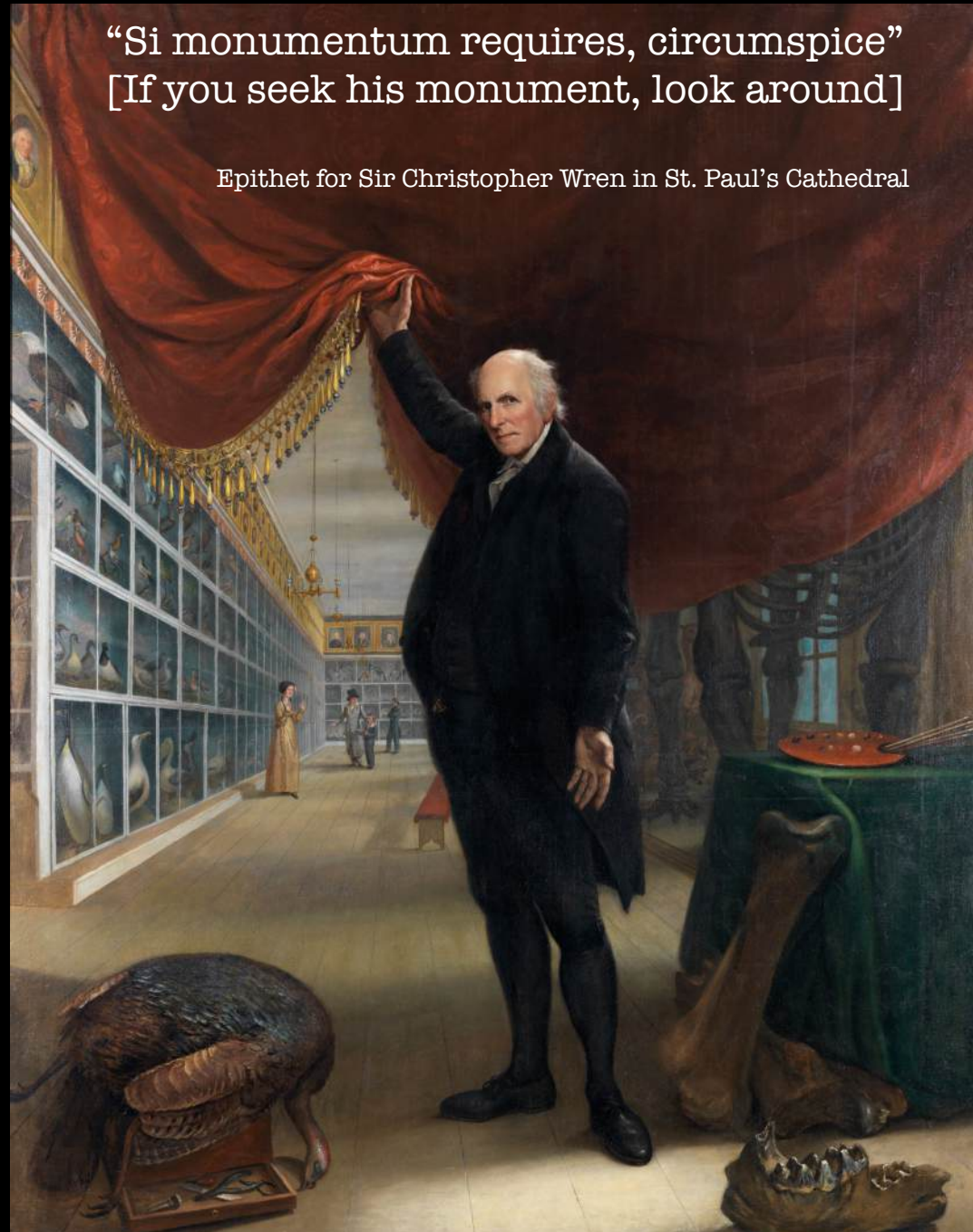
Peale's Enlightenment Shrine



Peale's Enlightenment Shrine



“If you seek his monument, look around”



Early Years in Annapolis: A Penchant for Painting



State House in Annapolis: Charles Willson Peale

1766: “Something Must and Shall be Done for Charles”



John Beale Bordley

National Gallery of Art



Benjamin West

Smithsonian Art Museum

1767-1769: London and West's Studio



Franklin with Polly Stevenson on his lap.
Charles Willson Peale. Circa 1767

1769: Peale's Return to The Colonies



George Washington. By Charles Willson Peale. 1772

1774: The Move to Philadelphia



State House, Philadelphia. By William Birch.

Peale opens a small art studio in his home on Arch Street.

After a visit to that studio, John Adams wrote Abigail that Peale was “tender, soft, affectionate ... he is ingenious.”

1780: The Move to 62 Lombard Street



Peale moved his family to a home he had purchased at 62 Lombard Street.

Opened a small painter's studio at the rear of the house.

1782: The Gallery Expansion



Peale added
a 66-foot extension to the house
with a series of sky lights with screens
could be adjusted to manipulate mood and setting.

1782: The Gallery Expansion

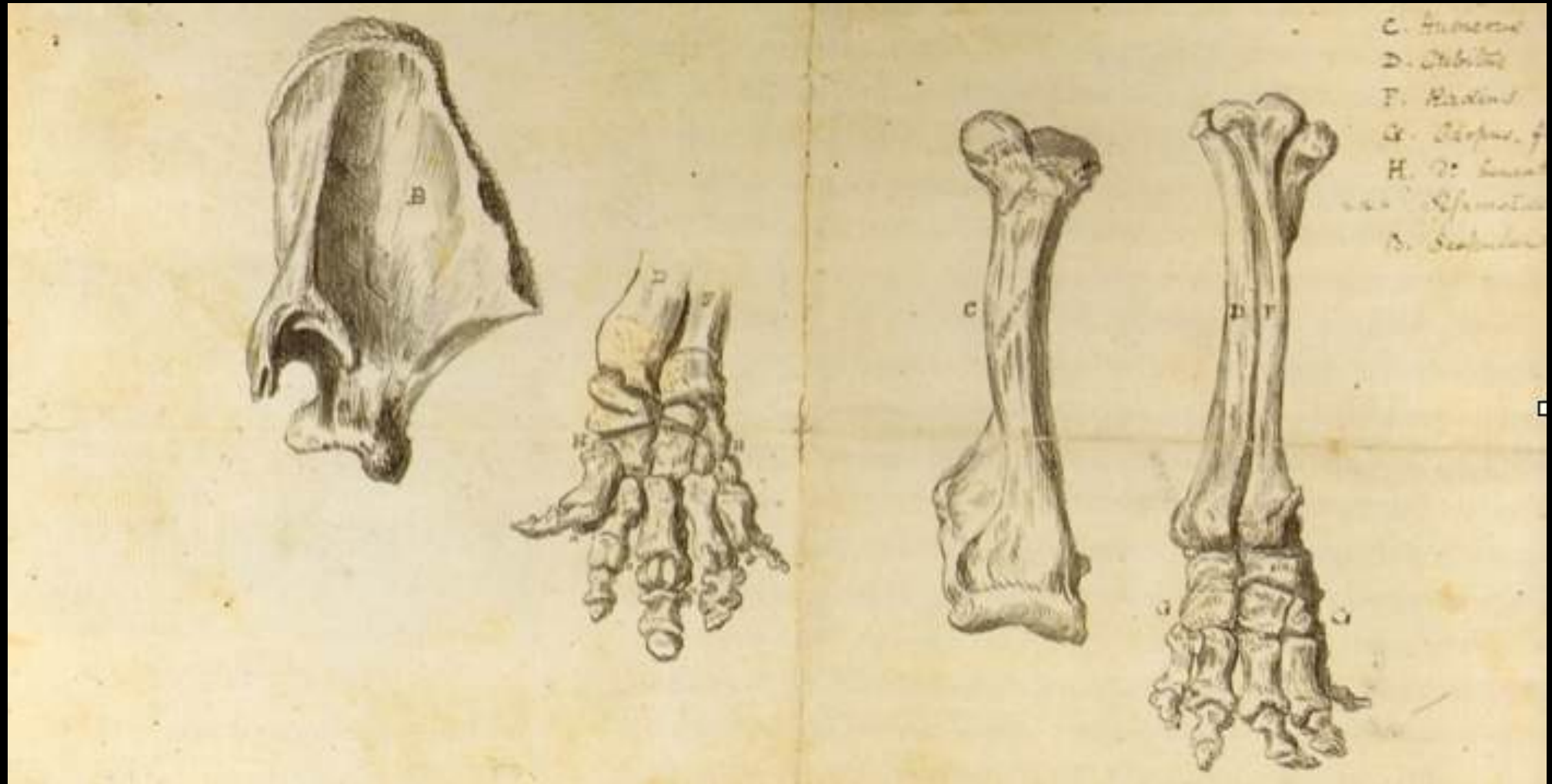


The Pennsylvania Packet, November 14, 1782

Peale's new "exhibition room," is now

"open for the reception and entertainment of all lovers of the fine arts, being ornamented with the portraits of a great number of worthy personages."

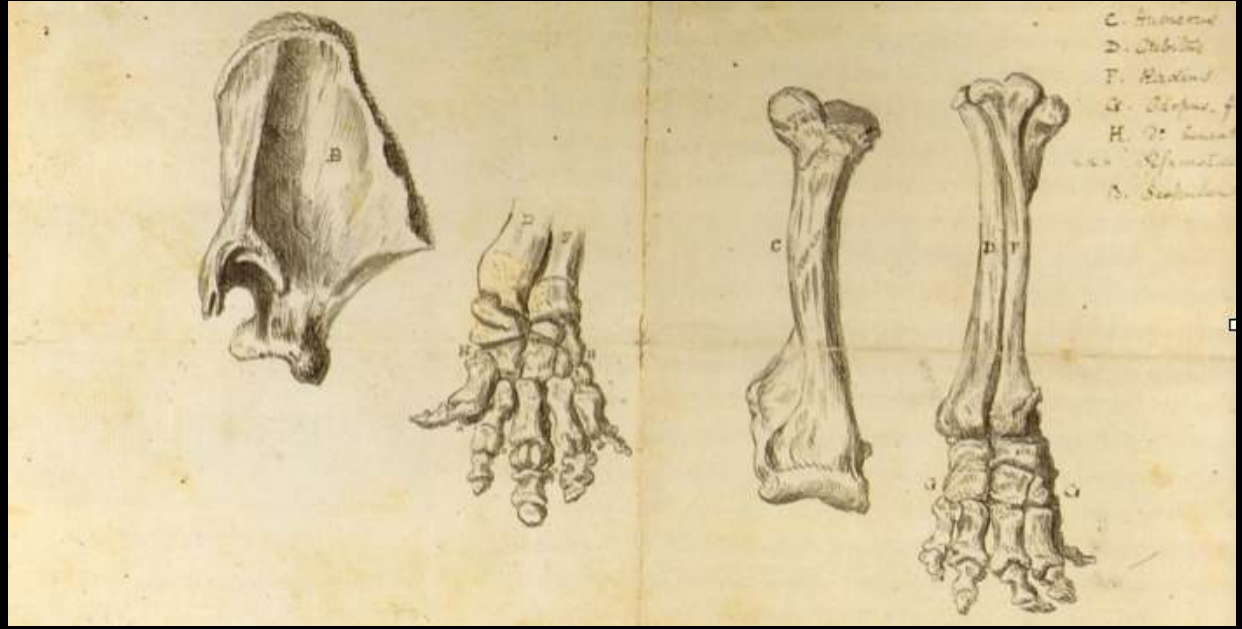
1784: The Bones that Set Things in Motion



1784: The Visit that Changed Everything



Nathaniel Ramsay By Charles Willson Peale



Ramsay told Peale that he “thought (the mammoth bones) so interesting ... he would have gone 20 miles to behold such a collection.”

1784: The Visit that Changed Everything



Nathaniel Ramsay By Charles Willson Peale



“Doubtless there are many men like myself who would prefer seeing such articles of curiosity than any paintings whatever, it would be little trouble to keep them, and the public would be gratified in the sight, at such times as they came to see the paintings.”

“Such Articles of Curiosity”



The Collection Grows: Franklin's Angora Cat



Madame Helvétius (Anne-Catherine de Ligniville)

Pairing Art with Natural History



Washington



Franklin

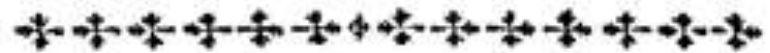


Paine



Lafayette

July 7, 1786: First Advertisement for Peale's Museum



MR. PEALE, ever desirous to please and entertain the Public, will make a part of his House a Repository for Natural Curiosities—The Public he hopes will thereby be gratified in the sight of many of the Wonderful Works of Nature which are now closeted and but seldom seen. The several Articles will be classed and arranged according to their several species; and for the greater ease to the Curious, on each piece will be inscribed the place from whence it came, and the name of the Donor, unless forbid, with such other information as may be necessary.

Mr. Peale will most thankfully receive the Communications of Friends who will favour him with their Assistance in this Undertaking

Corner of Lombard and Third Streets, Philadelphia.

N. B. All the Portraits are now removed into the former Exhibition Room; and Exhibitions of the Moving Pictures with Changeable Effects, will only be made for private companies, consisting of twenty or more persons, on previous notice being given.

Pennsylvania Packet, July 7, 1786

Mr. Peale, ever desirous to please and entertain the public, will make part of his house a repository for natural curiosities.

The public he hopes will thereby be gratified in the sight of many of the wonderful works of nature which are now closeted and but seldom seen.

The several articles will be classed and arranged according to their several species; and for the greater ease to the curious on each piece will be inscribed the place from whence it came, and the name of the donor....

Mr. Peale will most thankfully receive the communications of friends who will favor him with their assistance in this undertaking.

Ticket to Peale's Museum, 1787



Figure 8 Ticket to Peale's Museum, 1787.

“To Enlighten the Minds of my Countrymen”



Peale's vision of his museum

“{to} enlighten the minds of my countrymen and demonstrate the importance of diffusing a knowledge of the wonderful and various beauties of Nature ... to render the Institution a lasting honor and benefit to America.”

Dreams of a National Museum

Peale wrote General [not yet President] Washington that his museum would allow the young nation

“to retain with us many things really curious which would otherwise be sent to Europe.”



Charles Willson Peale



Washington

Dreams of a National Museum

Follow-up letters to Washington a few years later were more explicit.

Peale told the then President

he hoped that one day the museum would be under **Congressional “patronage.”**



Charles Willson Peale



Washington

The Museum Grows: Natural History

On an almost weekly basis the readers of the Pennsylvania Packet newspaper would learn of new museum acquisitions from

China
All across Africa
India
Pacific Islands
South America
North America



The Museum Grows: Natural History



hummingbirds and birds of paradise

pelicans and snipes

black panthers and minks

hammerhead sharks and porcupine fish

tiger skulls

A seventeen-foot-long shark from the

“Western ocean”

The Museum Grows: Anthropology and Ethnography



Fans and weapons from East India

Bow from Madagascar

Sword from Damascus

Mandarin pipe from China

A piece from the Bastille Prison

Cudgels from the Caribbean

Native American canoe

South American baskets

...

**Tahitian feather cap donated
by George Washington**

The Museum Grows: The Menagerie



By 1791, the Museum was a must see.

Annual attendance was ranged 3000-12,000 annually (in a city of 50,000)

1791: The Museum Board of Directors



Alexander Hamilton



James Madison

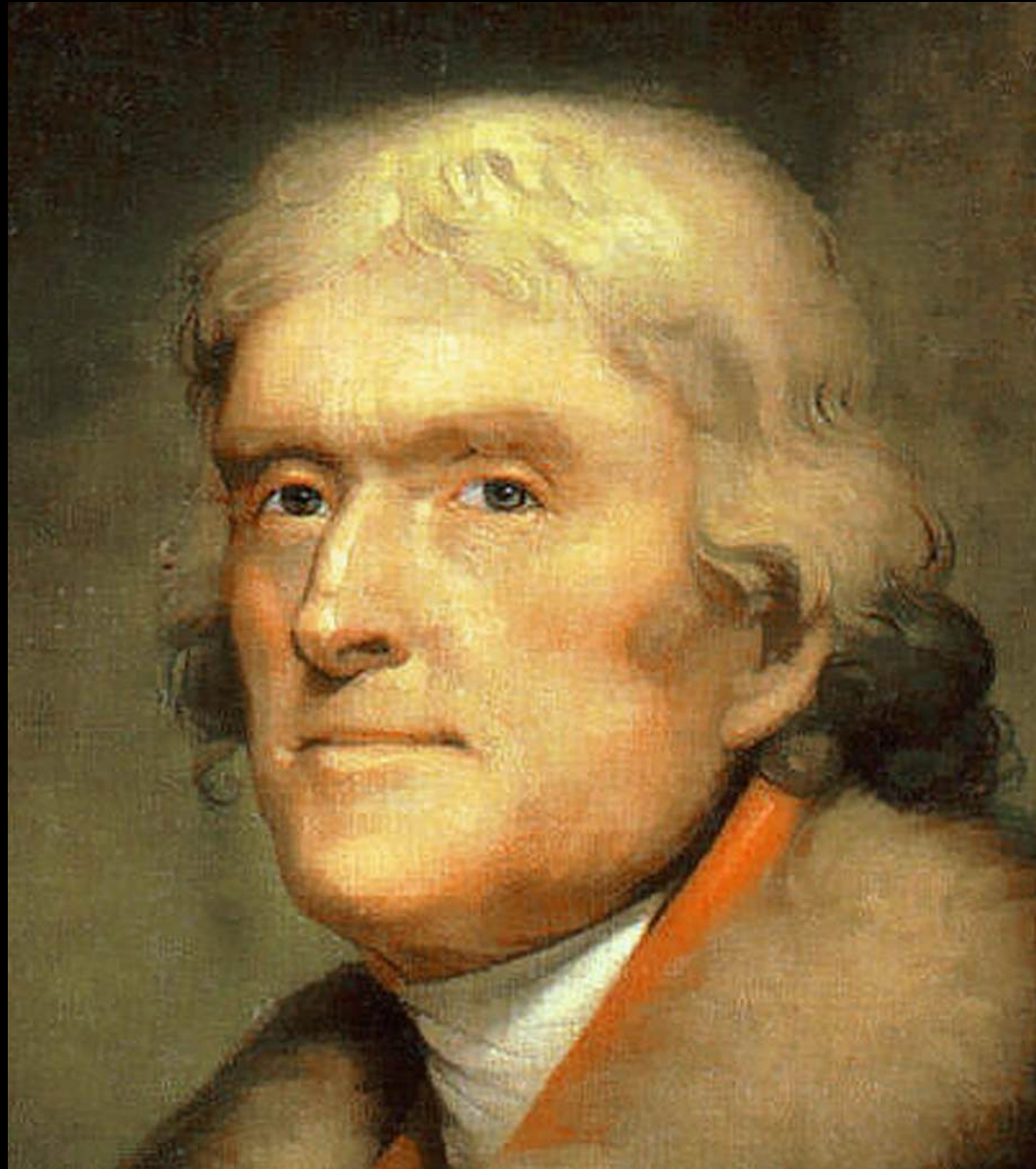


Gouverneur Morris



David Rittenhouse
(President of American
Philosophical Society)

1791: The Museum Board of Directors



Thomas Jefferson

1794: The Move to Philosophical Hall



Charles Willson Peale



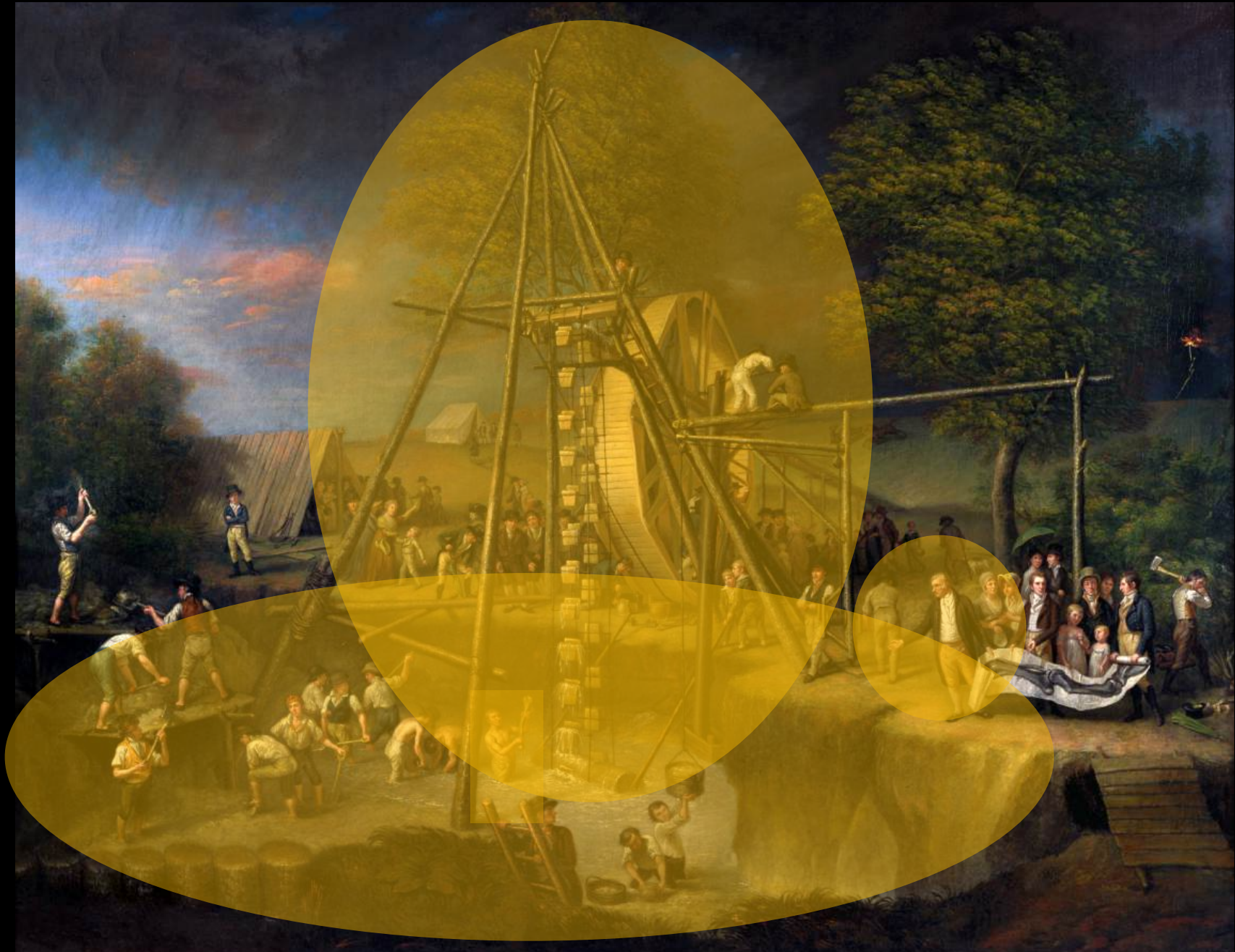
1801: Return of The Mammoth

Near Newburgh, New York, he and his team eventually excavated two nearly complete mammoth skeletons.



Exhumation of the Mastodon, C.W. Peale, 1806

1801: Return of The Mammoth



1801: Return of The Mammoth

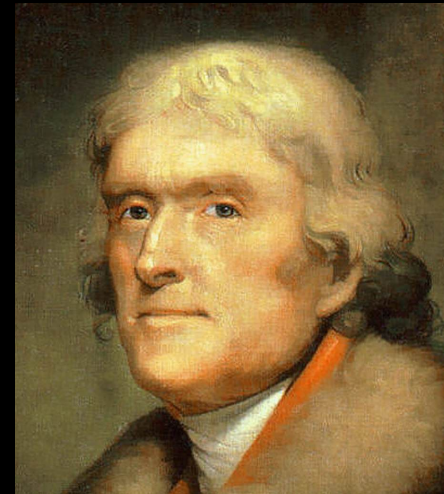
One mammoth skeleton was put on display in his museum.



1802: Carpe Diem



Peale's mammoth, front and center in his museum, was taking the country by storm.



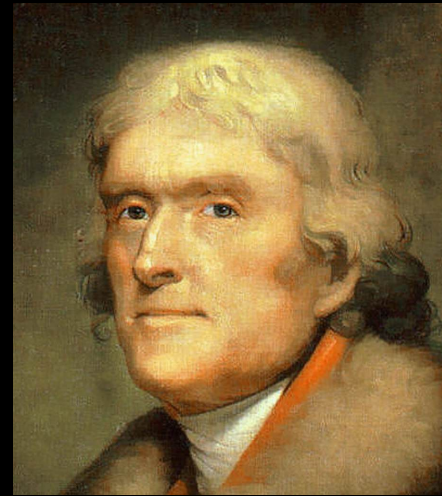
President of both
The American
Philosophical Society
and The United States.

January 1802: Peale Reaches out to President Jefferson



“The laborious, tho' pleasing task of mounting the mammoth skeleton being done, gives me leisure to attend to other interests of the museum.”

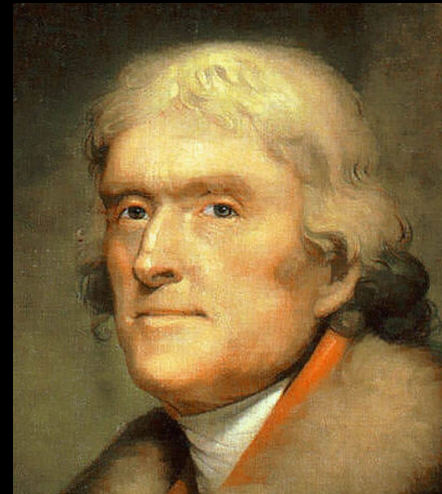
“huddled together, (my exhibits) lose much of their beauty and usefulness, they cannot be seen to advantage for study.”



Peale Reaches out to President Jefferson



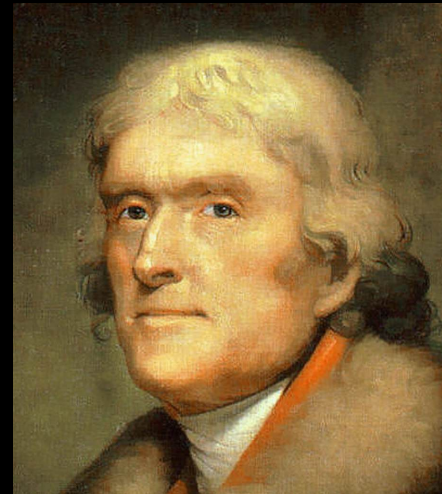
“In the end these labors
would be crowned in a
national establishment of
my museum.”



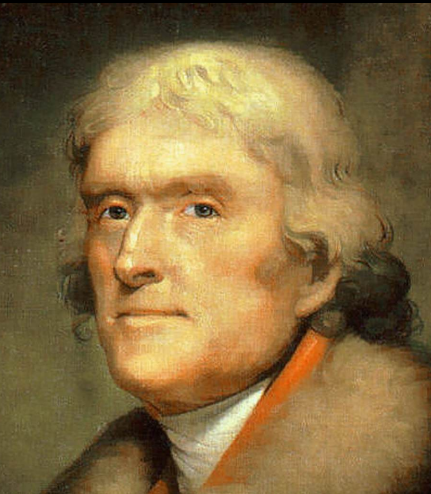
Peale Reaches out to President Jefferson



“I wish to know your sentiments on this subject, whether the United States would give an encouragement, and make provision for the establishment of (my) museum in the city of Washington.”



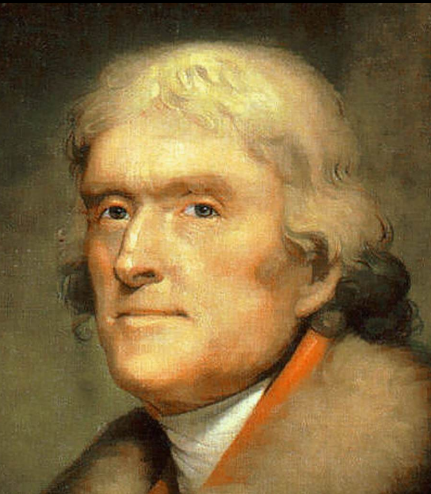
Peale Reaches out to President Jefferson



“No person on earth can entertain a higher idea than I do of the value of your collection nor give you more credit for the unwearied perseverance and skill with which you have prosecuted it, and I very much wish it could be made public property.”



Peale Reaches out to President Jefferson

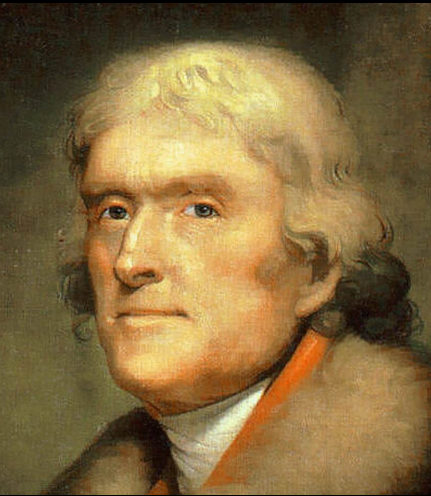


“I must not suffer my partiality to it to excite false expectations in you, which might eventually be disappointed.

You know that one of the great questions which has divided political opinion in this country is whether Congress (is) authorized by the Constitution to apply the public money to any but the purposes specially enumerated in the Constitution, and (many) have always denied that Congress has any power to establish a National Academy.”



Peale Reaches out to President Jefferson



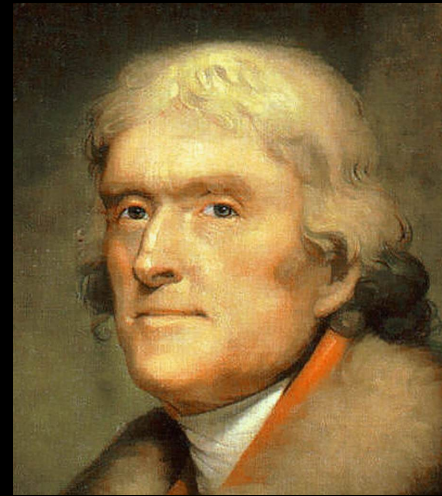
“I believe the opinion of a want of power to be that of the majority of the legislature.”



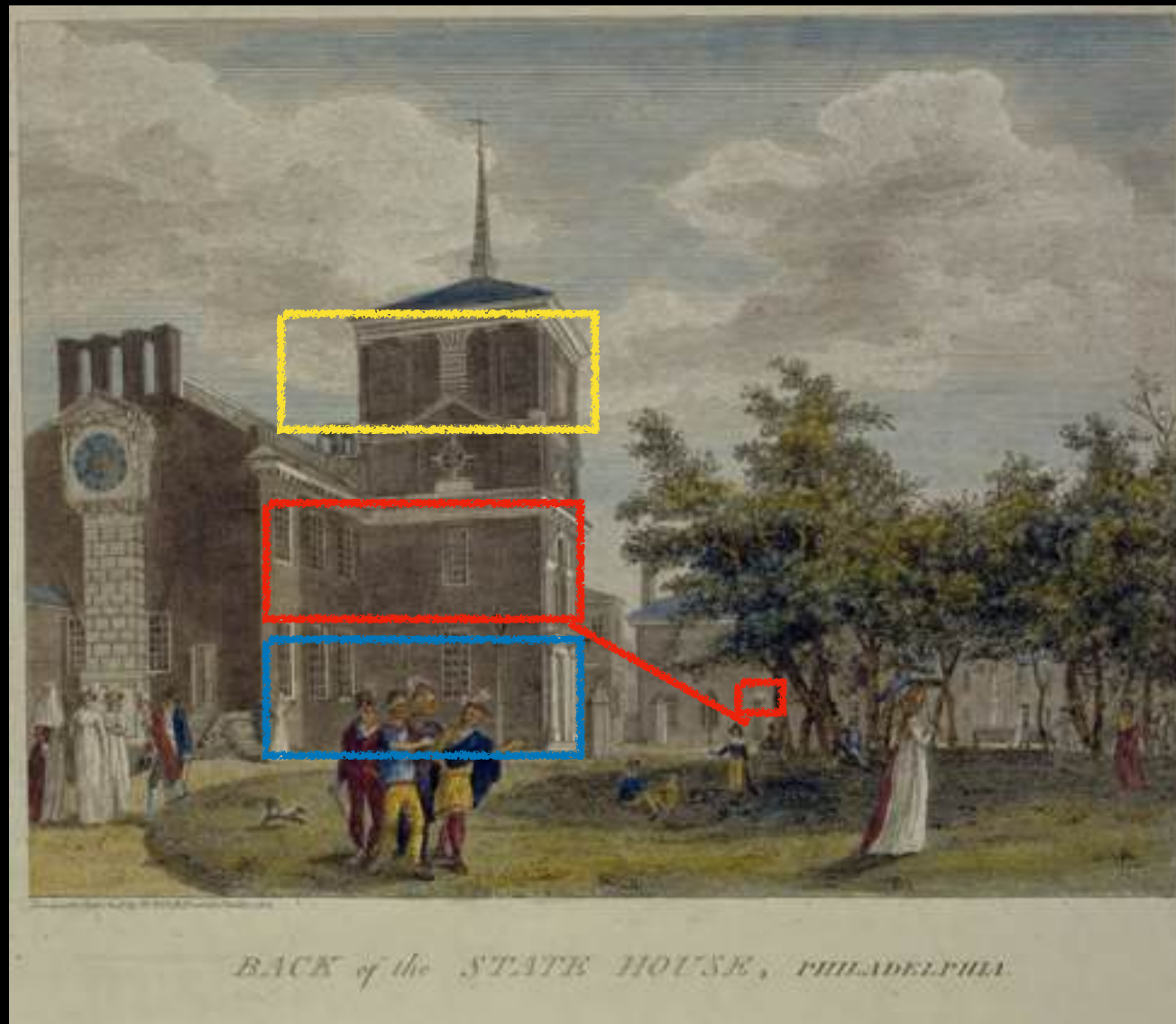
Peale Reaches out to President Jefferson



“Your communication has satisfied my mind... as it seem(s) from the present nature of the constitution, it would be an unproductive (effort).



1802: Move to the State House



Whoso Would Learn Wisdom, Let Him Enter



“MUSEUM: GREAT SCHOOL OF NATURE”

“SCHOOL OF WISDOM”

“WHOSO WOULD LEARN WISDOM, LET HIM ENTER.”

The State House Layout

Mammoth Room

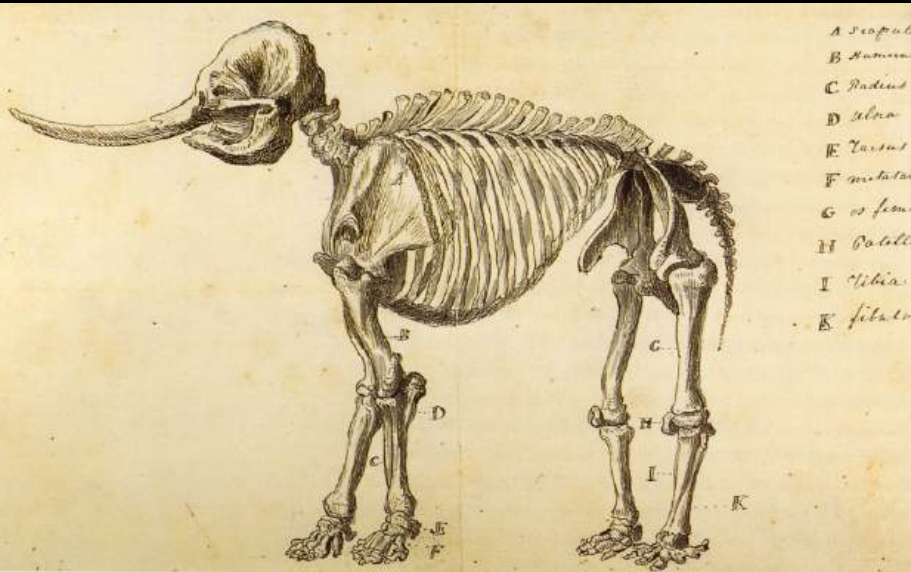
Quadruped Room

Grizzly bear, orangutan, giant anteater, llama, elk, peccary, jackal, various African antelopes...

Marine Room

Fishes, amphibians, corals, sponges

one hundred and eighty-five pound bivalve with its three-foot shell, etc.



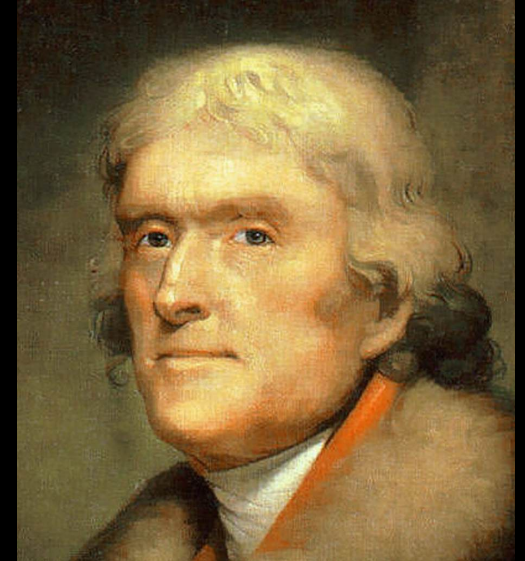
The State House Layout

The Long Room



Peale, Humboldt, Jefferson

The National Museum Redux



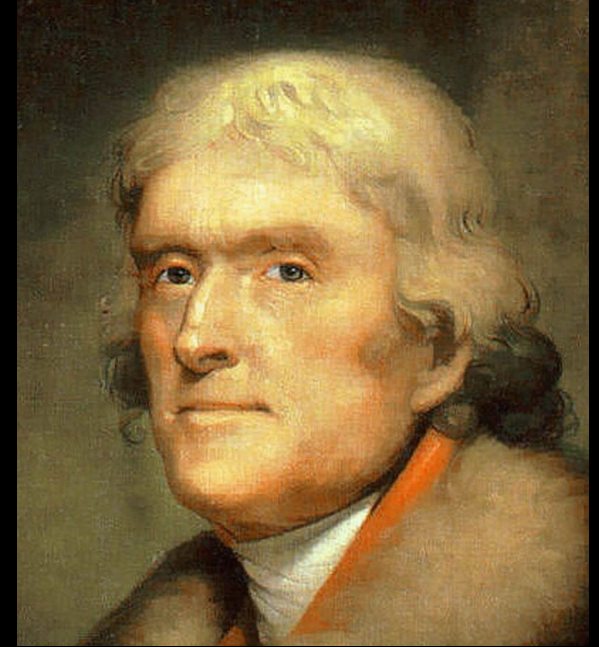
Not long after this Humboldt had recently arrived in Philadelphia after years exploring Central and South America.

Peale served as Humboldt's travel guide and companion on the trip from Philadelphia to Washington to see Jefferson.

Peale on Humboldt:

“without exception the most extraordinary traveler I have ever met with ... a fountain of knowledge which flows in copious streams... a great luminary defusing light on every branch of science.”

Dinner at the Executive Mansion

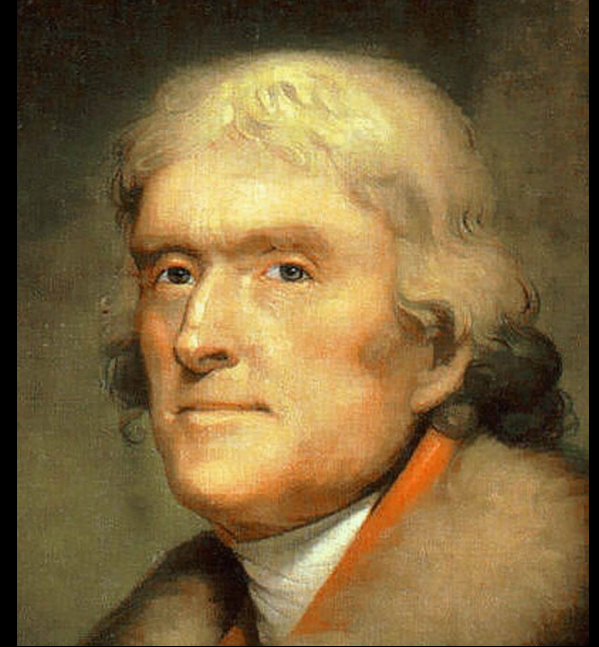


“We had a very elegant dinner, and what pleased me much, not a single toast was given or called for, or politics touched on.”

“Subjects of Natural History” led to “agreeable conversations animat(ing) the whole company.”

“All these circumstances, made me at this moment think it very probable that some provision will be made to induce me to remove my museum to this city and I think the time is not far distant that some proposals will be made to that purpose.”

After Dinner at the Executive Mansion



“The Baron came to my room and told me that he had been conversing with the President about me and my museum, that he (Humboldt) wondered that the government did not secure it by purchase.”

“The President replied that it was his ardent wish and he hoped that period was not far distant and he thought that each of the States would contribute means and thus it might be made a National Museum.”

Jefferson's Grandson



Thomas Jefferson Randolph

In 1807, President Jefferson was looking for the perfect place to send his 15-year-old grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph

For the finest Enlightenment education available.

He turned to his friend Charles Willson Peale.

Jefferson asked Peale if the young man could board with him

and have his educational curriculum guided by all that Peale and his connections had to offer.

Jefferson's Grandson



Thomas Jefferson Randolph

When approaching Peale with the idea, Jefferson made it clear that

“the circumstance which has guided us in fixing on subjects of study for our grandson has been the exclusive possession of Philadelphia of your Museum.”

Jefferson made it clear that his grandson should

“be solely occupied with his studies, not that he should be at all immersed in the society, & still less in the amusements & other abstractions of the place.”

Jefferson's Grandson



Thomas Jefferson Randolph

Young Randolph lived with the Peales, sharing a room with their 24-year-old son, Rubens

Peale referred to Rubens “right hand man” on the museum.

Peale intended nothing less than providing Randolph with an “abundance of food for the mind.”

He used the museum's collections, which were unrivaled in America at the time, to instruct Randolph in natural history,

Providing Randolph with unimpeded access to the most famous skeleton in the world:

the Mastodon.

Jefferson's Grandson



Thomas Jefferson Randolph

By all accounts Randolph was an exemplary student.

His grandfather wrote him with no small amount of pride that Dr. Benjamin Rush

the leading physician in the country and a central figure among the Philadelphia intelligentsia

“speaks favorably of you.”

Jefferson's Grandson



Thomas Jefferson Randolph

Randolph knew if he had any difficulties with all he was assigned, he could always turn to his grandfather for advice

Which Randolph did when he was struggling with how to condense all the information he was being fed. Jefferson responded by recounting his own battles with such things in his early years.

Jefferson's Grandson



Thomas Jefferson Randolph

Jefferson to Randolph

“the difficulty you experience in abridging the lectures is not unexpected. I remember when I began a regular course of study.

I determined to abridge in a common place book, everything of value which I read.

At first I could shorten it very little: but after a while I was able to put a page of a book into 2. or 3. sentences, without omitting any portion of the substance. ...

No stile of writing is so delightful as that which is all pith, which never omits a necessary word, nor uses an unnecessary one.

Jefferson's Grandson



Thomas Jefferson Randolph

After Thomas Randolph returned to Virginia in June 1809, Jefferson wrote his friend in Philadelphia to say just how pleased he was

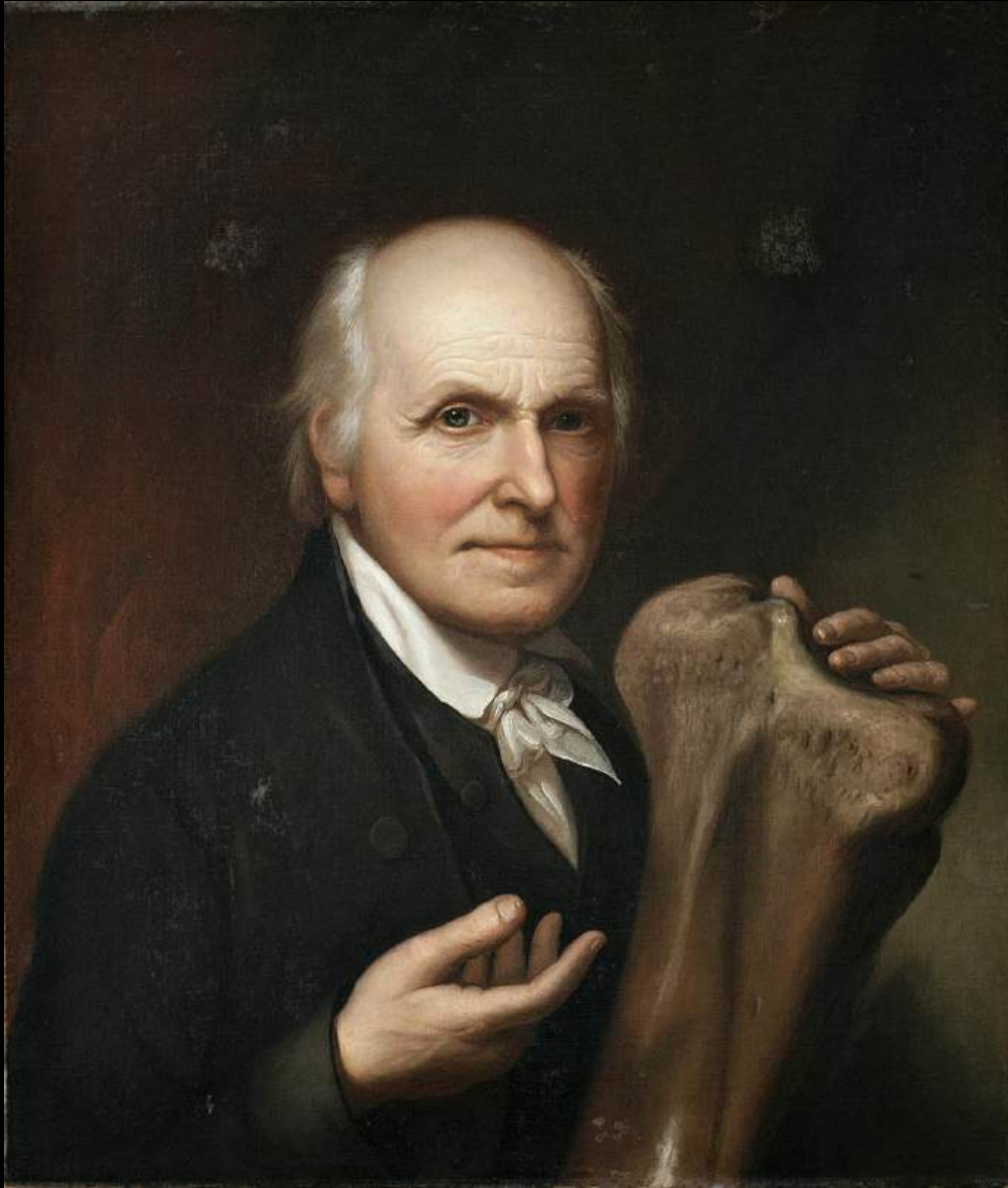
“I have now to thank you for all your kindnesses and those of your family to my grandson;

and at the same time to convey to you the expressions of his gratitude and affectionate remembrance.

He speaks of yourself, Mrs. Peale & the family always as of his own parents & family. ...

I cannot describe to you the hope & comfort I derive from his good dispositions and understanding.”

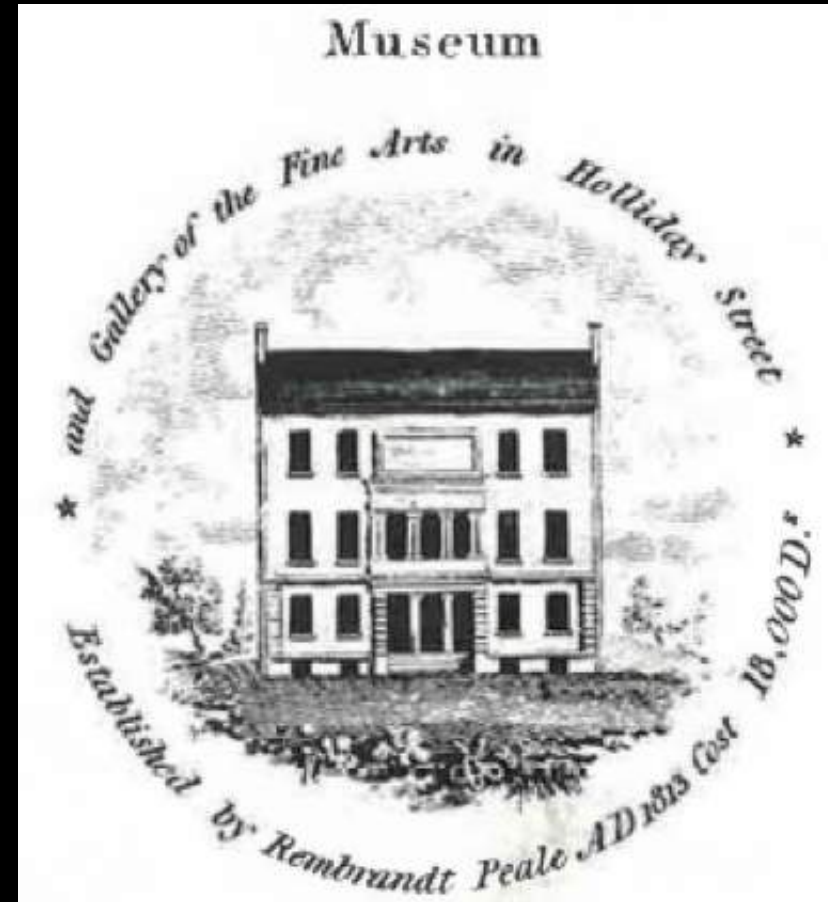
1810: Peale Passes the Torch To Rubens



Rembrandt Peale and a Spinoff Peale Museum in Baltimore



Rembrandt Peale, self portrait



**Engraving of the Baltimore Museum.
By Joseph Cone**

1825: Rubens Tires of Philadelphia and Opens a New York Spin Off



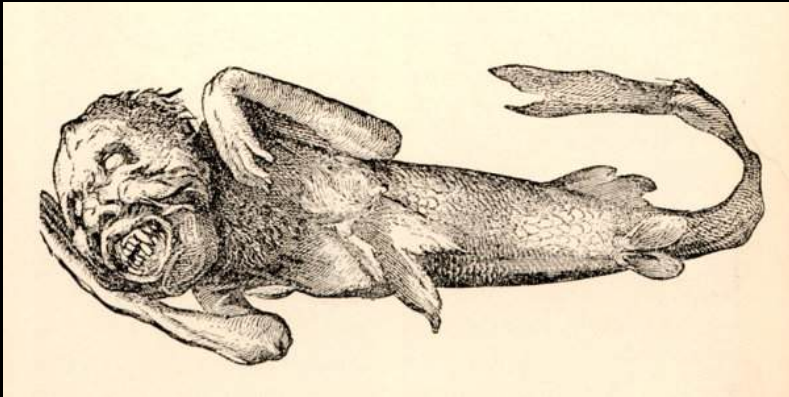
Peale's New York Museum and Gallery of Fine Arts

The Philadelphia Museum was now being run by Rubens' nephew, Edmund Peale.

1827: The Curtain Goes Down on *The Artist in His Museum*



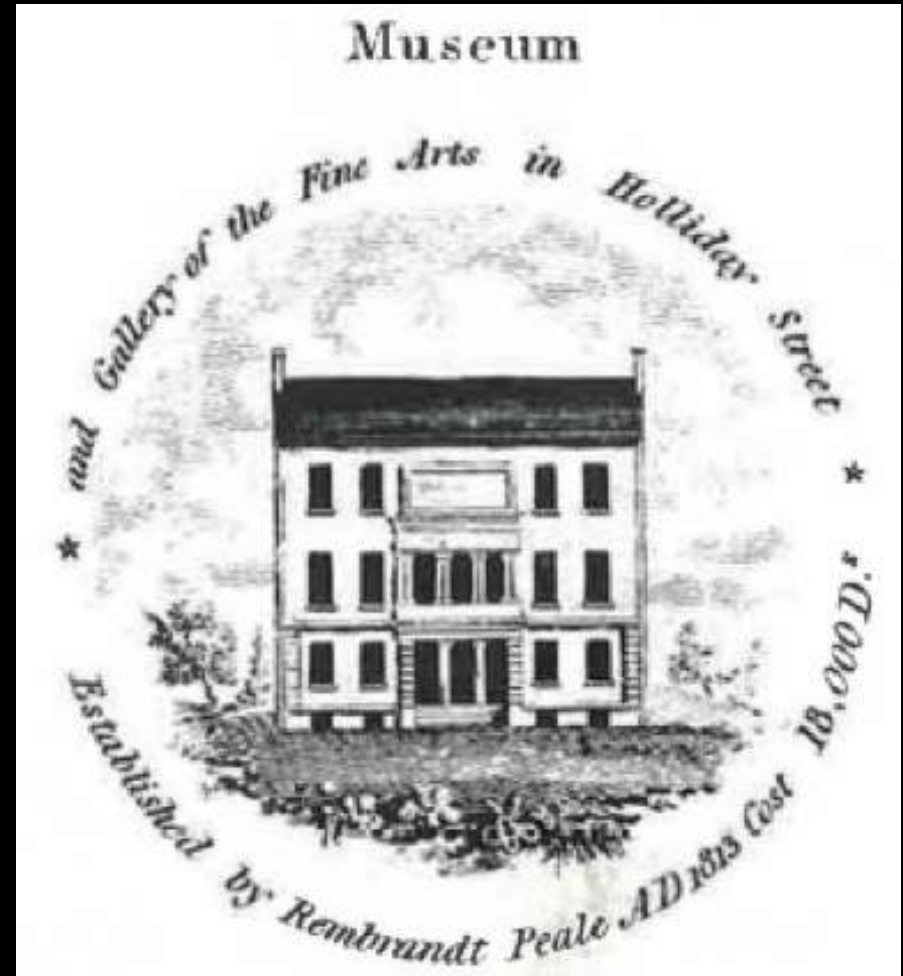
1842: Trouble Brewing in the Name of P.T. Barnum



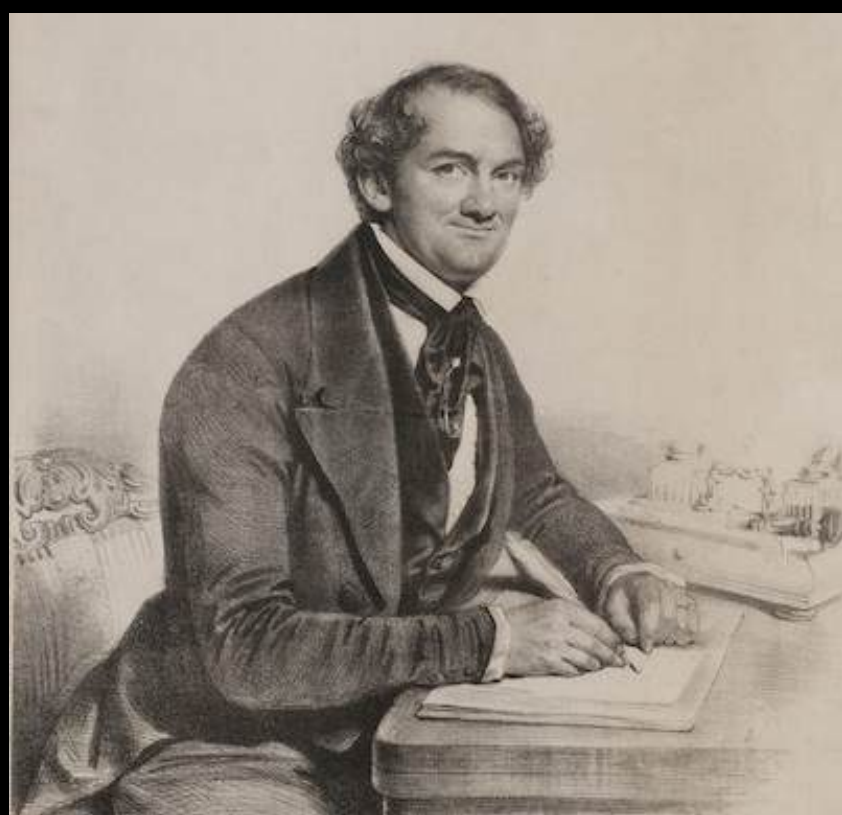
1842: Barnum Gobbles up Peale Museum in New York City



1845: Barnum Gobbles up Peale Museum in Baltimore



1849: P.T. Barnum Comes To Philadelphia

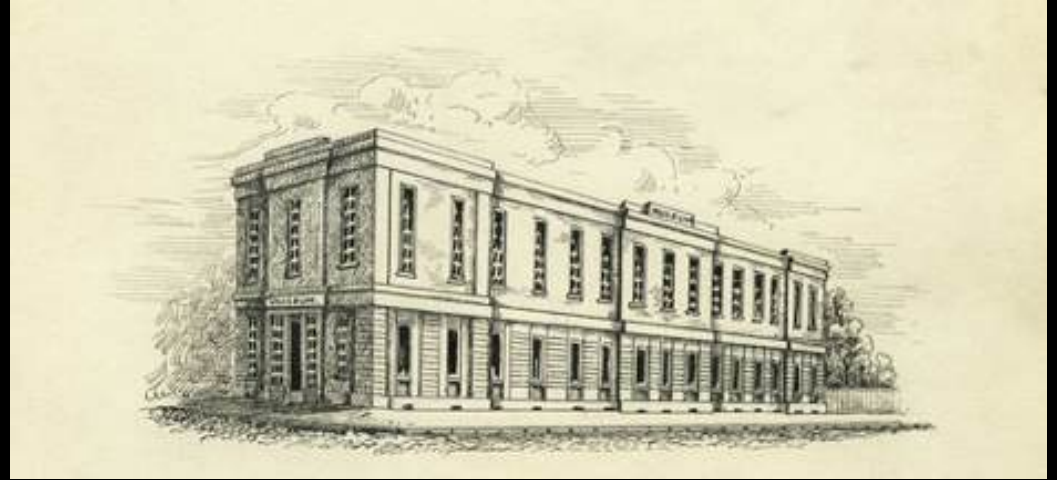


The Swaime Building

Barnum wrote his partner that:

“He’d kill the other shop in no time.”

1849: P.T. Barnum Kills the Other Shop in Philadelphia



Last Home of The Philadelphia museum at Ninth and Sansom Street

The Peale Museum's last advertisement ran on August 27, 1849.

1849: P.T. Barnum Kills the Other Shop in Philadelphia



Almost everything besides the paintings went on the auction block.

Barnum was there, and bought it all for

“five or six thousand dollars on joint account of Moses Kimball and myself.”

(Mostly) Scattered on the Wind





The United States Bank purchased a hundred and sixty of those, and sold them to the City of Philadelphia.



Natural History

Anthropology

Ethnography

Art

**The Enlightenment
Ethos**

BEHIND THE CRIMSON CURTAIN

The Rise and Fall of Peale's Museum

LEE ALAN DUGATKIN

