

Photographer Writing Book On Weir Farm — Connecticut’s First National Park

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Xiomaro, a visiting artist at Weir Farm National Historic Site, has signed a deal to produce a book about Connecticut’s first national park.
Photo Credit: *Contributed*

WILTON, Conn. — The first book about Weir Farm National Historic Site, Connecticut’s first national park unit and the only one dedicated to American painting, will be authored by Xiomaro, a visiting artist at the park.

About 150 of Xiomaro's photographs will be accompanied with captions that, he said, "tell the big story of a small park."

The 60-acre national historic site, nestled in Wilton and Ridgefield, is where J. Alden Weir (1852-1919), the father of American Impressionist painting, lived and created iconic works now seen at the Met, the Smithsonian and other world-class museums.

"Openings into the soul of the painter," was how Xiomaro's images were described by Hildegard Cummings, an art expert who authored a book about Weir. Since 2012, Xiomaro has been creating photographic collections of Weir's house, studios, landscape and gardens under several commissions.

The best of his photographs plus vintage snapshots will be featured in the book along with 11,000 words of captions.



“It’s about the classic American story of transformation,” said Xiomaro, who – after overcoming cancer – also made a transition from being a music lawyer to an artist. “Weir hated Impressionism, then championed it. His property was threatened by development, then got preserved as a national park. And the dramatic before-and-after renovations of the buildings will be seen in my images.”

The book taps into a growing trend: “heritage tourism” – travelers visiting historic house museums and gardens, according to The National Trust for Historic Preservation, in Washington, DC.

The book will also cover the women of Weir, the buildings’ decorative treatments and architecture and “the landscape where one literally steps into a painting,” said the artist.

“The best thing is that the book will celebrate the park in time for the striking of the special Weir Farm quarter,” said Xiomaro.

In 2020, the park will be depicted as part of the US Mint’s “America the Beautiful” series. The Mint’s website says the series “captures the breathtaking beauty of America’s natural landscapes that have inspired countless poets, adventurers, and artists. Today, these hallowed sites are ... enshrined” through the quarters designed by the Mint.

Arcadia Publishing will release the book as part of the Images of Modern America series, which the company website describes as uncovering “amazing aspects of American history that are all too often overlooked by standard texts” and “filled with expertly penned content and stunning full-color images.”

Xiomaro is an internationally recognized artist, writer, speaker, and curator. His work has been widely exhibited at venues such as Harvard University, Fruitlands Museum, the State Capitol in Hartford and U.S. Jim Himes' offices in Bridgeport and Stamford.

For information about visiting Weir Farm National Historic Site, go to www.nps.gov/wefa .