
For Its 200th Anniversary, Historic Diamond Rock Schoolhouse Joins the Wharton Esherick Museum Campus

Malvern, PA – The Diamond Rock Schoolhouse, a well-known Chester County landmark located at the intersection of Diamond Rock Hill and Yellow Springs Road in Tredyffrin Township, is entering a new chapter in its long history. As of this year, the 200th anniversary of its existence, the Schoolhouse is now part of the Wharton Esherick Museum.

Built by the local, primarily Mennonite, community in 1818 this one-room octagonal schoolhouse served as the first "free" or public school in the area. The school closed by 1864, no longer able to meet the needs of a growing population, and fell into disrepair.

Decades later, neighbors banded together to repair and care for the school, including celebrated artist, Wharton Esherick, who made the schoolhouse his painting studio for a brief time. Esherick's contributions to the restoration of the schoolhouse can be seen in the carved diamond motif shutters, the sunrise pattern cement floor, and iron work on the front door and shutters.

After decades of dedicated stewardship by volunteers operating as the Diamond Rock Schoolhouse Preservation Association, the Wharton Esherick Museum will now assume responsibility for this unique landmark to ensure the ongoing preservation, maintenance, and public use of the building. The Museum will continue to provide public access and interpretation of the schoolhouse, both as a treasured piece of local history and for its role in Wharton Esherick's story.

The Diamond Rock Schoolhouse will be open during Wharton Esherick Museum Second Sunday events this summer in June, July and August. Details can be found at whartonesherickmuseum.org/events.



Diamond Rock Schoolhouse, built 1818.



The Octagonal Schoolhouse, 1918, oil on canvas,
Wharton Esherick.

About the Wharton Esherick Museum:

The Wharton Esherick Museum, located just outside of Valley Forge Park in Malvern, PA is the handcrafted home and studio of Wharton Esherick (1887-1970), an internationally significant artist and leader of the Studio Furniture Movement. Esherick worked primarily in wood and extended his unique forms to furniture, furnishings, interiors, buildings, and more. His motto, "If it's not fun, it's not worth doing," is evident in the joyful expression of his work. A National Historic Landmark for Architecture, his hilltop studio/residence, with more than 300 of his works on exhibition, has been preserved much as it was when the artist lived and worked there.



Wharton Esherick Museum, *photo by Charles Uniatowski.*

The Wharton Esherick Museum is experienced through guided tours that must be reserved in advance. The Museum is open for tours Tuesday – Friday (for groups of 5 or more) from 10 am to 4 pm, Saturdays from 10 am – 4 pm and Sundays from 1 pm - 4 pm (no minimum requirement on weekends). Advanced tickets are required, and can be purchased at whartonesherickmuseum.org. For more information call 610-644-5822 or email info@whartonesherickmuseum.org.

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