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### **The Ideal Sketching Ground, brought to Fort Wayne**

*The Museum of Art celebrates the state's early painters turned printmakers*

**April 11, 2019 (Fort Wayne, IN)** – The Fort Wayne Museum of Art is pleased to present *The Ideal Sketching Ground: Prints by the Artists of Brown County*, an exhibition of over 100 works in intaglio, woodcut, and monotype by Brown County artists of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The exhibition opens April 20 and runs through August 4, 2019.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century artists from around the country made the journey to the small town of Nashville, Indiana by way of the newly connected Illinois Central Railroad. Through word of mouth and a growing number of paintings in group exhibition, interest in the hidden gem of Southern Indiana spread. There, artists found camaraderie and an unspoiled, picturesque place for inspiration. Chicago/Wisconsin painter Adolph Shulz described the area as “the ideal sketching ground” with its rolling hills, creek beds, rustic cabins, and “soft, opalescent haze.”

Most of the artists included in *The Ideal Sketching Ground* were foremost painters; however, they were also highly skilled printmakers, representing some of Indiana’s earliest examples in the graphic arts. This exhibition brings together the significant number of artists working in etching and woodcut in Brown County, including Charles Dahlgreen, Homer Davisson, Evelynne and George Jo Mess, Frederick Polley, Kenneth Reeve, and Will Vawter, among others drawn from area collections.

Curator of Prints and Drawings Sachi Yanari-Rizzo states, “While there have been numerous shows on this famous artist colony focusing on the paintings, this exhibition will reveal that Nashville, Indiana was also the perfect setting for printmaking. Featuring over 100 intaglios, woodcuts, and monotypes, it is likely the first major exhibition of this scale on the subject.”

A local man’s collecting passion sparked the idea for this exhibition. “My interest in Brown County art began 35 years ago while looking for an escape from my studies as a law student at Indiana University in Bloomington. In the Student Union building on campus I saw paintings by T.C. Steele, painted in the nearby Brown County, where I had fond childhood memories”, said Doug Runyan, advisor and lender to the exhibition.

**May 31, Lecture with art historian Martin Krause:** Krause is the retired Curator of Prints, Drawings, and Photographs at the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, and in his lecture at 7pm, he’ll share his insights on the exhibition *The Ideal Sketching Ground: Prints by the Artists of Brown County*. Cost is \$8 FWMoA members or \$12 for non-members. Appetizers and cash bar will be offered.

**June 6, Curator’s Tour:** The curators of this exhibition, Sachi Yanari-Rizzo and Charles Shepard, along with special guest and collector Doug Runyan, will lead you on an engaging and lively gallery tour at 12:15pm of *The Ideal Sketching Ground: Prints by the Artists of Brown County*. Cost is free with FWMoA admission.

General admission to see this exhibition at the museum is free for FWMoA members, \$8 adults, \$6 students and seniors 65+, and \$20 for families. General admission is free for everyone on Thursdays 5-8pm. Veterans, active military personnel, and their families receive free general admission. FWMoA gallery hours are Tuesday-Saturday 10-6pm, Thursdays 10-8pm, and Sundays 12-5pm.

**About the Fort Wayne Museum of Art:** Beginning with art classes in 1888 given by J. Ottis Adams and later William Forsyth, the Fort Wayne Museum of Art has evolved into the primary resource for the visual arts in Northeast Indiana. Regularly exhibiting regional and nationally acclaimed artists, the FWMoA also boasts an extensive permanent collection of American Art, including the Steven Sorman Archives and more than 300 pieces of Brilliant Cut Glass. The Museum is committed to the collection, preservation, presentation and interpretation of American and related art to engage broad and diverse audiences throughout the community and region, and add value to their lives. The Fort Wayne Museum of Art is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and is a funded partner of Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne. This activity made possible, in part, with support from the Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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