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The Tale of the Fort Wayne Art School Comes to Life at FWMoA

The city's oldest art institution has its roots in the West Central neighborhood

FORT WAYNE, IND., November 14, 2018 –The Fort Wayne Museum of Art is pleased to present to the community an exhibition that celebrates the storied history of the Fort Wayne Art School from 1888 to its evolution as the fine arts department of today's Purdue University Fort Wayne. "1026 West Berry Street: The Fort Wayne Art School," opens November 17 and will remain on view until February 10, 2019.

This exhibition is a celebration and exploration of the development of the Fort Wayne Art School in its century as a cultural entity in the city's downtown West Central neighborhood. It brings together elements of the school's history and a collection of works by many of the faculty members who left their mark on the school, its students, and the community. Work from instructors of the Art School such as John Ottis Adams, Clyde Burt, Don Kruse, George McCullough, Noel Dusendschon, Betty Fishman, and Russel Oettel are included in the exhibition, among others, many of which are loaned from private local collections.

Many former students of the Fort Wayne Art School recall the creative energy, excitement, and camaraderie of the Berry Street campus. A sense of community and family existed in the enclave of former homes and out-buildings that was the Art School's campus for almost 100 years.

The Art School's merger with Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne in the 1970s signaled its inevitable move to a central metropolitan campus. Though the school remained in West Central for another 15 years, the move to the IPFW campus in 1991 was bittersweet. Many lamented the loss of freedom that the West Central campus allowed, but the move provided a sound new building and more space to dedicate to each discipline. The new Department of Fine Arts also gained better access to university life than it had as a separate campus. However, many who remember learning and growing as artists on Berry Street still feel nostalgic about the gritty downtown campus. For them, that was the "real" Art School.

What started as a small painting class in 1888 is now an accredited institution through Purdue University Fort Wayne that educates hundreds of students annually in design, fine arts, art education, art history, and visual communication. Tenacity, adaptability, and resilience in the face of changing circumstances continue to be defining characteristics of this institution.

On December 13, FWMoA will host a panel discussion starting at 5:30pm led by Art School alumni Dale Enochs and Don Lutz, former instructor Don Kruse, and current PFW professor of painting and drawing John Hrehov. Admission is free for the party with appetizers and cash bar, and unique, artist-made holiday gifts will be available for sale in the Paradigm Gallery during its 2nd Thursday *Bauble Party* event.

About the Fort Wayne Museum of Art

Founded in 1921, the Fort Wayne Museum of Art is Northeast Indiana's leading visual arts institution. The museum regularly exhibits nationally acclaimed artists and features a permanent collection including works by Mark di Suvero, Andy Warhol, and Kara Walker. FWMoA is committed to the collection, preservation, and presentation of American and related art, in an effort to engage, educate, and add value to the lives of broad and diverse audiences throughout the community and region. The museum is funded in part by 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.

www.fwmoa.org

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