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FWMoA to exhibit work from its largest art gift in history
For the first time, works from the gift of 700 works of art will be on public display

August 31, 2017 (Fort Wayne, IN) – The Fort Wayne Museum of Art is pleased to exhibit, for the first time, selections from its 2016 multi-million dollar acquisition of more than 700 works of art by David Shapiro. The exhibition is an introduction to his numerous themes, his processes, and the intended meaning of his work. *David Shapiro: Seer, Actor, Knower, Doer* will feature more than 30 works in 3 galleries at FWMoA from September 16, 2017-February 2, 2018.

The curatorial focus of this exhibition will be on Shapiro’s approach to abstract painting, with his unique combination of geometric patterns adopted by artists of the 1970s with the expressive marks and sensual colors allowed by the next generation of artists in the ‘80s.

Shapiro studied and practiced Buddhism, which had a profound influence on his work, and he also was captivated by Asian art which taught him an appreciation for stillness, simplicity, and the beauty of calligraphic line. Shapiro internalized these influences, mixed them with his own spirituality, and fused them into a way of working and a style that were distinctly his own. The title phrase *Seer, Actor, Knower, Doer* comes from a series of Shapiro’s paintings by the same name, but those words also embody the complex depths of the person and artistry of David Shapiro.

His paintings and prints, according to the author Mason Riddle, "comprise a highly personal language of signs and symbols. Circles, spirals, dots, wave and knot patterns, stylized flames and textures resonate on richly hued, tactile surfaces of Nepalese and Japanese papers, burlap, nylon screening, and canvas evoking a subtle mood of contemplation.

FWMoA CEO and Chief Curator Charles Shepard adds, “Before his untimely death in 2014, David Shapiro had already secured his place in the history of contemporary art by having major museums around the world add both his paintings and prints to their highly regarded collections. That said, the full impact of David’s contributions to the aesthetics of American painting and printmaking in the late 20th/early 21st centuries has yet to be recognized. Alongside artists like Steven Sorman, Kenny Noland, Bob Mangold, and Frank Stella, David Shapiro’s deep and contemplative work advanced abstraction and serious art-making in an increasingly market-driven art world that prospered, predominantly, on sensationalism.”

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 a center for the visual arts community in Northern Indiana. Regularly exhibiting nationally acclaimed artists, the FWMoA also boasts an extensive permanent collection of American and related art including major works by Mark di Suvero, John Newman, Dale Chihuly, and Larry Rivers. The mission of the Fort Wayne Museum of Art is to collect, preserve and present American and related art to engage and educate broad and diverse audiences throughout the region to add value to their lives. This project made possible by the support of the Indiana Arts Commission, Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. FWMoA is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

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