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Freedom Riders, Bus Boycotters Exhibits roll into town **Two artists, one subject: Freedom Riders and the civil rights**

October 29, 2012 (Fort Wayne, IN) – This November, the Fort Wayne Museum of Art will launch twin exhibits exploring the efforts of a group of men and women, who, in 1961, were arrested for peacefully protesting segregation laws in the American South. Each exhibit, created by different artists, features portraits inspired by the original mugshots from the arrests, one taking form in oil painting collages, the other in black and white photo-journalism.

On November 17, painter Charlotta Janssen will unveil 82 large-scale oil portraits of peaceful protesters in the 1960s, a grouping which she calls “**Freedom Riders and Bus Boycotters: Threads of a Story.**” Each portrait, visually derived from the grainy, unadorned mugshots captured at the time of arrest, has been visualized in Janssen’s own vision with painterly brush strokes, newspaper collage embellishment, and a simple yet powerful color combination of turquoise, iron oxide, and charcoal-plum.

“I sought to create images that are as humanistic as abstract. Working in acrylic, oil, and rust, I pay homage to the hard lines of comic artist Bob Kane (Batman) and the work of Grant Wood (with an urban bent) and Francis Bacon, in giving new life to the vibrant deteriorating photographs of a past, but all too prescient era,” says Janssen.

The portraits of civil rights activists won’t stop there. In conjunction with Janssen’s group of paintings, FWMoA will present the work of author and photographer Eric Etheridge with the exhibit “**Breach of Peace: Portraits of the 1961 Freedom Riders**”, a visual excerpt of 20 black and white photographs from his 2008 book of the same title. Etheridge’s twist to the subject is photographing the 1961 civil rights activists today, giving the viewer a then-and-now perspective by showing original mug shots alongside modern-day portraits.

Charlotta Janssen’s exhibition will be on display at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art November 17, 2012 through January 27, 2013, with a visit to Fort Wayne with Freedom Rider Janet Braun-Reinitz for a gallery discussion on November 16 at 7:00pm. Eric Etheridge’s exhibit runs from November 14-December 30, 2012, with a lecture and book signing by Etheridge on November 29 at 6:00pm. Both visiting artist events are free for FWMoA Members, and \$5.00 for Guests. Visit www.fwmoa.org for details on the exhibitions and related programming.

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 Northeast Indiana. Regularly exhibiting regional and nationally acclaimed artists, the FWMoA also boasts an extensive permanent collection of American Art as well as prints and drawings from artists such as Jackson Pollock and Andy Warhol. 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 a funded partner of Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne.