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Triad of Exhibits Explore Endurance, Acceptance, and Inclusiveness
3 exhibits opening March 11 explore the lives of artists and their experiences of disability

February 22, 2017 (Fort Wayne, IN) – The Fort Wayne Museum of Art is pleased to announce a trio of exhibitions that feature the work of artists who have forthrightly addressed, in varying ways, the effects of physical and mental disability on the creation of art. The exhibits will be on display March 11-June 11, 2017 and include two solo exhibitions by contemporary photographers working in the United States and an exhibit of artists from the FWMoA permanent collection.

Sharon, the photographic story of a father's experiences raising his severely disabled daughter, meticulously traces the profound struggles internationally-acclaimed contemporary photographer Leon Borensztein faced while raising Sharon. Exhibited together for the very first time, this collection of more than 40 black and white photographic prints communicates the strength of Sharon's spirit and invites us to consider the power of unremitting love.

The second exhibition, *Expressions of Existence*, will take its cue from art history and from the FWMoA permanent collection as it investigates the work and careers of artists throughout history who have explored the ways in which their disabilities have affected their creative work. The work in this exhibit, which spans the years 1797 to 2013, is not a display of disability but an expression of all lives which are at once comparable and contrastable—synchronous but separate. This exhibition includes works by Jackson Pollock, Wesley Neal Rasko, Marie Laurencin, Chuck Close, Ginny Martin Ruffner, Andy Warhol, and Francisco Goya, among others. This exhibition's didactic materials will be supplemented by Braille text.

Finally, this series will conclude with an exhibit of the work of Timothy Archibald and his son Eli, who is autistic. *ECHOLILIA* is an eleven-image curation from a larger body of work that was published in the identically titled book (*Echo Press, San Francisco, CA, 2010. 70 pp., 43 color plates*). Taken at their home in El Sobrante, California, these primarily unstaged images intimately narrate a tense but respectful artistic and personal relationship between father and child, when the two are learning to understand the meaning of autism and the importance of awareness.

Each exhibit's labels will be printed in font that is easy for individuals with dyslexia to read. Planned programs for this series of exhibits includes an artist talk and tour on April 8 from 10:30am-12pm with Timothy Archibald and his son, Eli, with a deaf interpreter present. The talk/tour is free with FWMoA admission. On May 4 at 12:15pm Chief Curator Charles Shepard and Curator of Special Collections Tiffany Street will lead a gallery tour of all three exhibitions, with a deaf interpreter present. The tour is free with FWMoA admission.

These exhibitions are organized by the Fort Wayne Museum of Art, led by Chief Curator Charles Shepard, and Curator of Special Collections Tiffany Street. *Sharon* is co-organized by the Fort Wayne Museum of Art and the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art. Major support for this series of exhibitions is provided by the AWS Foundation.

About the Fort Wayne Museum of Art

Beginning with art classes in 1888, the Fort Wayne Museum of Art has evolved into the leading visual arts institution in Northeast Indiana. Regularly exhibiting nationally acclaimed artists, the FWMoA also boasts a permanent collection including works by Mark di Suvero, Andy Warhol, and Kara Walker. The FWMoA is committed to the collection, preservation, and presentation of American and related art to engage and educate 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. 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

About the AWS Foundation

Founded in 2007, the AWS Foundation supports a wide range of organizations in northeast Indiana working to develop a community in which people with enduring intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities are engaged fully and meaningfully in all aspects of community life. For more information, visit awsfoundation.org.

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