

**For Immediate Release**

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**Fort Wayne Museum of Art presents Early Fall exhibitions:**

Robert Vickrey: The Magic of Realism

August 10 – October 6, 2013

Clay Prints: Image, Surface, and Narrative in Contemporary Ceramics

August 31 – October 27, 2013

Hedgehog Press: Prints and Processes

August 31 – October 13, 2013

Three exhibitions opening at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art in August highlight mastery in painting, ceramics, and printmaking through the visions of national and regional artists, each pushing the boundaries of their chosen medium.

**Robert Vickrey: The Magic of Realism**

August 10 – October 6, 2013

Trained in the laborious, Renaissance-era technique of egg tempera painting, Robert Vickrey fused his technical ability to render precise detail with his passion for expressionism and film noir to create hyper-real scenes haunted by an atmosphere of mystery and tension.

The *Magic of Realism* exhibition at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art is a collection of work on loan from the Harmon-Meek Gallery in Naples, FL spanning Vickrey's prolific career as a painter and one of the greatest painters of the egg tempera medium, championed by American legends Andrew Wyeth and George Tooker. Until his passing in 2011 at the age of 84, Vickrey was perhaps the last living master of the almost vanishing craft of egg tempera.

Not only had Vickrey become a master of egg tempera, he became one of America's most notable "Magic Realist" artists and rose to prominence in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Born in Manhattan, Vickrey spent most of his early career in the city after receiving a BFA in 1950 from the Yale School of Fine Arts.

He has said, "I graduated in 1950 when Yale's art school jumped from worshipping Botticelli to bowing down to the Box and Cube - I was lucky to escape to New York that year!"

Strongly influenced by his teachers Reginald Marsh and Kenneth Hays Miller at the Art Students League, Vickrey depicted the lost innocence of urban youth making chalk graffiti marks on Manhattan sidewalks, eerie street signs, manhole covers, and pavement markings indicating a 'No Exit' sense of a Camus or Sartre landscape, nuns in pristine habits lost in post-Hiroshima labyrinths, and a endless stream of adolescents caught in a web of luminous halos and sinister shadows projected from the distorted spokes of bicycle wheels.

*ARTnews* recognized his early genius stating in 1951: "Vickrey is an exceptional technician" and the *New York Times* also noted his arrival on the scene the same year: "Robert Vickrey lets a meticulous technique and a realistic style serve a fantastic imagination. Full of obliquely expressed sympathy for the human situation in vivid and original ways, they symbolize loneliness or hostility or simply the pains of growing up."

Generally accepted as the single artist who has done the most for the egg tempera medium in an era of abstraction - including writing two books on the subject many years ago, Vickrey has 60 of his portraits in the

permanent collection of the Smithsonian Institute's National Portrait Gallery, with 80 total used on the cover of *TIME* from 1957 to 1968.

A public lecture by IPFW Professor of Fine Arts John Hrehov will be held Thursday, October 3 at 6:30pm. Hrehov himself creates artwork with a similar precision to Vickrey, often exploring other-worldly, dreamlike subject matter in what he refers to as “allegorical realism.” FWMoA Members: Free admission; Non-Members: \$5.

## **Clay Prints: Image, Surface, and Narrative in Contemporary Ceramics**

August 31 – October 27, 2013

Curated by Charlie Cummings of Gainesville, FL

Sponsored in part by Designer/Craftsman Guild

This exhibition is a survey of the wide use of printmaking techniques for image transfer on clay in contemporary ceramics. Artists featured in this exhibition use a wide range of printmaking techniques to utilize color, texture, graphics, photography and narrative in their ceramic vessels and sculptures. Printmaking techniques represented include commercial decals, laser printer decals, intaglio, laser etching, monoprinting and screening alone and in combination.

Since antiquity craftspeople have used imagery on ceramic forms as decoration and to convey narratives. For most of the 20,000 year history of ceramics, surface imagery has been created by stenciling, stamping, carving, or by painting the object with clay or glaze. Since the 1750s printmaking technology has been used to put images on factory made ceramics using decals produced through Intaglio and lithographic processes. Decals produced for commercial applications have long been available to ceramic artists, until recently, the use of personal imagery by way of image transfers has been rare in ceramics.

Before the widespread availability of personal computers and printers, printmaking processes and equipment were too cumbersome and expensive for most studio artists. Enabled by the ever increasing accessibility of computers and printers, studio ceramicists have, over the past decade, integrated a wide range of printmaking processes into their studio practice.

A public panel discussion in conjunction with this exhibition led by Curator Charlie Cummings and exhibiting artists Paul Andrew Wandless and Thomas Lucas will be held on Thursday, October 17 at 6:30pm. Free for FWMoA Members and Students with valid ID; \$5 non-members.

## **Hedgehog Press: Prints and Processes**

August 31 – October 13, 2013

Fort Wayne artist and Hedgehog Press owner Julie Wall Toles is the featured artist of this exhibition, showing alongside selected artists that have produced work at the Hedgehog Press. The exhibition will highlight the steps of the print process leading up to a final work as well as explore the business aspects of running a print shop.

The following is a recent interview between the Fort Wayne Museum of Art and Toles as she reflects on the Hedgehog Press as a Fort Wayne resource:

### **Why did you want to start a print press in Fort Wayne?**

Toles: I wanted to start Hedgehog Press because it was something our community was lacking. As a printmaker I really struggled with what to do after getting my Bachelor of Arts. I wasn't sure about going straight into graduate school but how else would I make my work? After a few years of trying to find my artistic voice I realized I wanted to provide the opportunity for people, like myself, to create prints. Being a Fort Wayne native, I have always felt a sense of responsibility to my community. It all happened very quickly after looking at the building that now houses my shop. My husband was more supportive than he

probably should have been and agreed that this was something I needed to do.

**How do you hope your press will grow?**

Toles: Hedgehog Press is designed to grow and change with the wants and needs of the community. Although I have a relatively small space, it is laid out in a way that can morph into different uses. Hosting classes is a very rewarding thing for me to do. I love helping others make a piece of work that they are proud of. I hope to have many full classes and excited people in and around my shop.

**What has been the initial response of the community to having a print press in town?**

Toles: People are very interested in it. Once they hear or see me talk about what Hedgehog Press is, most stop into the shop to see what I am working on. It's funny to me how hesitant some people are to just stop by. But once they are in the shop and they see how welcoming it is they end up sitting on the couch and just hanging out. I always encourage drop-in guests and I love having the company. After people meet me they seem to feel much more comfortable with the idea of taking a class or workshop. I want people to feel welcome and inspired in my space. I love teaching people about the art of printmaking whether it is through a class at my shop, a demonstration at the FWMoA, or just a conversation at an art fair.

On September 5, Julie Wall Toles will lead a gallery talk at 12:15pm for the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday Gallery Talk Series. All 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday Gallery Talks are free with museum admission. FWMoA Members receive free museum admission.

**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.

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