The New KMA Takes Shape

Friday, October 11
6pm
Knoxville’s premier art auction to benefit the KMA
Held this year at the Knoxville Convention Center
Presented by the Guild of the Knoxville Museum of Art
Visit www.knoxart.org for more information
THE NEW KMA TAKES SHAPE

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As our members and regular readers of Canvas already know, and the world is becoming increasingly aware, the Knoxville Museum of Art will soon house the most ambitious and monumental figurative glass sculpture anywhere, the work of internationally renowned artist and Knoxville resident Richard Jolley. This dazzling 185-foot-long, 14-foot-high sculpture, titled Cycle of Life: Within the Power of Dreams and the Wonder of Infinity, is the generous gift of Ann and Steve Bailey. The eyes of the world will be on Knoxville as art lovers from around the world make the pilgrimage to the KMA to experience this unparalleled masterpiece when it is unveiled in the spring of 2014. This is a defining moment and untrilled opportunity for the KMA and for Knoxville. Installation has already begun, and will continue through winter as we prepare for an exciting week of opening celebrations April 30-May 4, 2014.

The gift of the Jolley sculpture is but the latest in a decades-long legacy of remarkable and generous gifts that have created and sustained the KMA. The largest single gift in the museum’s history, by local philanthropist Jim Clayton, led to the construction of the current building, which opened in 1990. The KMA’s Clayton Building is a true American masterpiece. As the building nears its 25th birthday and the Jolley unveling approaches, long-deferred maintenance and cosmetic work is being undertaken, and the museum’s landscaping and exterior areas are being upgraded and improved (see renderings of the beautiful new North Garden on the facing page). Thanks to the success of the 25th Anniversary Campaign, this vital work is well underway, and visitors to the museum can already see dramatic improvements to the exterior. This fall, repairs and upgrades to the interior will necessitate closing the building to the public until November 29, 2013, hence the sparsely populated calendar in this edition of Canvas.

Cycle of Life stands as a spectacular affirmation of the museum’s mission to celebrate the richness and diversity of the visual arts in East Tennessee past and present. Higher Ground: A Century of the Visual Arts in East Tennessee, our flagship permanent exhibition, has inspired an outpouring of generosity that has allowed us to make several spectacular acquisitions by homegrown artists such as Knoxville Impressionist Catherine Wiley. To fulfill the parallel mission of presenting new art and new ideas, a new permanent installation, Current: Recent Art from East Tennessee and Beyond, stresses the connection between what happens here and in art centers elsewhere in this country and abroad. A rich mix of temporary exhibitions and education programming complements and supports these core initiatives and serves a broad and diverse audience, particularly young people and underserved populations. To ensure that the KMA is able to build its collection and serve the community with outstanding exhibitions and education programs, the museum needs to create an art acquisition fund and grow its program and operating endowment.

Important goals of the 25th Anniversary Campaign include growing the operating endowment and creating a dedicated fund for art acquisitions. The 25th Anniversary Campaign will get the KMA ready to receive Cycle of Life and ensure the museum’s success as it enters its second quarter century. Building improvements and exterior enhancements will require nearly $5 million, while operating and acquisition endowments will require an investment of millions more. As the campaign moves in to its public phase, we hope you will consider joining the many philanthropic families who have made KMA what it is today. An opportunity to invest in the next 25 years and to participate in showcasing the Jolley exhibit to the rest of the world is not something that occurs often.

Now is our time to shine!

Visit the museum online... www.knoxaart.org
Follow the museum on Twitter “Like” the museum on Facebook Watch KMA videos online... http://knoxaart.blink.tv
When the museum reopens in late November, visitors will notice several key acquisitions that will be featured on a rotating basis in Currents and Higher Ground.

At the Collectors Circle’s April 9 purchase event, the group voted overwhelmingly in favor of After the Mona Lisa 8 by Devorah Sperber. Sperber explores the connections between art and technology, and ways in which the visible world is perceived by the human mind. For each of her labor-intensive works, she borrows a well-known image from art history or popular culture, scans it into her computer, and then reduces it to a grid of individual color pixels. The artist then spends hours carefully matching each pixel with a similarly colored thread spool. To the unaided eye, Sperber’s thread spool works appear either abstract or upside down. They resolve into something familiar only when viewed through her specially-designed acrylic gazing balls. Through this innovative approach, Sperber calls attention to the powerful hold of iconic images on the mind while creating interactive works of art that comfortably exist between past and present, abstraction and representation, and object and illusion.

#1210610 and #1211010, two large canvases by emerging Romanian painter Leonardo Silaghi were donated by noted New York collectors Marc and Livia Straus. Silaghi’s abstractions powerfully express the chaotic transition of his Romanian hometown from a decaying Communist nation to a contemporary urban society still taking shape. Often using black and white photographs of abandoned Cold War machinery as starting points, the artist launches into large, forcefully executed paintings populated by conveyor belts, vehicles, ductwork, and other industrial debris. Carefully painted shadows and highlights imply that these relics exist in pictorial space, while sweeping brushwork and rugged surface textures shift attention to his dynamic process. A new work by Silaghi, #1312020, was also purchased by the museum. The KMA is one of the first American museums to acquire the Romanian artist’s work.

Among other recent acquisitions were three objects produced by artists with strong ties to Knoxville. Philip Livingston enhances sculpture from the late 1980s by using black and white photographs of abandoned Cold War machinery as starting points, the artist launches into large, forcefully executed paintings populated by conveyor belts, vehicles, ductwork, and other industrial debris. Carefully painted shadows and highlights imply that these relics exist in pictorial space, while sweeping brushwork and rugged surface textures shift attention to his dynamic process. A new work by Silaghi, #1312020, was also purchased by the museum. The KMA is one of the first American museums to acquire the Romanian artist’s work.

Art faculty, and is known for his freestanding and wall-mounted sculptures in wood and metal. Despite its modest size, this untitled work fully encompasses Livingston’s interests in blending different materials, shredding painting and sculpture, and creating compositions that suggest an architectural context.

Alex McQuilkin is a Brooklyn-based artist whose video work explores the role of stories—that both fiction and non-fiction—in shaping belief systems. She is especially interested in how women’s experiences are conveyed and interpreted in popular culture through cinema, literature, and the visual arts. In many cases, McQuilkin’s videos consist of emotionally-charged excerpts from iconic films spliced with footage of the artist reacting to the events in the original film. In Joan of Arc she responds to Maria Falconetti’s memorable lead role in the legendary silent film “The Passion of Joan of Arc” (1928) by Carl Dreyer, and to the film’s themes of adolescent desire, faith, and suffering.

Form in Steel #9 is a rare early work by Philip Nichols, a veteran Knoxville artist known for his welded steel sculptures resembling architectural structures or mechanical forms of unknown function. He came to Knoxville in 1961 from Michigan as the first sculptor appointed to the University of Tennessee art faculty. A year or so after his arrival, he produced Form in Steel #9 in his makeshift campus studio on 19th Street. By the early 1970s, Nichols began working in stainless steel for its durability and brilliant finish, and welded steel sculptures from this early period are very rare.

Alice Young Mayo, a portrait drawing by Edward Harrison Hurst, Jr. from the 1940s adds to the museum’s extensive holdings by one of Knoxville’s art prodigies. Hurst trained with legendary painter George Luks at New York’s renowned Art Students League even before graduating from high school. Although Hurst returned to Knoxville frequently to display his elegant society portraits and precisely-crafted still-lifes, he spent much of his life mingling with wealthy clientele near his studios in New York and London. Alice Young Mayo was a prominent Knoxvillian, a portrait painter, and a personal friend of the artist. She sat for Hurst in his Washington Square studio in New York, during her time in boarding school.


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The KMA is pleased to acknowledge the support of the Arts & Heritage Fund. We are grateful to the Clayton Family Foundation, Cornerstone Foundation, the Haslam Family Foundation, Lucille S. Thompson Family Foundation, Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority, Scripps Network, Visit Knoxville, and 21st Mortgage for contributing to this new community resource, which supports a wide range of arts organizations and historic sites in our area and is managed by the Arts & Culture Alliance of Greater Knoxville.
The museum’s very own docent and volunteer Carol Devenski received a Hometown Heroes award from Home Federal Bank in May. The Hometown Heroes awards program recognizes outstanding individuals who provide volunteer services that strengthen our community and improve the lives of others. Carol Devenski has been a volunteer docent for the museum since 2007.

Devenski makes art understandable for all ages, but her heart lies in reaching out to the youngest of visitors, those under 10. As a trained art educator, she knows the power that art can unleash. She is a tireless volunteer, with more than 670 hours of service this past year (nearly four months full-time). She is also an incredible researcher and provides the museum with extensive information on upcoming exhibitions and acquisitions. In her words, “Art matters. Not only is the museum a great place to show art, it’s an incredible community resource.”

If you would like to become a KMA docent and enjoy enriching the lives of others, contact Krishna Adams at kadams@knoxart.org.

The KMA is looking for volunteers to work in various aspects of the museum. Volunteers are needed to work at the front desk and to help with events such as Alive After Five, exhibition openings, and Summer Art Academy. This past year, volunteers worked the equivalent hours of seven full-time positions. Whether you can volunteer one day a week or one day a month, your commitment to the museum is greatly beneficial and critical to the day-to-day operations.

Additionally, for those who are interested in taking their volunteer opportunities a step further, the museum is always looking for docents to help give tours and to educate youth and adult groups.

If you are interested in volunteering at the KMA, please contact DeLena Feliciano at dfeliciano@knoxart.org. For docent information, contact Krishna Adams at kadams@knoxart.org.

QUALIFICATIONS
One must be 70 ½ years old to take advantage of a qualified charitable distribution
Up to $100,000 cash, of non-taxable income, can go straight back to a charity/charities of one’s choice
Must complete by December 31, 2013

DISQUALIFICATIONS
Donor-advised funds and private foundations do not qualify
Distributions may not be used for event tickets

Last year’s “fiscal cliff” law that passed Congress and was signed by the President, formally known as the “American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012”, has been extended through the end of 2013. This IRA charitable giving option allows eligible taxpayers, 70 ½ years or older, to make charitable distributions from their traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA), up to $100,000, without incurring taxable income that is typical on IRA withdrawals.

Here is how it can benefit you or someone you know who has an IRA and is over age 70 ½:

Taxpayers who meet the criteria for making direct charitable distributions from their IRA’s may realize a substantial tax benefit by taking advantage of this extended opportunity. If you believe that such a gift may be appropriate for you, we encourage you to promptly consult with your tax advisor and IRA custodian, and we ask you to kindly remember the Knoxville Museum of Art.

To learn more, please contact:
Susan Hyde, Director of Development
865-934-2045 office, 865-806-7339 mobile
shyde@knoxart.org

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Handcrafted jewelry by Asheville artist Suzanne Q. Evon is now available in the KMA Gift Shop.

Suzanne Evon studied at Parsons School of Design in New York and continues to explore various metal techniques. Her current body of work combines both gold and silver and includes colored gemstones as well as raw natural stones. Evon finds that by incorporating a variety of methods, she can bring about a richness in texture that gives each piece a unique and timeless quality that goes beyond trends.

For information about this and other local artists, contact the KMA Gift Shop at 865.934.2042 or screswell@knoxart.org

For docent information, contact Krishna Adams at kadams@knoxart.org.

Handcrafted jewelry by Asheville artist Suzanne Q. Evon is now available in the KMA Gift Shop.
This fall is the 8th Annual East Tennessee Regional Student Art Exhibition, November 29, 2013-January 12, 2014, presented by the Tennessee Art Education Association and the Knoxville Museum of Art. All public, private and home-schools in grades 6-12 from 32 counties are invited to participate.

The staff of the museum, working in concert with a committee of area art educators, designed this annual exhibition to offer middle and high school students the opportunity to display their talents and be honored for their accomplishments in a professional art museum environment. Last year 880 artworks were submitted from 96 teachers and 325 of those works were juried into the exhibition.

Competition expenses, such as the awards, printing of programs, posters, entry information and jurors’ fees are completely funded by local community business, community members, and museum supporters. The Best-in-Show winner receives a purchase award of $500, and the artwork becomes a permanent part of the collection of James Dodson, on loan to the Knoxville Museum of Art’s Education Collection. The Best in Middle School winner receives $250 and the teacher of the winning students will receive $100. Scholarships are awarded to eligible juniors and seniors by colleges and universities from across the nation, which gives them the opportunity to promote their program and attract qualified applicants from a group of highly motivated and talented East Tennessee students. After the closing of the ETRSAE the artworks in the 10 winning categories travel to Belmont University to be in Tennessee’s Best of the Best Student Art Exhibition in Nashville.

The reception is Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at the Tennessee Theatre, 604 S. Gay Street from 6-8pm with the awards ceremony starting at 6:45pm. The exhibition will be at the Knoxville Museum of Art.

The East Tennessee Regional Student Art Exhibition is made possible by presenting sponsor Regal Entertainment. Additional sponsors include Emerson Process Management, Home Federal Bank, Carton Service Inc., and the Tennessee Theatre.