

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art Announces Work by Leading Landscape, Pop Artists: May 26, 2010

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art has announced two distinctive contemporary works. *Enassamishhinjijweian* (2009), a tour-de-force landscape by Tom Uttech, builds on the collection's strength in American landscapes, supplementing Asher B. Durand's *Kindred Spirits*, Thomas Moran's *Autumn Landscape* and Marsden Hartley's *Hall of the Mountain King*, among other works. The second announced painting is Wayne Thiebaud's *Supine Woman* (1963), a psychologically ambiguous portrait of a tense, prone woman. This work joins the museum's growing body of works representing memorable female figures, ranging from the confident gaze of Mrs. Theodore Atkinson, Jr. in an early portrait by John Singleton Copley to the jaunty brio of Norman Rockwell's *Rosie the Riveter*.

Tom Uttech is widely admired for his mystical evocations of the northern woods in the United States and Canada. In this imposing, 8 1/2' x 9' landscape, carefully delineated waterfowl, raptors, foxes and flying squirrels fill every inch of the canvas, the abundance of wildlife tamed by a strict geometric grid anchored by the horizon line and a lone black bear.

"These paintings are all recollections of the magic I have found in the North Woods," Tom Uttech wrote. "They never depict any actual place. They hope to recreate the feelings those places generate in ourselves ... I do also mean to be saying something about the richness and diversity of life on this planet and how magically wonderful this all is by packing so many individuals and species into the same place at the same time."

"I love the balance Uttech strikes between a natural view of the scene and a completely stylized, imaginary, magical evocation of landscape," said Don Bacigalupi, director. "He is also keenly conscious of art history, drawing on a wide range of compositional techniques, from the horror vacui used by medieval painters such as Hieronymus Bosch, who filled the entire surface of the picture plane with detail, to the very classical order and perspectival composition employed by Renaissance artists such as Masaccio and Uccello."

Uttech crafted the work's title from the language of the Ojibwe, a Native American tribe based in the United State and Canada; *Enassamishhinjijweian* can loosely be translated as "hoping for good things to come." The frame was hand-made and stained by the artist to enhance the work.

Tom Uttech was born in Merrill, Wisconsin in 1942. After earning a degree at the Layton School of Art in Milwaukee Uttech went to graduate school at the University of Cincinnati. He taught at the Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock for one year before returning home to teach at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee from 1968 until his retirement in 1998. Uttech's paintings have been featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions throughout the United States, and his work has been widely published, most comprehensively in an exhibition catalog by Margaret Andera, *Magnetic North: The Landscapes of Tom Uttech* (Milwaukee Art Museum, 2004). His work is included in the collections of the Columbus Museum of Art in Columbus, Ga., the New Orleans Museum of Art in New Orleans, La. and the Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa, Okla., among others. He was recently awarded the 2010 Academy Award in Art by the American Academy of Arts and Letters.