



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

American Folk Art from the Volkersz Collection

September 24 - December 22, 2013

Members' Event: Meet the Author Tom Patterson, October 2, 5-6 PM

Folk Art Lecture: Tom Patterson, Curator & Author, October 2, 6:30 PM,

Free and Open to the Public

Exhibition Reception: October 4, 5-9 PM

Gallery Talk: Tom Patterson & Willem Volkersz, October 4, 7 PM

Missoula, MT / August 13, 2013 / Missoula Art Museum (MAM) / *Strange and Wonderful* represents a selection of works from the collection gathered by Willem and Diane Volkersz. The Volkersz are artists and collectors and their Self Taught/Folk Art collection is truly a collaborative, life-long endeavor. This traveling exhibition represents a fraction of the hundreds of objects in the Volkersz collection and range from works by Alva Gene Dexhimer to Rev. Howard Finster.

The work included in the exhibition features drawings, paintings, constructions and sculptures. Almost all of the artists are considered self-taught, or more specifically have a passion for their practice which functions without the support of instruction or academia. The consequence of this is obvious, direct and honest expressions that are executed with sometimes the barest of materials. The Volkersz used a hands-on approach to their collecting by visiting, becoming acquainted with and documenting the environments of many of these artists. The window of opportunity in which they collected these works is gone, for most of these artists are deceased. The language in which scholars frame this work is ever changing. It is important to note that many significant collections of self-taught and folk art have found homes in American art institutions and MAM is pleased to host this slice of Americana.

The Volkersz Collection is itself a unique artwork. Many collections have been assembled by people from all walks of life, but this collection is different. Willem and Diane are artists and educators with an appreciation of creative innocence. They are extremely well-travelled, with a wealth of life experiences. They immersed themselves into these artist's environments. This collection was assembled by disciplined and generous collectors with sensitivity to the attention that each of these oft ignored artists deserves.

Strange and Wonderful – American Folk Art from the Volkersz Collection has been curated by Sam Gappmayer of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center and Stephen Glueckert of MAM in consultation with Willem Volkersz. MAM is honored to present Folk Art scholar and essayist for the exhibition's catalog, Tom Patterson. Patterson has published on outsider artist Rev. Howard Finster and is the author of *Contemporary Folk Art: Treasures from the Smithsonian American Art Museum*. This traveling exhibition and catalogue will be featured at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center in 2014.

The MAM exhibition and catalogue are generously supported by Paul G. Allen Family Foundation. MAM thanks Willem and Diane Volkersz for their willingness to share this collection.

Contact: For more information, please contact the Missoula Art Museum at 406.728.0447, visit the MAM website at www.missoulaartmuseum.org or contact Stephen Glueckert, Exhibitions Curator, stevegl@missoulaartmuseum.org, 406.728.0447 x226.

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About MAM: FREE EXPRESSION / FREE ADMISSION. The Missoula Art Museum strives to engage artists and audience in the creative exploration of contemporary art relevant to our community, state and region. Founded in 1975 and accredited by the American Association of Museums since 1987, MAM showcases diverse and thought-provoking contemporary artwork from local and international artists. Gallery Hours: Tuesday- Saturday, 10 AM - 5 PM, Sunday, 12-5 PM. Office hours: Mon-Fri, 9AM-5PM.