



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Tom Foolery: The Vendorama Series

January 20 - May 9, 2010

Artist Reception and Gallery Talk: February 5, 5-8 pm

Saturday Family Art Workshop with Tom Foolery: February
6, 10 am - 12 pm

Missoula, MT / January 4, 2010 / Missoula Art Museum (MAM) / Tom Foolery is a Montana artist whose miniature, narrative dioramas are inviting, playful, and laced with satire. *The Vendorama Series*, Foolery's signature tableaus, built into the bodies of old vending machines and juke box selectors, focus on small Western town streetscapes. To view the works and all the details within these intimate environments, one must approach the artwork and peer into the window of each work's little world. Only then is the viewer invited to explore the Happy Heifer Gallery to get a glimpse of the tiny artworks within Foolery's larger imaginative artwork. He invites viewers into these worlds, luring them into voyeuristic pleasures as the details of the places are discovered. Viewers can find the bronze sculpture of a cowboy riding a buffalo in the satirical Old West Gallery, for example, and they can learn the literal meaning of the title in *Close the Blinds* as one peeks into an apartment window above the storefront. In every piece, Foolery invites his visitors to explore his meticulously crafted places until hopefully, he says, "the viewer gets absorbed and suspends disbelief, if even for a moment."

Foolery built his first miniature environment into the dashboard of his Nash Rambler thirty-three years ago. He moved to using the inside of the small Kodak Brownie camera body, then theatre spotlights. Foolery had begun to play on the notion of the viewer as voyeur and the spotlight's interiors offered a unique stage to present his narratives, a theme that persists in *The Vendorama Series* at MAM. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s Foolery exhibited extensively with numerous solo and group exhibitions from Los Angeles to Seattle. That work tended to poke fun at the pretense of the art world as he became more familiar with it while living and working in San Francisco. In 1993, Foolery moved back to Montana, built his home and studio where he now lives and continues to create his wonderful follies focused on our more local Western scene.

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: Wed-Fri, 10AM-5PM, Sat, 10AM-3PM. Office hours: Mon-Fri, 9AM-5PM.

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