



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Helen McAuslan: The Kent State Paintings

August 1- November 22, 2014 // Travel Montana Lobby in the Andrew Precht Addition

Educational Programming in conjunction with the Big Read & Festival of the Book: October 9-11, 2014

Missoula, MT / May 1, 2014 / Missoula Art Museum (MAM) / On loan from the Museum of the Rockies, these important paintings were produced following the Kent State tragedy by Montana artist Helen McAuslan. McAuslan was an early Montana modernist who maintained a working ranch in Springdale, MT, and later lived in a cabin on the Boulder River near McLeod, MT. She was extremely well-traveled, and a gifted and prolific draftsman and painter. During her lifetime she worked in isolation, largely ignored by the art world. Yet she remained a deeply committed humanitarian, who found meaningful friendships with fellow artists Frances Senska and Bob and Gennie DeWeese. These lifelong friends worked diligently to preserve McAuslan's legacy. She died in the early 1970s and the majority of her work was gifted to the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman, MT. The Kent State paintings were among her last works included in that gift.

On May 4, 1970 Ohio National guardsman fired 67 rounds over 13 seconds into a crowd of students. They killed four students and wounded nine others, one of whom suffered permanent paralysis. The Kent State incident profoundly affected public opinion during an already contentious time over the role of the United States in the Vietnam War. McAuslan was also deeply affected and was immediately inspired to create these works.

It is especially important to display these works at this time, as MAM is featuring two exhibitions that seek to inspire a dialogue surrounding the Vietnam experience, in conjunction with the Big Read and Festival of the Books' emphasis on Vietnam era literature. McAuslan's paintings are reflective of the cultural fabric and inspired human passion of the time. The exhibition will be accompanied by text composed by Dr. H. Rafael Chacón, Associate Professor of Art History and Criticism, The University of Montana.

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, Senior 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.