



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

WILLEM VOLKERSZ: ON PAPER

**September 1 – December 3, 2016 // Faith Pickton and Josephine Aresty Gallery**

Gallery Talk: November 15, 7PM

**Missoula, MT / August 24, 2016 / Missoula Art Museum (MAM)** -- Missoula Art Museum will celebrate the recent gifts donated by Willem and Diane Volkersz with works from a drawing retrospective titled, *A Paper Trail, Drawings 1954-1999*. The drawings range in theme from those Volkersz created as a high school student during his studies of the geometric De Stijl movement native to the Netherlands, to a series of playful self-portraits, spare conceptual exercises, and hat ‘excerpts’ drawn from famous paintings throughout art history. As a whole, they are a testament to the power and breadth of which drawing is capable and to the artist’s development over a period of 60 years.

Volkersz immigrated to the United States in 1953, and these drawings chronicle his growing self-awareness as an artist, as well as a fascination with his adopted home. Volkersz is celebrated for his large-scale mixed-media assemblages that incorporate vintage and kitsch found objects; enlarged, vernacular ‘paint-by-number’ scenes; elegant neon ‘drawings;’ and simple wooden objects such as benches or suitcases. These neon works extend his drawing practice into three dimensions, creating a vocabulary of signs and signifiers that the artist employed over the course of his career. Throughout the 1960s, many artists were influenced by neon signs, and Volkersz, an enthusiastic and exhaustive collector of American folk art and vernacular objects, became obsessed with neon as a perfect expression of American culture.

Volkersz was recently honored with inclusion in the Portland Art Museum’s 2016 Contemporary Northwest Art Awards. The artist’s work has been featured in 45 solo exhibitions and more than 200 group shows internationally. He taught at Ohio State University, Jacob Kramer College (Leeds, England), the Kansas City Art Institute, and Montana State University, where he also served as Director of the School of Art for six years.

Contact: For more information, please contact the Missoula Art Museum at 406.728.0447, visit the MAM website at [www.missoulaartmuseum.org](http://www.missoulaartmuseum.org) or contact Brandon Reintjes, Senior Curator, [brandon@missoulaartmuseum.org](mailto:brandon@missoulaartmuseum.org), 406.728.0447 x230.

- END-

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. Office hours: Mon-Fri, 9AM-5PM.