10-5-2010

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PRCA’s Images and Artists from Morris’s Past exhibit celebrates UMM milestone

Summary: The Prairie Renaissance Cultural Alliance features work created by UMM’s first four art professors: Fred Peterson, Lois Hodgell, Bruce McGrew, and John Stuart Ingle.

(October 5, 2010)-In celebration of the 50th birthday of the University of Minnesota, Morris (UMM), the Prairie Renaissance Cultural Alliance (PRCA) Gallery features work created by UMM’s first four art professors: Fred Peterson, Lois Hodgell, Bruce McGrew, and John Stuart Ingle. The paintings and prints in the exhibit “Images and Artists from Morris’s Past” are from the personal collections of members of the Morris community. The exhibit will be on display in the PRCA Gallery now through October 30, 2010. A reception, free and open to the public, will be held during UMM Homecoming on Saturday, October 9 from 10 a.m. until noon.

Fred Peterson began his career at UMM in 1961 and retired in 2003. He taught basic studio courses and two art history courses each quarter. After Lois Hodgell arrived, he added upper division art history courses and developed sculpture courses. Throughout his career, he expressed his artistic curiosity and insight in two-dimensional art. He is known for his research and writing on the architecture of rural Minnesota and its reflection of the culture, values, and religious beliefs of the immigrant groups of the mid-1800s to the early 1900s. He is the author of *Homes in the Heartland: Balloon Frame Houses of the Midwest* and *Building Community: Keeping the Faith*. He makes his home in Maryland.

The late Lois Hodgell began her UMM career in 1962 and retired in 1993. She taught printmaking, drawing, painting, and design. She received a master of fine arts from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1961, and was hired by the fledgling Morris college for fall 1962 to teach basic studio courses and to begin painting courses. In 1963, she initiated the first printmaking course. In the mid-1960s, Hodgell began teaching advanced graphics courses. While the courses she taught began to focus primarily on printmaking, she continued to paint in oil and watercolor.

The late Bruce McGrew earned a master of fine arts at the University of Arizona. He was an instructor in studio art at Morris from 1964 until 1967 when he returned to his alma mater for a tenured faculty position. At Morris, McGrew taught design, drawing, and painting. He also taught extension classes. McGrew is remembered as a prolific painter working in oils and watercolors. He also created small etchings in the print studio.

John Stuart Ingle joined the UMM faculty in 1967 and primarily taught painting and drawing. He is known for watercolor paintings often characterized as “magic realism.” Ordinary objects become intensely extraordinary through Ingle’s unique style. Ingle’s work is in several major public collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Yale University Art Gallery and The Art Institute of Chicago. In 1996, he was commissioned to create the new Betty Crocker image. He retired from UMM in 2003 and lives in Minnetonka.

The PRCA is located at 630 Atlantic Avenue, downtown Morris. Regular hours are Tuesdays through Fridays from 11 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Saturdays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., or by appointment. For more information, call 320-585-5037 or e-mail prca@prairierenaissance.org.
The nonprofit PRCA’s mission is to advocate, promote, and coordinate arts, heritage, and cultural activities in Stevens County and the surrounding area.

Above from left: Hodgell, Magrew, and Peterson (circa 1964)

Below from left: Peterson, Ingle, and Hodgell (circa 1969)

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.