

kemperMUSEUM

of contemporary art

For Immediate Release

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Art by America's Iconic Wyeth Family on view
September 17–November 29 at KC's Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art

The artwork by the Wyeth family, America's iconic art family, will be the focus of the exhibition WYETH: Three Generations of Artistry this fall at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City. Together, the artists of the Wyeth family—N. C., Henriette, Andrew, and James—represent more than one hundred years of American painting and have long been associated with the people and the landscapes of Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, and coastal Maine. On view September 17–November 29, 2009, WYETH draws nearly forty paintings and works on paper from public and private collections, including some that have never been on exhibition before now. Admission to the Kemper Museum is free.

The exhibition will open with a free public reception, 5:30–7:30 p.m., Thursday, September 17. At 6:30 p.m. that evening, exhibition artist James Wyeth will speak in the Museum's Meeting Room, and the Kemper Museum's new Curator, Barbara O'Brien, will facilitate the conversation. Seating is first come, first served in the Meeting Room. Several more programs have been organized in conjunction with the exhibition, see pages 3–4 for details.

A 96-page, fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition. It sells for \$30.00 and

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4420 Warwick Blvd., Kansas City, Missouri 64111 | www.kemperart.org | 816-753-5784



N. C. Wyeth, *Octave Plunged*, 1920; oil on canvas, 36 x 25 inches; Courtesy of Adelson Galleries and Frank E. Fowler, photo: John Bigelow Taylor

will be available through the Museum Shop at www.kemperart.org and 816-457-6147.

WYETH: Three Generations of Artistry presents works by N. C., Henriette, Andrew, and Jamie Wyeth, comprising more than one hundred years of American painting—an extraordinary window through which to consider this artistic family. By looking at the work of the three generations together, the exhibition allows for more subtle visual and thematic strands to reveal themselves—strands that, when taken together, form a complex and beautiful tapestry, a family portrait. The exhibition's works explore such themes such as the importance of place, historic preservation, intense physical and psychological drama, reference and deference to family, and finding one's own artistic expression. For the viewer, the exhibition provides an unmatched opportunity to view the similarities and differences across three generations. One can see that the individual artists' stories are intertwined.

The patriarch of the family, N. C. Wyeth (1882–1945), is best known for his illustrations that graced the covers of the *Saturday Evening Post* and those featured in several books published by Charles Scribner's Sons, including the 1911 edition of Robert Louis Stevenson's novel *Treasure Island*. In addition to his illustrations, N. C. Wyeth was an accomplished painter and teacher. He passed away tragically along with his grandson in an automobile accident in 1945, a few days before his 63rd birthday.

Like her younger brother Andrew, Henriette Wyeth (1907–1997) was a student of her father, N. C., and later studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. In 1929, she married Peter Hurd, one of her father's students, and shortly thereafter moved to a ranch in Hurd's native New Mexico, where she painted for several decades.

Andrew Wyeth (1917–2009), perhaps the most celebrated and controversial artist in the family, passed away this January at age 91. Wyeth worked in a representational style at a time when his peers explored abstract expressionism and painted the people and landscapes close to the Wyeth family homes in Pennsylvania and Maine. His style and subject matter sparked debate with his admirers and critics throughout his long and productive career. At the age of 20, Wyeth had his first solo exhibition in New York, and in 1963, President John F. Kennedy selected Wyeth the first artist to receive the Presidential Freedom Award. In 1970, he was the
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first living artist to have an exhibition at the White House.

Andrew Wyeth's son, James (Jamie) Wyeth (born 1946), carries on the family tradition today. Best known for his portraits, including those of Andy Warhol, President Kennedy, and other notables, James Wyeth also paints landscape and domestic scenes of Maine, using a brighter and bolder color palette than his father. His paintings of legendary dancer Rudolf Nureyev were on view in the exhibition *Capturing Nureyev: James Wyeth Paints the Dancer* at the Kemper Museum in 2006.

FREE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Thursday, September 17

Opening Reception, 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Conversation with James Wyeth, 6:30 p.m.

During the opening reception, the Museum's new Curator, Barbara O'Brien, will lead a conversation with celebrated artist James Wyeth at 6:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room. Seating is first come, first served. FREE.

Family Tour Hour

2:00–3:00 p.m., Saturday, September 19

At this event for families, children and adults may take a docent-led tour of the exhibition. Then, take home a hands-on activity to create an illustration inspired by N. C. Wyeth. FREE, but reservations required. Contact Beth Harris at bharris@kemperart.org or 816-457-6134.

Contemporary Connections in the Classroom

5:30–7:00 p.m., Friday, October 2

In this workshop for educators, teachers will learn more about the Wyeth family's history and works of art and make connections to the classroom. The program includes a tour and an educator's packet. Light refreshments and snacks will be served. FREE, but reservations required. Contact Beth Harris at bharris@kemperart.org or 816-457-6134.

Meet Me at the Museum Tour

2:00–3:00 p.m., Saturday, October 3

Join a docent for a tour and lively discussion about the exhibition *WYETH: Three Generations of Artistry*. Meet at the visitor services desk. FREE.

Immediate Memories Tour

1:00–2:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 14

In collaboration with the Alzheimer's Association, individuals with memory loss, along with a family member or friend, are invited for a tour of *WYETH*. Accompanied by trained docents, participants discuss the people and landscapes of Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. During the tour, the family member or friend may enjoy a complimentary dessert and beverage in the Café Sebastienne. FREE, but reservations required. Contact Beth Harris at bharris@kemperart.org or 816-457-6134.

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Memories in the Making

1:00–2:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 21

In this workshop, organized in collaboration with the Alzheimer's Association, participants with memory loss create watercolor paintings inspired by the Wyeth's artwork. Participants are encouraged to take the October 14 Immediate Memories tour to become familiar with the artists' works. FREE, but reservations required. Contact Beth Harris at bharris@kemperart.org or 816-457-6134.

Meet Me at the Museum Tour

2:00–3:00 p.m., Saturday, November 7

Join a docent for a tour and lively discussion about the exhibition WYETH: Three Generations of Artistry. Meet at the visitor services desk. FREE.

ArtReach Workshops

As part of a collaborative project between the Kemper Museum and the Center for Child Health and Development at the University of Kansas Medical Center, the Kemper Museum offers art-making workshops for children with and without development disabilities. FREE, but reservations required. Contact Beth Harris at bharris@kemperart.org or 816-457-6134.

Wyeth Animals, People, and Landscapes (for Ages 10–13)

12:30–2:30 p.m., Saturday, November 14

Wyeth: Faces and Spaces (for Ages 14–18)

12:30–2:30 p.m., Sunday, November 15

About the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art

Kansas City's renowned free modern and contemporary art museum, the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art opened in October 1994 and draws more than 120,000 visitors each year. The Museum boasts a rapidly growing permanent collection of modern and contemporary works of artists from around the world. The Museum hosts temporary exhibitions, installations, performance work, film and video series, lectures, concerts, children's workshops, and other creative programs designed to both entertain and challenge.

The Kemper Museum of Contemporary (4420 Warwick Blvd.) is open 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Tuesday–Thursday; 10:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m., Friday–Saturday; and 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Sunday. Café Sebastienne, a four-star restaurant, serves lunch 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Tuesday–Sunday; and dinner 5:30–9:30 p.m., Friday–Saturday. The Museum and Café are closed on Mondays and major holidays. Admission is free.

Kemper at the Crossroads (33 West 19th Street) is open noon–8:00 p.m., Fridays; and noon–6:00 p.m., Saturdays. Admission is free.

The galleries of Kemper East (200 E. 44th Street) are open 10:00 a.m.–4 p.m., Tuesday–Friday. Admission is free.

For more general information about the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, visit www.kemperart.org.

Thank you

The Kemper Museum is pleased to thank the R. C. Kemper Charitable Trust, UMB Bank, n.a., Trustee, for its generous support of this exhibition.

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