

January 11, 2006

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LAYERED LANDSCAPE COLLAGES CHART
GEOGRAPHY OF MEMORY, IMAGINATION IN VIVID COLOR

Kurt Lightner: Five Acres on view February 3–April 2, 2006
at Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art

KANSAS CITY, MO—In the tradition of American landscape painting, artists have defined a relationship with a particular place in a variety of ways, often combining factual details with fanciful longings and emotional overtones. Adding to this rich history, New York-based artist Kurt Lightner creates densely layered and magnificently detailed collages that depict real and imaginary landscapes of the five acres of woods behind his childhood home in Ohio. A selection of Lightner's works are featured in the exhibition *Kurt Lightner: Five Acres*, on view February 3–April 2, 2006 at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art. Museum admission is free.

The exhibition opens with a free, public reception 5:30–7:30 p.m., Friday, February 3 and includes an artist and curator discussion 6:30–7:00 p.m. Seating is first come, first served. For a complete list of educational events, see pages 2–3.

Kurt Lightner: Five Acres is Lightner's first solo museum exhibition, and he is a visiting artist at the Kemper Museum. The exhibition marks the beginning of the Verve series, a new series that highlights emerging trends and ideas in contemporary art.



Untitled, 2005; acrylic ink on Mylar collage, 50 3/4 X 72 inches;
Private collection

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Lightner infuses the genre of nature painting with the contemporary feel of collage. Composed of hundreds of elements that have been painted on Mylar with acrylic ink and then individually cut out by hand, his works are brimming with color and energy; light penetrates and ricochets through the dense layers of translucent material, creating a sense of depth and space. "I want the viewer to be immersed in the image. Just like the dense woods one can get lost in," Lightner explained in an essay that accompanies the exhibition.

Like the visionary watercolors of Modernist painter Charles Burchfield, another Ohio native who found inspiration in its countryside, the fantastical shapes, colors and detailed layering of Lightner's landscapes reflect his memories—in his case, as a child looking for unusual plants and objects in the woods behind his home. Exuding both vitality (bright, wildly colorful images) and melancholy (dark, dense forests), Lightner's works expand on both his childhood joys of discovering and exploring nature and his increasing uncertainty about the future of his family farm and the adjacent woodlands. "Lightner continually mines his intimate knowledge of the unmythologized Midwestern surroundings of his past, and cloaks it in a veil of mood, emotion, and nostalgia," said Elizabeth Dunbar, curator at the Kemper Museum.

Born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1971, Kurt Lightner lives and works in New York. He received his BFA from Columbus College of Art and Design, Ohio, and his MFA from the School of the Visual Arts, New York. He has had a solo exhibition at Clementine Gallery, New York, and his work has been included in such notable group exhibitions as *Greater New York* at PS1/MoMA and *Queens International 2004* at the Queens Museum of Art, both in New York.

FREE EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Friday, February 3, 6:30–7:00 p.m.

Artist and Curator Discussion

Learn more about the ideas and the content in Kurt Lightner's works by attending a discussion between the artist and Elizabeth Dunbar, curator at the Kemper Museum. Seating is first come, first served at this free event, part of the opening reception for *Kurt Lightner: Five Acres*.

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Sunday, April 2, 2:00 p.m.

Tour: Meet Me at the Museum

Join a Kemper Museum docent for a lively discussion of *Kurt Lightner: Five Acres*. Space is limited. Meet at the visitor services desk a few minutes before 2:00 p.m. No reservation is required for this free tour.

Sunday, April 2, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Family Event: Fantasy, Fairy tales, and Forests

Use your imagination to travel to Kurt Lightner's fantastic landscapes and forests and create your own woodland paintings and invented fairy-tale creatures with watercolor on paper. A special storytelling session is held in the exhibition gallery at 3:00 p.m.

Thank You

Special thanks to Sally Kemper Wood for underwriting the exhibition reception.

The Kemper Museum acknowledges the generous support of Bank of America for the 2006 Visiting Artists Program. Financial assistance has been provided by the Arvin Gottlieb Charitable Foundation, UMB Bank, n.a., Trustee; the Hallmark Corporate Foundation; the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation; the David Woods Kemper Memorial Foundation; Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; and the Richard J. Stern Foundation for the Arts. Generous in-kind support is provided by *The Kansas City Star*, Midwest Airlines, and The Raphael Hotel.

About the Kemper Museum

Kansas City's acclaimed, free contemporary art museum, the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art opened in 1994 and draws more than 130,000 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. For more information, visit www.kemperart.org.

The Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art 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. The galleries at Kemper East (200 E. 44th Street) are open 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Tuesday–Thursday. The Museum's popular Café Sebastienne serves lunch 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Tuesday–Saturday; dinner 5:30–9:30 p.m., Friday–Saturday; and brunch 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Sunday. The Museum and Café are closed on Mondays.

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