

NEWS

from the Worcester Art Museum

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IMMEDIATE



DAVID THORPE: A MEETING OF FRIENDS

(WORCESTER, Mass., May 4, 2006) – Worcester Art Museum is proud to present the first solo museum exhibition in the United States of British contemporary artist, David Thorpe. Five of Thorpe's mixed-media collages and one sculpture, created between 1999 and 2005, inhabit the Contemporary Gallery with six early American landscape paintings from the Museum's Permanent Collection. The American landscapes include works by Winthrop Chandler, Ralph Earl, Edward Hicks, Martin Johnson Heade and Albert Bierstadt.

David Thorpe: A Meeting of Friends, is on view at the Worcester Art Museum, 55 Salisbury Street, through Sunday, August 13, 2006.

Thorpe's work depicts fantastical dwellings amidst untamed landscapes. Intricate layers of cut paper and natural fibers create imaginary small worlds that from a distance look like modern versions of traditional landscape paintings. Upon closer inspection, the works appear alive; multiple stratum of textured paper, wood, and plant-life merge to form three-dimensional dioramas that pull the viewer closer and closer into the collages.

The one sculptural element in the exhibition serves many purposes; Curator Susan Stoops writes that "Thorpe's inclusion of his Arts and Crafts inspired screen, handmade of painted glass and dark wood, extends pictorial connections between subject, scale, and time into the architectural environment of the gallery. Its horizontal expanse, signifying both intellectual boundary and physical barrier, strategically separates the Museum's historic landscapes from Thorpe's own, while also 'providing (importantly) points of entry and resistance, penetration and privacy.'¹"

When talking specifically about this showing of Thorpe's work, Stoops writes that "In the Worcester installation, Thorpe's strategic configuration of images and objects results in a unique meeting between historic worlds and contemporary ideas. It is a conception of place and an apprehension of time that stretches both forward and back."

¹ Tom Morton, "Call of the Wild," *Frieze*, Issue 88, January/February 2005, 85.

Born in London in 1972, Thorpe graduated from Goldsmiths University. Thorpe continues to live and work in London. In 2002, Thorpe's work was featured in the group exhibition *Drawing Now: Eight Propositions* at MOMA QNS. Later in 2004, Thorpe participated in his first ever solo exhibition at the Tate Britain, London, as a part of the "Art Now" series, and published an artist book, *A Rendezvous with my Friends of Liberty* with Revolver, Archiv für aktuelle Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Thorpe's other solo exhibitions include showings at Meyer Riegger Galerie, Karlsruhe, Germany, Taro Nasu Gallery, Tokyo, 303 Gallery, New York, and Maureen Paley Interim Art, London. Group exhibitions include showings around the world in Stockholm, London, The Netherlands, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Czech Republic, Milan, Amsterdam, Cologne, Austria and Vienna. Thorpe's next solo exhibition is organized by the Camden Arts Centre, London, and the show will travel to the Kunsthaus Glarus, Switzerland in 2007.

Credits:

David Thorpe: A Meeting of Friends, is made possible through generous support provided by the Don and Mary Melville Contemporary Art Fund. Additional generous support provided by Marlene and David Persky, Linda and John Nelson, Jean McDonough, and Worcester Magazine. The exhibition is curated by Worcester Art Museum Curator of Contemporary Art, Susan Stoops.

About the Worcester Art Museum

The Worcester Art Museum, which opened to the public in 1898, is world-renowned for its 35,000-piece collection of paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, photography, prints, drawings and new media. The works span 5,000 years of art and culture, ranging from ancient Roman mosaics to Colonial silver, Impressionist paintings and contemporary art. Dedicated to the promotion of art and art education, the Museum offers a year-round studio art and art appreciation program that enrolls over 6,000 adult and youth students each year. Public tours are offered Saturdays at 11 a.m. and Sundays at 1 p.m., September through May. Audio tours are also available in English and Spanish.

Museum hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Thursday, 11 a.m.-8 p.m. (evening hours sponsored by Commerce Bank), and Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors and full-time college students with current ID, and FREE for Members and all youth 17 and under. Admission is also FREE for everyone on Saturday mornings, 10 a.m.-noon (sponsored by The TJX Companies, Inc. and National Grid). The Museum is located at 55 Salisbury St., Worcester, Mass., easily accessible from the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90), Route 290 and Route 9. Free parking is available near entrances on Salisbury, Lancaster and Tuckerman streets. For more information, call (508) 799-4406 or visit the Museum web site at www.worcesterart.org.

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