Summer Ceramics Exhibition At MMAC Celebrates Bray Legacy

MISSOULA –

The Montana Museum of Art & Culture at The University of Montana will present “60 Artists, 60 Artworks, 60 Years: Celebrating the Archie Bray Foundation” from June 3 through Sept. 10.

The exhibition, which will be on view in the museum’s Meloy and Paxson galleries, pays tribute to the 60th anniversary of the Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts in Helena.

The exhibition’s diverse selection of ceramics created by past Bray residents, who include UM faculty and alumni, exemplify the breadth of creative expression generated at the internationally renowned Montana institution. Drawn from MMAC’s Permanent Collection and four private Missoula ceramic collections, the exhibition features artists from various periods in the Bray’s history.

As its title suggests, the exhibition will include a single artwork by each of 60 artists who epitomize the legacy of the Archie Bray Foundation. Featured are works by contemporary Missoula-based artists Adrian Arleo, Julia Galloway, Trey Hill, Beth Lo, David Pledge and David Regan, as well as works by Frances Senska, Rudy Auto, Peter Voulkos, Branson G. Stevenson, Peter Meloy, David Shaner, Kurt Weiser, Jay Rummel and others.

In addition, MMAC will host a satellite exhibition at UM’s Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library June 3-Sept. 10 titled “Peter and Henry Meloy: Collaborations.” The exhibition will feature functional and sculptural ceramics by the well-known brothers. Peter was a co-founder of the Archie Bray Foundation, and Henry was a New York City abstract expressionist painter. The pieces in the exhibition are on loan from the Henry Meloy Educational Trust.

A memorial for artist and former UM School of Art Chair and Professor Tom Rippon (1954-2010) will be on view June 3-Sept. 10 on the first floor of the University’s Main Hall. Rippon, a ceramics virtuoso who studied with Robert Arneson, is known for his imaginative sculptures that embody humor and whimsy, such as “Tree of Art,” a 1996 ceramic wall mural that adorns the east side of the University’s Performing Arts & Radio/Television Center. A free public reception with refreshments and live music will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, June 3, in the PAR/TV Center lobby.

“Ceramic Collectors Summer Celebration,” a roundtable discussion with participating collectors, will take place at 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 29, in the Montana Theatre of the PAR/TV Center. The event is free and open to the public. UM art history and criticism Associate Professor H. Rafael Chacón will speak about the history of ceramics. An outdoor reception with food, beverages and entertainment will follow on the PAR/TV Center patio.

MMAC also will host a “Student Welcome and Ceramic Artist Celebration” at 5 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 7, for returning UM students and the Bray artists featured in the exhibition. The celebration, which is open to the public, will take place in the PAR/TV Center lobby.

These UM events will be held concurrently with multiple ceramics exhibitions across the state. Activities associated with the Bray anniversary titled “2011: From the Center to the Edge – 60 Years of Creativity and Innovation at the Archie Bray Foundation” will take place June 23-25 in Helena. A complete schedule of anniversary activities and statewide exhibitions is available online at http://60th.archiebray.org.
MMAC galleries are located in UM’s PAR/TV Center. Gallery hours for the Bray exhibition are from noon to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday and from noon to 6 p.m. Friday. For more information visit MMAC’s website at http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum or call 406-243-2019.

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**NOTE TO MEDIA:** Digital images of select items included in the MMAC exhibition are available by calling 406-243-2019.

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