ARTWORKS OF MARCUS DALY’S GRANDDAUGHTER GIFTED TO MMAC

MISSOULA –

The Montana Museum of Art & Culture has received a gift of 19 oil paintings and seven charcoal drawings by artist Frances Carroll Brown, granddaughter of Montana copper baron Marcus Daly.

Brown was born Feb. 23, 1909, in Baltimore. When she was 3, her mother, Margaret, died, and Brown inherited her mother’s fortune. As a young lady of means, Brown embodied early 20th-century society.

Her formal education was conducted by a governess and concluded with a two-year grand tour of Europe as part of a finishing school with a private tutor. In Europe Brown was exposed to a variety of cultural influences, learned French and visited the great museums. When she returned from Europe, she premiered as a debutante in New York City and participated in steeplechases flying the Daly colors.

Brown maintained strong ties to the Bitterroot Valley and the Stock Farm, site of the family’s Daly Mansion in Hamilton, and attended social events and celebrated holidays at the mansion. As a Stock Farm shareholder, she was involved in the day-to-day operations of the ranch.
In the late 1930s and early ’40s, Brown pursued her art, studying in France and Greece. When World War II erupted, she returned to the U.S. to work as a Navy translator in New York City. In 1947 she contracted polio. She recovered from total paralysis after use of the Orton-Gillingham Multisensory Method restored her cognitive and speech abilities.

In the 1950s Brown divided her time between Roseland, N.J., and Baltimore. She attended Schuler’s School of Fine Art in the 1960s. After the ownership and stewardship of the Daly residence was transferred to the state of Montana in 1985, Brown never returned. She lived the remainder of her life in Baltimore and died there in 2002.

Many of the artist’s artworks now in the MMAC Permanent Collection were exhibited together on June 17, 2002, at the artist’s childhood home, now a school in Baltimore.

Brown’s art contributes to a growing list of significant female artists who played a compelling role in Montana art history. Her psychological portraits are artistically and historically significant, ranging in subject matter from workers and day laborers to high society portraits and artist models.

Her art, which remains largely unknown, is fundamentally humanistic, indicating a fascination with a variety of racial, religious and class backgrounds. In addition to the 26 pieces preserved at MMAC, six drawings by Brown survive at the Daly Mansion.

Mary Jean Warlen, donor of the Frances Carroll Brown paintings and drawings to MMAC and Brown’s caretaker during the last 12 years of her life, describes Brown as a “most unusual individual, out of place in this century,” “a woman of excellence” and “extremely gracious, with an indomitable character.”

“To discover a previously little-known artist of the aesthetic caliber of Frances Carroll Brown with direct ties to the Bitterroot and Missoula areas is enormously exciting,” said MMAC
Director Barbara Koostra. “Preserving the history of art in Montana through artworks such as these is central to our mission, and we are very grateful for this generous gift.”

Brown’s paintings recently were cleaned and conserved, and the drawings were reframed and stabilized using archival materials thanks to a generous grant from the F. Morris and Helen Silver Foundation. Conservation and reframing were done in preparation for an exhibition of Brown’s work to open at MMAC next year. MMAC has expanded gallery hours for its current exhibitions and is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday from noon to 3 p.m. and Thursday and Friday from noon to 6 p.m. through March 12. For more information, call 406-243-2019 or go online to http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum.

###

NOTE TO MEDIA: Digital images of select items of Brown’s artworks are available upon request by calling 406-243-2019.

BK/bd
Local, state
120610mmac