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'Art on the Plains' a Snapshot of Artistic Talent from Across the Upper Midwest

FARGO, N.D. – With the exhibition “Art on the Plains XI: A Regional Juried Exhibition,” opening January 29, Plains Art Museum will provide a valuable glimpse into the range of artistic talent currently being shown across the upper Midwest. Forty-eight established and emerging visual artists from North Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, South Dakota, and Nebraska will be featured in the exhibition, particularly artists that exemplify the region’s contemporary practices in photography, sculpture, installation art, and other media.

Museum Director of Curatorial Affairs Megan Johnston said this exhibition makes a strong case for the Midwest as a source of some of the world’s most critical work.

“This exhibition proves that good work can be made anywhere today,” Johnston said. “The center of the art world isn’t necessarily New York, London or Berlin. It’s not Minneapolis, Chicago, Los Angeles, or Houston. It’s right here and right now.”

The exhibition was juried by Hesse McGraw, chief curator of the Bemis Center of Contemporary Arts in Omaha, Neb. He observes that the work in “Art on the Plains” upends traditional notions of the Midwest while offering a rationality found nowhere else in American life.

“The exhibition careens through the fault lines of Middle America: shrinking cities, corporate agriculture, race and class divisions, and meat and potatoes culture,” McGraw said. “Their works graciously reveal a place whose politics are more complex than stark red and blue and where taste is a battleground.”

McGraw, an artist and writer, was the founding director of Paragraph, a contemporary art gallery operating under the non-profit Urban Culture Project in downtown Kansas City, Mo., where he also served as senior editor of *Review Magazine*.

“Art on the Plains XI” will open in the Museum’s Jane L. Stern and William and Anna Jane Schlossman Galleries with a preview reception on Saturday, January 28 at 7:30 p.m. McGraw will deliver a gallery talk at 8 p.m. The exhibition will open to the public on Sunday, January 29. More information on the exhibition can be found at plainsart.org/exhibits. “Art on the Plains XI” is sponsored in part by Bremer Bank.

Plains Art Museum is located at 704 First Avenue North. It is accredited by the American Association of Museums and is a nonprofit, regional fine arts museum with plans to significantly expand its programs through its “Little Artist in All of Us” campaign. The campaign is raising funds for the Center for Creativity and Lifelong Learning which includes working with Fargo Public Schools and other educational entities to build teaching studios. The campaign is also strengthening operations by enhancing the Museum’s endowment and visitor services.

Museum programs are made possible, in part, by major funding from members of the Museum, The FUNd at Plains Art Museum, the cities of Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo through The Arts Partnership, The McKnight Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature, the North Dakota Council on the Arts through an appropriation by the North Dakota State Legislature and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. More information is available at 701.232.3821 or at www.plainsart.org.

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