



ELAINE L. JACOB GALLERY

and

ART DEPARTMENT GALLERY

James Pearson Duffy Department of Art and Art History

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: *Works by Peter Gilleran*

Dates: November 6 through December 18, 2009

Opening: Opening reception on Friday, November 6, 5-8PM

Hours: Tuesdays – Thursdays 10AM-6PM and Fridays 10AM-7PM

Contact: Lisa Baylis Gonzalez or Crystal Palmer at (313) 577-0770

Art Department Gallery to present *Works by Peter Gilleran*

This exhibition features approximately 35 paintings and drawings by Peter J. Gilleran (1921 - 2007) who was an art professor at Wayne State University from 1954 to 1989, when he retired. Gilleran attended Cass Tech High School (1939) in Detroit, received his BA (1948) from the Colorado College in Colorado Springs and earned his MFA (1950) from Cranbrook Academy of Art, where he studied with Zoltan Sepeshy and taught for nearly a decade. During World War II, Gilleran served in the Army Signal Corps as a draftsman while being stationed in India and China.

The influential teacher and prolific artist participated in one of the first Ann Arbor Art Fairs and was the official portrait artist in its fourth year. Gilleran exhibited up until the time of his death, with one-person shows at the Scarab Club, the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center, West Virginia State College and the Detroit Artists Market. Throughout his career, Gilleran received a number of prestigious awards, including a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation fellowship.

Gilleran's work illustrates his deep exploration of a wide variety of modern artistic styles, including Cubism, Pointillism, Abstract Expressionism and Fauvism, which he synthesized and used often to depict local subject matter. There is an energy created through Gilleran's unique color palette and adept draftsmanship, and a deep empathy in his sensitive portrayal of his subjects.

Witty and optimistic, Gilleran's passion for art was the driving force behind his talent and love for teaching. Richard Bilaitis, professor emeritus and former chair of WSU's James Pearson Duffy Department of Art and Art History said, "He lived, ate and slept painting and drawing and inspired many students to choose careers in the field."

"His artwork and teaching were a continual source of enjoyment, satisfaction and pride; it was his life," Gilleran's wife, Anne Crow Gilleran said. Two of his children followed in their father's footsteps. Daughter Breon Gilleran is a sculptor and an assistant professor of art at Goucher College in Towson, Maryland, while son Peter Gilleran is a painter and has taught high school art in the Detroit Public School system.

This exhibition serves as a special tribute to a prolific and accomplished Michigan artist who taught painting, drawing and graphic design at Wayne State University for 35 years.

The exhibition's opening reception is Friday, November 6, from 5:00 to 8:00 PM, and is free and open to the general public. The Art Department Gallery is located in the Art Building on the campus of Wayne State University near the intersection of Cass Avenue and Kirby Street. Metered street parking is available and is free after 6:00 PM.

For further information, please contact Lisa Baylis Gonzalez (lbgonzalez@wayne.edu) or Crystal Palmer (eb2188@wayne.edu) at (313) 577-0770.

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