

# Alamance County Arts Council in Graham, NC, Features Works by Dr. Leo Twiggs

Alamance County Arts Council in Graham, NC, will present *Leo Twiggs 1970-2015: Current Work in Context*, featuring works by the distinguished American artist Dr. Leo Twiggs, on view in the Sister and SunTrust Galleries of the Captain James and Emma Holt White House, from Sept. 10 through Oct. 30, 2015. A reception will be held on Sept. 10, from 6:30-8:30pm.

The exhibition features Twiggs' batik paintings spanning 45 years of his award-winning career.

A native of South Carolina, Twiggs' was the first African-American to receive a doctorate in art education from the University of Georgia and the first visual artist to receive South Carolina's Governor's Award for the Arts. His batik paintings have won international recognition and numerous awards and he has had more than 70 one-man shows.

While the exhibition's main focus is on Twiggs' work from the last decade, a substantial part of the show presents earlier works from as far back as 1970. In doing so, the exhibition provides historical context for Twiggs' more recent paintings. It shows both the development of Twiggs' work in the past 45 years and the elements that remained consistent during that period. The latter includes Twiggs' use of certain symbols and objects over time while changing their representation and meaning.



'Silent Signals,' Dr. Leo Twiggs, 2002, batik on cotton, 33" x 27"

Batik is deliberate and complex, tedious and time consuming, yet, the process compliments Twiggs' art. His paintings are lively, expressive, and full of rich color and texture.

Much of Twiggs' subject matter is a result of his own encounters with the world. Twiggs' work features his family members and friends, his upbringing in rural South Carolina, the old South of Confederate commemoration and black victimization, the signs, signals and crossroads of people's past and the cultural heritage of black people including the rivers they traveled and the blues they sang. The soft colors in his art help give his work a sincerity and contemplativeness that fits his literal subject matter.

"Somewhere along the way I saw the spidery web-like linear patterns and mottled surface inherent to batik as expressive of an aging process, the struggle to survive, not just the world, but time itself. I came to realize that the struggle we had was the basic struggle of mankind - we were not alone. Perhaps that is why my figures evolved to be no longer just black or brown, but purple, red, blue, yellow and white."

The works featured in the exhibition were gathered from Twiggs' personal collection, galleries that represent him and private collectors. Wim Roefs is the curator of the Alamance Arts exhibition that will present Twiggs' works. Roefs is the owner of if ART Gallery in Columbia, SC, where much of Twiggs' work is featured.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings, call the Council at 336/226-4495 or visit ([www.alamancearts.org](http://www.alamancearts.org)).



"Last Flag 5," Dr. Leo Twiggs, 2014, batik on cotton, 36" x 45"

The X shape or St Andrew's Cross, for instance, has in different stages of Twiggs' career functioned as part of the Confederate rebel flag, the symbol for a railroad crossing and as an X marking a man or a spot.

Twiggs' paintings are done with an ancient process of decorating fabric called batik. In this process, the artist colors the fabrics one color at a time using dyes and wax. Twiggs' developed his own unique batik painting process through innovative manipulation of the traditional technique by repeating the process numerous times, which has given us his nationally acclaimed work today.

# Asheville Art Museum in Asheville Offers Works by William Wegman

The Asheville Art Museum in Asheville is thrilled to be presenting *William Wegman: Cubism and Other-isms*, an exhibition of the work of renowned artist William Wegman, on view through Jan. 24, 2016.

In her essay for the artist's 2006 retrospective exhibition catalogue, Joan Simon describes William Wegman as a "pioneer video-maker, wry conceptualist, performer, photographer, painter, found-object finder, draftsman and writer. Wegman is typical of his generation in his multimedia reach but unusual in his audiences. He is not only held in critical esteem within the international art world but also beloved by the general public.... He is the 'man with the dogs,' whose handsome troupe of Weimaraners collaborates with him in theatrical tableaux and the telling of tales."

William Wegman was born in Holyoke, MA, in 1943. He attended the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston and received his Masters of Fine Arts degree from University of Illinois in 1967. Wegman taught briefly in Wisconsin before venturing out to California in 1970 and finally settling in New York in 1972. In 1970 Wegman acquired his first Weimaraner, naming him Man Ray. He soon began including Man Ray in his videos and photographs. Wegman claimed that it was Man Ray who



"A Step Up", 2014, by William Wegman, pigment print, 44 x 34 inches, Edition 1/7. Courtesy of the Artist and Senior & Shopmaker Gallery, New York.

insisted on becoming part of the process, leading to one of the most significant collaborations between artist and model in the history of art. The artist continued to work with Man Ray until the dog's death in 1981.

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In 1986 Wegman began a whole new collaboration when his new dog Fay Ray arrived in his life. Upon the arrival of Fay Ray, Wegman began using a Polaroid again and started photographing his Weimaraner family. Wegman's dog family has been seen in many of his works ranging from early video shorts to books to mainstream videos.

For many years Wegman has been working on a project he calls *Cubism and Other-isms*, where, with his trademark wry humor, he mines art historical precedents to create images of startling beauty. In a 1981 interview, Wegman states, "In my own work I have visited many art movements, but none more often than Cubism — the epitome of modern art." In the early 1990s while making videos and films with his dogs standing in as human characters, Wegman began placing his subjects on elevated platforms in order to shoot them at eye level. The props in his photographs have taken many forms, but none so consistently as the cube. The cube is also one of the most available on-set items in the studios of commercial photographers, used for displaying products in tableaux or isolation to highlight their form or shape. For Joan Simon, this use of the cube also suggests "an art-about-art reference echoing both the pedestal of traditional sculpture and the Euclidean geometry of Minimalism."

The exhibition *William Wegman: Cubism and Other-isms* surveys more than 25 years of Wegman's artistic production, including early black-and-white photographs, large-format Polaroids and more recent digital imagery. In conjunction with this exhibition, the Museum is screening *William Wegman:*

*Video Works 1970-1999* in the New Media Gallery.

Wegman's photographs, video works, paintings and drawings have been exhibited in museums and galleries internationally. Recent exhibitions include *William Wegman: Hello Nature*, a major survey organized by the Bowdoin College Museum of Art of over 100 nature-related works by the artist in various media (2012), which traveled to Artipelag, Värmdö, Stockholm, Sweden (2013); and *A World of Its Own: Photographic Practices in the Studio*, a group exhibition organized by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, (2014). Wegman presented the annual 2014 Robert Rosenblum lecture at the Guggenheim Museum of Art, New York. He is represented by Senior & Shopmaker Gallery in New York.

Founded by artists in 1948 in Asheville, NC, the Asheville Art Museum annually presents an exciting, inviting and active schedule of exhibitions and public programs based on its permanent collection of 20th and 21st century American art. Any visit will also include experiences with works of significance to Western North Carolina's cultural heritage including Studio Craft, Black Mountain College and Cherokee artists. Special exhibitions feature renowned regional and national artists and explore issues of enduring interest. The Museum also offers a wide array of innovative, inspiring and entertaining educational programs for people of all ages.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings or visit ([www.ashevilleart.org](http://www.ashevilleart.org)).

# UNC Asheville in Asheville, NC, Features Works by Carol Prusa

UNC Asheville in Asheville, NC, is presenting *Unfathomable*, an exhibition of works by silverpoint and mixed media artist Carol Prusa, on view in the S. Tucker Cooke Gallery, in Owen Hall, through Sept. 17, 2015.

Prusa is known for her contemporary and

large-scale use of silverpoint combined with fiber optics. Her recent work consists of fiberglass forms, acrylic circles, hemispheres and spheres ranging from bowl-sized to five feet in diameter. These forms are articulated with silverpoint drawing and ground graph-

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