



Meadows Museum to Present Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by Acclaimed Texas Artist John Alexander

Human/nature. The Ridiculous and Sublime: Recent Works by John Alexander Will Feature 35 Works by SMU-Trained Artist Known for His Satirical Look at How Humans Interact with Nature

DALLAS (SMU) (March 3, 2015) — The Meadows Museum at Southern Methodist University will honor one of the University's most acclaimed artists with the exhibition *Human/nature. The Ridiculous and Sublime: Recent Works by John Alexander*. The exhibition will run March 22 through June 28, 2015 and will feature 35 paintings and drawings by the SMU-trained Alexander, whose works often incorporate social satire and a surreal cast of people and animals. One critic has described his work as capturing “nature at its grandest and man at his worst.”

The exhibition, curated by Meadows Museum Curatorial Assistant Shelley DeMaria, will be on display within the museum's Virginia Meadows Galleries. A catalogue, which includes an essay by Eleanor Jones Harvey, Senior Curator at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, as well as an artist interview conducted by DeMaria, will accompany the exhibition.

Born in 1945 in Beaumont, Texas, Alexander attended Lamar University before entering graduate school at SMU's Meadows School of the Arts in 1969. During his time at the Meadows School, he also worked at the Meadows Museum, where he gained unique access to the Museum's permanent collection of Spanish art. Alexander was notably influenced by the work of Francisco de Goya, and in particular, by Goya's four complete print series, which are part of the Museum's permanent collection. Alexander would take from the Spanish artist the ability to satirize the world he saw around him, and meld it with his own Texan sensibility, which included an acute awareness of the oil industry and its effects on the natural environment.

After receiving his MFA from SMU in 1970, Alexander moved to Houston, established a studio and became a member of the art faculty of the University of Houston. In the late 1970s, Alexander moved to New York, where he currently divides his time between New York City and Amagansett, Long Island. He has exhibited extensively in the United States and around the world, and had a major retrospective in 2008 at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston. Alexander's work is included in the permanent collections of leading museums including the Dallas Museum of Art; The McNay Museum in San Antonio; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum

of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and many other distinguished public and private collections worldwide. His 1989 painting *Demons* is part of the University Art Collection at the Meadows Museum, a gift from Houston philanthropist William J. Hill in 2006.

Human/nature. The Ridiculous and Sublime is comprised of 35 works on loan from 26 lenders, including 12 from Texas. "Our exhibition spans the past decade of John's career, with the earliest work from 2002, yet it is representative of his trajectory as a whole," said DeMaria. "He is a consummate draftsman, a skillful satirist, and a lover of nature. All of these characteristics will be on display in this exhibition."

"Exhibiting the work of such a distinguished alumnus as John Alexander is a fitting way to help celebrate both SMU's 100th anniversary and the Meadows Museum's 50th anniversary," said Mark A. Roglán, the Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum and Centennial Chair in the Meadows School of the Arts. "John's brilliant paintings and drawings are an enduring testament to the way in which the Museum has left a profound impact on students and artists over the last 50 years."

Programming to accompany the exhibition includes a lecture by the artist on Thursday, March 26 at 6:00 p.m. in the Bob and Jean Smith Auditorium and a gallery talk by the exhibition curator on Friday, April 10 at 12:15 p.m. in the Virginia Meadows Galleries. Both programs are free.

As part of the Meadows Museum's 50th anniversary celebration, the museum has established the John Alexander Membership Society (JAMS), a unique 12-month membership named after the artist. Museum members at this level will enjoy special benefits throughout the anniversary year. For more information, contact Membership Manager David Leggett at either 214-768-2765 or dleggett@smu.edu.

This exhibition has been organized by the Meadows Museum. It is part of the Museum's Golden Anniversary, which is sponsored by The Meadows Foundation, The Moody Foundation, the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Dallas Tourism Public Improvement District. Media sponsorship has been provided by *The Dallas Morning News*. Additional support for this exhibition has been provided by the John Alexander Membership Society. Funding has also been provided by the Williford Foundation for American Art.

About the Meadows Museum

The Meadows Museum is the leading U.S. institution focused on the study and presentation of the art of Spain. In 1962, Dallas businessman and philanthropist Algur H. Meadows donated his private collection of Spanish paintings, as well as funds to start a museum, to Southern Methodist University. The Museum opened to the public in 1965, marking the first step in fulfilling Meadows' vision to create a "Prado on the Prairie." Today, the Meadows is home to one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of Spanish art outside of Spain. The collection spans from the 10th to the 21st century and includes medieval objects, Renaissance and

Baroque sculptures, and major paintings by Golden Age and modern masters. Since 2010 the Museum has been engaged in a multidimensional partnership with the Prado, which has included the exchange of scholarship, exhibitions, works of art, and other resources. The Meadows Museum is celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2015 with a series of special exhibitions and programs. Visit <http://www.meadowsmuseumdallas.org> for more information.

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