

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Phyllis McElroy 253.284.2531 | pmcelroy@jayray.com

Matt Wakefield 253.722.2691 | mwakefield@jayray.com

On behalf of Tacoma Art Museum

New Exhibition at Tacoma Art Museum Explores the Birth of New American Styles of Art and their Influence from 1900-1950

TACOMA, WA (January 17, 2022) –Tacoma Art Museum’s newest exhibition, *Departures and Divisions: Variation in American Styles 1900-1950*, explores the period when a number of American artists rejected time-honored subjects and styles and embraced a variety of different aesthetics. The new installation, highlighting artwork from TAM’s own collection and curated by the museum’s executive director, David F. Setford, opens Saturday, January 22 and is on view until early September 2022.

This new American mindset/artistic mindset constituted a rejection of dominant styles such as French Impressionism and the genteel subjects preferred by New York’s National Academy of Design, in favor of urban and rural scenes of American life. The exhibition begins with works by several of the artists affectionately known as “The Eight”, including William Glackens, George Luks, Everett Shinn and John Sloan – all followers of Robert Henri, who encouraged his students to illustrate the gritty city streets and hardworking people they saw in day-to-day life.

Simultaneously the celebrated 1913 Armory Show introduced American audiences to abstraction, cubism, expressionism and a variety of other modern styles. In the following decades, American artists adopted or reacted to these new ideas in various ways. The exhibition surveys these responses from American Scene works that celebrate rural life and regional scenery, to the new aesthetics born in the Harlem Renaissance, the influence of the powerful figurative style of Mexican muralists and explorations of abstraction. Works by Northwest artists illustrate the impact of these changes in our region.

“Through these new styles, American artists expanded the definition of what art could be and strove to define a national aesthetic but instead of a singular definition they instead developed a variety of viewpoints,” said Setford, Executive Director of Tacoma Art Museum. “This was a transformative period in American art and we want to

reintroduce our visitors to these artists and celebrate their important legacies as well as share more of the wonderful works in our collection.”

The exhibition includes over 40 paintings and prints by such well-known names as Robert Henri, Elizabeth Catlett, Edward Hopper, Jacob Lawrence, and Georgia O’Keeffe as well as Northwest artists including Vanessa Helder, Kamekichi Tokita, and Mark Tobey.

Events

Virtual Talk | Hear from the Curator
Sunday, February 6, 1 - 2:30 p.m.
Free

Departures and Divisions: Variation in American Styles, 1900-1950 is supported, in part, by Tacoma Creates, ArtsFund, Washington State Arts Commission, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

###

About Tacoma Art Museum

Celebrating over 85 years, Tacoma Art Museum is the leading resource for art of the Pacific Northwest and greater Western region. TAM’s mission is to transform our communities by sharing art that inspires broader perspectives and cultivates a compassionate future. TAM’s collection contains more than 5,300 works, with an emphasis on the art and artists of the Northwest and broader Western region, 25% of which consists of studio glass. The collection includes the largest retrospective museum collection of glass art by Tacoma native Dale Chihuly on permanent view; the most significant collection of studio art jewelry by Northwest artists; key holdings in 19th century European and 20th century American art; and one of the finest collections of Japanese woodblock prints on the West Coast. TAM is located in the heart of Tacoma’s vibrant Museum District, which consists of six museums, including the Museum of Glass, a frequent collaborator.