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GRAND RAPIDS ART MUSEUM PRESENTS *REAL/SURREAL*, THE SECOND EXHIBITION FROM THE WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, OCTOBER 19, 2012 - JANUARY 13, 2013

*Exhibition challenges the art historical categories of Realism and Surrealism by juxtaposing important American works from both disciplines, such as Edward Hopper and Man Ray, and finding points of convergence*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., September 12, 2012** – *Real/Surreal*, an exhibition exploring important American works of Realism and Surrealism, will be on view at the Grand Rapids Art Museum from October 19, 2012 through January 13, 2013. This exhibition boldly challenges the art historical categories of Realism and Surrealism by juxtaposing works of art from both disciplines, allowing viewers to actively reexamine categories that previously seemed oppositional. *Real/Surreal* is presented as part of a three-year, three-exhibition partnership with the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, New York.

"We are looking forward to this groundbreaking exhibition," said GRAM Director and CEO, Dana Friis-Hansen, "And I'm so thrilled that this partnership with the Whitney is once again bringing important masterpieces of American art to West Michigan."

Friis-Hansen continued, "From the serene splendor of small town America, to complex narratives that contort time and space, to otherworldly dreamscapes as if from distant planets, *Real/Surreal* will take you on a journey you will never forget!"

Focusing on the tension and overlap between these two strong currents in twentieth-century art, the juxtapositions and points of convergence in this exhibition encourage new ways of looking at some of the most dynamic works of art of the thirties, forties, and fifties in America. Artists whose styles are traditionally described as Realist, such as Edward Hopper and Andrew Wyeth, distill from reality using composition and style to convey an ambiguous or unsettling mood, finding the uncanny in the everyday. Artists typically known as Surrealists, such as Man Ray and Yves Tanguy, are represented with bizarre yet sometimes familiar images. In between is the work of the Magic Realists, such as George Tooker and Jared French, who render reality in a way that makes it seem alien.

GRAM is the first stop on a national tour of the exhibition. *Real/Surreal* is organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and includes over sixty paintings, drawings, photographs, and prints. It is the second of three exhibitions as part of the three-year partnership with the Whitney. The partnership was announced earlier this year with the opening of *Synopsis Shuffle*, an exhibition of work by Robert Rauschenberg.

Pamella DeVos serves on the boards of two art museums—the Grand Rapids Art Museum and the Whitney—and was instrumental in helping connect the two organizations for the three-year, three-exhibition partnership.

At the press conference announcing the three year exhibition schedule, Ms. DeVos, who was appointed earlier this year by Gov. Rick Snyder to the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, stated, "I am thrilled to see this partnership put in place, a partnership that started with a conversation I had with the Director of the Whitney, Adam Weinberg, and later with our new Director here at GRAM. It then grew quickly into a reality for the Grand Rapids Art Museum."

Adam D. Weinberg, the Alice Pratt Brown Director of the Whitney Museum of American Art, stated: "We are delighted to be collaborating with the Grand Rapids Art Museum, a truly vibrant cultural center in West Michigan, on the presentation of three exhibitions which debuted at the Whitney: *Synopsis Shuffle*, *Real/Surreal*, and *Legacy: The Emily Fisher Landau Collection*. It's a great pleasure to share these shows with audiences of art lovers outside of New York. We are immensely grateful to Pamella DeVos and the Daniel and Pamella DeVos Foundation for their extraordinary generosity... and for their enduring support of the Whitney."

An interactive gallery will accompany the exhibition, where visitors can become immersed in a hands-on, interactive landscape that blurs the boundaries between the real and surreal. They can explore bizarre dream worlds, experiment with Surrealist subjects, and dive deeper into the themes and ideas seen throughout the exhibition.

In addition, a complementary exhibition titled *Salvador Dalí's Twelve Tribes of Israel* will be on view throughout the duration of *Real/Surreal*. This exhibition will showcase works by the Spanish Surrealist artist, Salvador Dalí, providing visitors the chance to compare and contrast the works of American Surrealists with those of a well-known European artist involved in the movement. The exhibition of the twelve prints in this series marks the Museum's participation in Grand Rapids' 2012 Year of Interfaith Understanding.

Also on view, from November 2, 2012 through January 13, 2013, is the Michigan Artist Series exhibition, *Robert McCann: New History Paintings*. In his dynamic and colorful large-scale paintings, Robert McCann explores the contemporary connections between real and surreal and the visual and digital worlds, characterized by the overlay of abstraction and illusion with a cast of characters that includes friends and acquaintances, sports stars, and pop culture icons.

A list of the programming complementing *Real/Surreal* can be found below.

### **Exhibition-related programming**

**October 18**

**7:00 - 9:00pm**

#### **REAL/SURREAL MEMBER PREVIEW**

GRAM Members get to experience the new exhibition first! Join GRAM for a real surreal evening with complimentary refreshments, a cash bar, and special guest lecturer Michael Duncan. RSVP by October 11, 2012 at 616-831-2924 or [memberpreview.kintera.org](http://memberpreview.kintera.org)

**7:30pm**

#### **REAL/SURREAL MEMBER PREVIEW LECTURE**

##### **More Real: Expanding the Boundaries of Figurative Art**

With special guest lecturer Michael Duncan, Independent Curator and corresponding editor for *Art in America*, Los Angeles. Complimentary refreshments, lecture, and a cash bar. RSVP by October 11, at 616.831.2912 or [memberpreview.kintera.org](http://memberpreview.kintera.org).

**9:30 pm – midnight**

#### **REAL/SURREAL: THE AFTER PARTY**

Everyone's invited to *Real/Surreal: The After Party!* Enjoy the surreal sounds by Spydre Murphy on the balcony, a cash bar, and great art and conversations late into the evening. Be sure to check out the surreal photo booth and parlour games. Members free, non-members \$5 cover.

### **REAL/SURREAL ON FILM**

Saturdays at 2:00pm, Cook Auditorium. Free with admission.

**Nov 24** *Un Chien Andalou* (1928)

**Dec 01** - *Edward Hopper* (2008)

**Dec 08** - *The Fall* (2006)

**Dec 15** - *Edward Hopper* (2008)

**Dec 22** - *Un Chien Andalou* (1928)

**Dec 29** - *The Fall* (2006)

**Jan 05** - *Edward Hopper* (2008)

**Jan 12** - *Un Chien Andalou* (1928)

### **FRIDAY NIGHTS AT GRAM – FRIDAY NIGHT CONVERSATIONS**

Galleries open late, cash bar, live piano music, and great conversations. 5-9pm; Conversations start at 7pm. \$5 after 5pm; free for GRAM Members. Special exhibition admission may apply.

#### **October - The Uncanny & Absurd**

**Oct 12** - Surrealist Film: *L'age D'or* by Luis Buñuel, screenwriting by Salvador Dalí

**Oct 19** - Let's Play: The Uncanny Worlds Within Video Games

**Oct 26** - Poetry on Demand: An Immersion in Surreal and Absurd Poetry

#### **November - Interpretations & The Unconscious**

**Nov 02** - Surrealist Film: *Un Chien Andalou* by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí

**Nov 09** - Dreamachine: A Content Creation Experiment

**Nov 16** - A Surreal Evening with Eugenia Marve

**Nov 23** - Film: *Edward Hopper* (2008)

**Nov 30** - Tree Lighting Ceremony and Magical Performance

#### **December - Tales & Legends**

**Dec 21** - Jason Quigno: Native American Stories through Art

**Dec 28** - Self-Guided Tour: A Cultural Exploration through Poetry

### **SATURDAY ALL DAY WITH THE ARTS**

Hands-on family programming in the Education Center Studio, every Saturday from 10am-3pm. Free with admission. Special exhibition admission may apply. Monthly themes:

#### **October:** Kaleidoscopes: A Different View

After ArtPrize, continue your investigation of American Modern and Contemporary artists in the Education Center Studio with a kaleidoscope project. Design and construct a kaleidoscope inspired by the textures and shapes found in Jimmy Ernst's *Pastures and Planets*, 1966.

#### **November:** Looking Through the Layers

Immerse yourself in the exciting worlds of Realism and Surrealism during *Real/Surreal*. Explore bizarre painting techniques and create two very different and unique realities using similar images.

#### **December:** Fancy Faces

Investigate colors and contours as we create portraits inspired by Max Pechstein's decorative painting, *Strawberry Girl*. Uncover the excitement of chine-collé, an innovative printmaking technique, and construct your own unique mixed media portrait.

#### **November 3 & 17**

### **REAL/SURREAL ART TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Explore the relationships between Realist and Surrealist art movements while discovering ways to connect notable works of art to the lives of students. Leave with lesson plan ideas, completed examples, background information on artists, and new teaching methods. For more information, visit [gramteachers.kintera.org](http://gramteachers.kintera.org).

For more information on the exhibition and the Grand Rapids Art Museum, visit [artmuseumgr.org](http://artmuseumgr.org).

### **About the Grand Rapids Art Museum**

The mission of the Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) is: to inspire discovery, enjoyment, and learning about art; to serve as a welcoming and inclusive cultural resource; to collect, conserve, and interpret works of art of the finest quality. Established in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids, the new Art Museum is internationally known for its distinguished design and LEED Gold certified status. Established in 1910 as the Grand Rapids Art Association, GRAM has grown to include more than 5,000 works of art, including American and European 19th and 20th century painting and sculpture and more than 3,500 works on paper. Embracing the city's legacy as a leading center of design and manufacturing, GRAM has a growing collection in the area of design and modern craft.

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