

News Release

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SOUTH GALLERY



Student Curated Exhibition Chronicles John E. Thompson's Modernist Vision

DENVER – *John Edward Thompson: Colorado Modernist* opens at the University of Denver (DU) Myhren Gallery Nov. 12, 2009. It is the first of three exhibitions curated this season by students in a museum studies class at DU's School of Art & Art History (SAAH). Thompson (b. 1882) was a pioneering artist who served on the DU faculty from 1929 to his death in 1945. This exhibition gathers together paintings, sketches and drawings by Thompson from DU's permanent art collection and other regional collections, including those of the Harbaugh family and of Deborah and Warren Wadsworth.

It also highlights the ongoing restoration of an important mural by Thompson on the DU campus, rediscovered more than 70 years after it was painted over in 1931. His 350 square foot Shakespeare-themed mural in Margery Reed Hall, which was finished in 1929 and painted over in 1931, was largely forgotten until its rediscovery in 2007. It is now being restored with the participation of SAAH students enrolled in the pre-conservation Bachelor of Fine Arts program.

Thompson's influence on Colorado art was felt soon after he moved to Denver in 1917. Modernist works by Thompson and his followers incited heated debates about modern art in the newspapers of the time after they were included in a 1919 exhibition at the Denver Public Library. In the early 1920s, Thompson became a founding faculty member of the Chappell House School. When DU acquired the School in 1929 Thompson, along with most of its faculty, transferred to the University's School of Art (now SAAH). He remains one of Colorado's best-known and most avidly collected painters.

What: *John Edward Thompson: Colorado Modernist*
When: Nov. 12, 2009–Jan. 17, 2010 (Closed Dec. 19–Jan. 3)
Opening reception: Thursday, Nov. 12, 5–8pm
Where: Victoria H. Myhren Gallery, University of Denver
School of Art & Art History, 2121 E. Asbury Ave., Denver, CO
Cost: Always free.
Hours: 12–4 p.m. daily.

NOTE: For most of the 2009-2010 exhibition calendar, the Victoria H. Myhren Gallery will be split into two adjoining exhibition spaces, identified as the North and South Galleries. Shows will be staggered with separate opening receptions for each space.

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