Art OF OUR TIME

SELECTIONS FROM THE ULRICH MUSEUM OF ART
WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY

Patricia McDonnell and Emily Stamey

With contributions by
Toby Kamps, Laura Moriarty,
Antonya Nelson, Timothy R. Rodgers,
and Robert Silberman

Photo-essay by Larry Schwarm

Ulrich Museum of Art | Wichita State University
in association with the University of Washington Press
This book is published in conjunction with the exhibition

**Art of Our Time: Selections from the Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita State University**
April 24–August 8, 2010.

© 2010 Edwin A. Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita State University
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by an information storage-and-retrieval system, without prior written permission of the Ulrich Museum of Art.

Edwin A. Ulrich Museum of Art
Wichita State University
1845 Fairmount Street
Wichita, KS 67260-0046
www.ulrich.wichita.edu

University of Washington Press
P.O. Box 50096
Seattle, WA 98145-5096
www.washington.edu/uwpress

Book design: Patrick Dooley, Lawrence, Kansas
Assistant manuscript editor: Susan C. Jones, Minneapolis
Photographers: Larry Schwarm and Jim Meyer for the Ulrich Museum of Art, except work by Zhang Huan (courtesy of the artist)
Printing and binding: Greystone Graphics, Kansas City, Kansas
This book was typeset in Adobe Garamond Pro, designed by Robert Slimbach (based on the roman typefaces of Claude Garamond and italic typefaces of Robert Granjon), and Gill Sans, designed by Eric Gill.

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**
Edwin A. Ulrich Museum of Art.
Art of our time: selections from the Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita State University / Patricia McDonnell and Emily Stamey; with Toby Kamps . . . [et al.]; photographic essay by Larry Schwarm. – 1st ed.
p. cm.
Published on the occasion of an exhibition held at the Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita State University, Apr. 24–Aug. 8, 2010.
709.04’007478186 – dc22
2009051477

Front cover: Joan Miró, Personnages Oiseaux (Bird People), 1977–78 (cat. no. 16)
Back cover: Tom Otterness, Millipede, 2008 (cat. no. 45)

This exhibition and book have been made possible through the generous support of Emprise Bank and the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional sponsors include the Joan S. Beren Foundation, Edward and Helen Healy, Harry Pollak, and Richard S. Smith and Sondra M. Langel. Support has also been provided by Jon and Kelly Callen, Mike and Dee Michaelis, Jayne S. Milburn, Christine F. Paulsen-Polk, and the Wichita State University Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research.

### Contents

**Preface**
Donald Beggs

**Acknowledgments**
Patricia McDonnell

**Art for All in Wichita: A Brief History of the Ulrich Museum of Art**
Patricia McDonnell

**Selections from the Ulrich Museum of Art**

**About the Contributors**

**Advisory Board and Staff**

**Sponsors**

**Reproduction Credits**
The paintings of Arthur B. Davies lead one away entirely into the land of legend, into the iridescent splendor of reflection... Often you have the sensation of looking through a Renaissance window upon a Greek world—a world of Platonic verities in calm relation with each other.

Marsden Hartley 1

Welcome reflects the distinguishing Arcadian vision and symbolist impulses of Arthur B. Davies. His scene of youth cavorting in an idealized sylvan setting is part balletic choreography, part dreamy idyll. It attempts to emphasize humankind's accord with nature, an ideal that lay at the heart of the symbolist movement from the 1880s until the early twentieth century. The unsettling pace of industrialization and its disruption of cultural norms fostered in many a nostalgic yearning for a more peaceful, bucolic world. Inspired by such artistic precursors as Pierre Puvis de Chavannes and Ferdinand Hodler and in step with contemporaries such as Maurice Prendergast and Odilon Redon, Davies conjured an image of carefree abandon disconnected from early-twentieth-century realities. The influences of Paul Cézanne's Bathers series, painted from the mid-1870s onward, and of the Fauves—the group of artists led by Henri Matisse in the early 1900s—are also evident in the Ulrich's canvas. An admirer of the modern-dance pioneer Isadora Duncan, Davies evokes her naturalistic gestures in the swaying motion of the figures in Welcome.

Davies belonged to a circle of painters known as The Eight (including William J. Glackens, Robert Henri, Ernest Lawson, George Luks, Maurice Prendergast, Everett Shinn, and John Sloan), who collectively pursued artistic models outside the academic norm. The group formed when the conservative National Academy of Design refused to display works by Glackens, Henri, Luks, and Sloan; in 1908 Davies organized an independent show of canvases by The Eight at New York's Macbeth Gallery. Five years later, he led the organization of the 1913 Armory Show, a massive exhibition of modern art. This landmark presentation signaled a turning point for the American art world, which now confidently began embracing and promoting modernism.

Davies was a trusted advisor to the art collectors and Museum of Modern Art co-founders Lillie Bliss, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, and Mary Quinn Sullivan. A. Conger Goodyear, the museum's first president, acknowledged Davies's instrumental role in its conception. Although his own work was not at the radical forefront of his time, Davies championed experimentation and innovation. His lyrical paintings, political skills, and open mind won him hearty praise from critics, collectors, and fellow artists alike.

Patricia McDonnell


About the Contributors

Toby Kamps is senior curator at the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston. He has organized exhibitions on the work of Vanessa Beecroft, Ellsworth Kelly, and Claes Oldenburg as well as such themed exhibitions as Small World: Dioramas in Contemporary Art (2000), Lateral Thinking: The Art of the 1990s (2002), and The Old, Weird America (2008).

Patricia McDonnell is director of the Ulrich Museum of Art. Her scholarly focus is upon European and American modernism, and she is a leading specialist on the painter Marsden Hartley. Her publications include Marsden Hartley: American Modern (1997), On the Edge of Your Seat: Popular Theater and Film in Early Twentieth-Century American Art (2002), and Painting Berlin Stories (2003).

Laura Moriarty is the author of three novels and the recipient of several literary awards. Before becoming a full-time writer, she was a social worker. Moriarty lives in Lawrence, Kansas, where she teaches creative writing at the University of Kansas.

Antonya Nelson has written three novels and published six short-story collections. She contributes often to the New Yorker and the New York Times Book Review. Nelson holds the Callen Chair in Creative Writing at the University of Houston. Her award-winning novel, Loving to Tell (2000), takes place in her hometown of Wichita, and her forthcoming novel, Bound, is set there as well.

Timothy R. Rodgers is director of the Scottsdale (Arizona) Museum of Contemporary Art. Formerly chief curator at the New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, he is involved in a range of writing and curatorial projects. His scholarly concentration is on American early modernism.

Robert Silberman is an associate professor of art history at the University of Minnesota’s Twin Cities campus. His chief scholarly interests have been photography, film, and contemporary art. Silberman collaborated with former New York Times photography critic Vicky Goldberg on the companion volume for the 1999 PBS series American Photography: A Century of Images.

Larry Schwarm is a professor of art at Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas, and a nationally regarded photographer whose work has been shown at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C. His 2003 book, On Fire: Larry Schwarm, won the Honickman Book Award and Prize.


Advisory Board and Staff

**Ulrich Museum of Art Advisory Board, 2009–10**

Carol Wilson, Chair
Joan S. Benen, Vice Chair
Martin Bauer
Kelly Callen
Ronald Christ
J. Eric Engstrom
Dr. Alan Fearey
Sonia Geretman
Edward Harly
Lou Heldman
Trish Higgins
Jacque Kouri
Dr. George Lucas
Nancy Martin
Mike Michaelis
Jane C. McHugh
Chris F. Paulsen-Polk
Bruce Schreck
Shoko Kato Sevart
Chris Shank
Dwayne Shannon
Ann Townsend

**Ex-Officio**

Ted D. Ayres
Dr. Elizabeth King
John More
Dr. Patricia McDonnell
Dr. Gary C. Miller
Dr. Rodney Miller
Dr. Martha Shawver

**Ulrich Museum of Art Staff**

Linda Doll, Assistant Director of Finance and Management
Aimee Geist, Curator of Education
Mark Janzen, Registrar and Collection Manager
Angela Lemine, Administrative Specialist
Dr. Patricia McDonnell, Director
Kevin Mullins, Curator of Exhibitions
Dr. Emily Stamey, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art
Teresa Vasey, Public Relations Manager