

**Biggs Museum Announces Exhibition, Symposium and Catalogue about Delaware Illustrator William D. White**

*Symposium Registration Opens Online January 15<sup>th</sup> at  
[www.BiggsMuseum.org](http://www.BiggsMuseum.org)*



**Dover, DE (January 12, 2015)** – This March, the Biggs Museum of American Art will open an exhibition of the works of William D. White (1896-1971), a currently unknown Delaware artist whose illustrations and fine art reshape our understanding of Brandywine tradition artwork. The exhibition, entitled William D. White: *Vision and Voice*, will take place **March 6 – June 21, 2015** and is the first major exhibition and exhibition catalogue of this unique and important regional artist. This artist’s varied and significant career spans some of the country’s most intense moments of the 20th century as well as the final days of the golden age of American illustration. The exhibition and publication will celebrate significant moments in the life of the artist through an examination of over 75 works.

**About William D. White**

Beginning in 1920, White created roughly 500 illustrations, several murals, numerous easel paintings, and over 150 documented works on paper during his 50-year career. He received classical training at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and studied briefly with Gayle Porter Hoskins. However, William D. White rejected the idea of imagination as central to visual storytelling, a key tenet to Wilmington’s Brandywine School of Art, whose illustrators created dramatic images for fiction classics and historical events. Instead, White took a humanist approach to illustration based upon direct observation. Seeking authenticity, he set out to paint “real life.”

White descended mine shafts, climbed bridge spans, and crawled through subway tunnels to document the real-life drama played out daily by men working back-breaking, and often dangerous, jobs. His illustrations of coal and copper miners, construction workers,

and farm laborers were among America's earliest images to humanize poorly-educated and low-paid minorities – African Americans, Mexicans, and unskilled European immigrants – as the unsung heroes of American Industrial might.

William D. White's credits include illustrations for *The Saturday Evening Post*, three trade publications for the Hercules Powder Company, two Phelps Dodge Corporation commissions to document copper miners, and a TRAP (Treasury Relief Art Project) mural commission to decorate the Dover Post Office interior. He also created landscapes, portraits, and American Scene subjects depicting everyday life.



### **William D. White Symposium – March 28, 2015**

On **March 28, 2015**, from 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., the museum will host a one-day symposium which examines the world view of an illustrator in early 20th-century Delaware. The symposium is sponsored in part by Wilmington University, Delaware Humanities Forum, and the Delaware Division for the Arts.

Centered in Wilmington's early 20th-century art scene, six historians will bridge connections to the American publishing industry, national movements in modern art and the federal patronage of the arts of the Depression Era.

**Symposium speakers include:** Nancy Carol Willis: William D. White biographer; Heather Campbell Coyle: Curator of American Art, Delaware Art Museum; Ryan Grover: Curator, Biggs Museum of American Art; Mary Hollahan: Curator of Illustration, Delaware Art Museum; Christine Podmaniczky: Curator, N.C. Wyeth Collections and Historic Properties, Brandywine River Museum of Art; Joyce Schiller: former Curator, Rockwell Center for American Visual Studies, Norman Rockwell Museum.

Reservations are required with a \$5 admission fee. Lunch and/or additional field trips can be purchased at the time of registration. To register, visit [www.BiggsMuseum.org](http://www.BiggsMuseum.org) or call (302) 674-2111.

### **William D. White Lecture Series – June 6, 2015**

On **June 6, 2015**, from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., the Biggs Museum will host a program entitled *William D. White and the Murals of Delaware*, a set of three speakers who will discuss mural making and their conservation in the region over the 20th and now 21st centuries. This varied trio of points of view will review the history of murals in the region, the conservation and preservation of public murals as well as an introduction to the Mural Art Program, among America's most successful public art projects.

Speakers include: Jane Golden: Executive Director, Mural Arts Program, Ryan Grover: Curator, Biggs Museum of American Art, Joyce Hill Stoner: Edward F. and Elizabeth

Goodman Rosenberg Professor of Material Culture and Affiliated Paintings Conservator, Winterthur Museum.

**Reservations are required with a \$5 admission fee. To register, visit [www.BiggsMuseum.org](http://www.BiggsMuseum.org) or call (302) 674-2111.**

### **William D. White Exhibition Catalogue**

A catalogue entitled *William D. White: Vision and Voice of the Artist Revealed* will be available for purchase throughout the exhibition, both online and in person at the Biggs Museum of American Art. This catalogue, authored by biographer Nancy Carol Willis\* in partnership with Biggs Museum Curator Ryan Grover, will give an in depth look at the life and works of William D. White.



\*Biographer, Nancy Carol Willis, BS74, Graphic & Advertising Design, knew White when she was a teenager growing up in north Wilmington. Willis describes him as a kind, but reclusive, man who lived in an adobe shack without electricity. Writing the biography of White's life has been a lifetime goal. Willis is an author/illustrator of award-winning children's nature books and teaches art courses at Wilmington University.

### **Admission**

There will be a \$5 admission fee to view the *William D. White: Vision and Voice Exhibition*. Biggs Museum members and children under twelve receive free admission. Admission to *Vision and Voice* will also be free to the public every Sunday. Admission to the Museum's Permanent Collection remains free to everyone, every day.

**For additional details on the exhibition, symposiums, and catalogue, please visit [www.BiggsMuseum.org](http://www.BiggsMuseum.org) or call (302) 674-2111.**

### **About the Biggs Museum**

The Biggs Museum seeks to serve a diverse public as a regional museum of fine and decorative arts, made from 1700 to present, representing the State of Delaware and the surrounding Mid-Atlantic region. The Biggs Museum engages audiences through a compelling program of temporary exhibitions and programming. The Biggs Museum encourages the development of creativity and an appreciation for art by offering a comprehensive slate of educational programming for all ages. The Biggs Museum of American Art is a private, non-profit 501(c) (3) organization.

**Hours of Operation:** Tuesday through Saturday; 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Sunday; 1:30 p.m. until 4: 30 p.m.

**The Biggs Museum of American Art:** 406 Federal Street, Dover, DE 19901, 302.674.2111, [www.biggsmuseum.org](http://www.biggsmuseum.org).