

Biggs Museum of American Art

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DISCOVERING A NEW WORLD IN THE PAINTINGS OF MICHAEL ROBEAR *Cecil County, Maryland Artist Exhibition to Open November 6th*



Michael Robear, *Blue Birth*, 2014, watercolor on paper, artist's own forged aluminum frame

Dover, DE (October 27, 2015) – The Biggs Museum of American Art is proud to present the upcoming exhibition, *Michael Robear: New Discoveries*, with an opening reception on Friday, November 6, 2015 from 5-7 p.m.

Michael Robear: New Discoveries will be on view in the Biggs Museum third-floor galleries until January 10, 2016 and a corresponding museum catalogue of select artworks will be available for sale. Furthermore, the artist will collaborate with the museum's curator, Ryan Grover, on Saturday, January 9, 2016 to give a lecture and workshop on the history and use of egg-tempera painting, an artistic medium the artist is currently exploring.

About Artist Michael Robear

For most of his life, artist Michael Robear (b. 1962) has been quietly producing unique watercolor paintings that reinvent his Cecil County, Maryland home into an iconography of clashing forces and surreal forms. Despite the inherent fragility of watercolor paints on paper, Robear has always aligned himself with a rugged individualism seemingly shared by

other better-known watercolorists such as Winslow Homer, John Marin and especially Andrew Wyeth.

Michael Robear grew into adulthood sketching and believing one day he would become a wildlife artist. By studying the artists who his family appreciated, Robear emulated painters such as Robert Bateman, the printmakers of *Ducks Unlimited* and the illustrators featured in *Outdoor Life*. With early support by educators and family, Robear was accepted into the Corcoran School of Art. At the age of 17, he was living in Washington D.C. thrust into the legacy of the Washington Color School and studying with leading contemporary artists such as Robert Stackhouse.



Despite the impressive influences of abstract painters in Michael Robear's formal education, his personal style has always been naturalistic. His admiration for Brandywine Illustrators, such as Howard Pyle and N.C. Wyeth, tied him aesthetically to the most luminary members of that realist tradition. Robear's evolution from this precedent manifests in a heightened sense of fantasy. Maryland's landscape, his home life, the early-American houses and a profound moral core are animated through folding horizons, anthropomorphic atmosphere and splintering architectural elements.

Michael Robear, *Consuming Fire*, 2007, watercolor on paper, artist's own forged aluminum frame

Upon returning to Cecil County, Robear started a family, worked in construction and painted whenever he was able. His skills in carpentry enabled him to renovate older, often dilapidated farm houses dotting the landscape of his childhood. Before long, his exceptional hand skills procured him work reproducing historic metalwork, especially domestic hardware of the 18th and 19th centuries. The artist built a metalsmithing studio while expanding his abilities in this demanding craft. The techniques he learned in metalwork were quickly absorbed into making singular frames for his watercolors.



Michael Robear: New Discoveries exhibition is made possible, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency dedicated to nurturing and supporting the arts in Delaware, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts.

Exhibition Event Quick Facts

Event: Opening Reception, *Michael Robear: New Discoveries*

Date: Friday, November 6

Time: 5 – 7 p.m.

Price: Free with admission*

Over the course of his lifetime, Michael Robear has developed his surreal interpretation on regional landscapes and people with an adventurous application of his preferred medium, watercolor. The artist's cavalier use of water-based paints is contrasted by the unique frames he forges from metal. A professional metalsmith, Robear has been completing his works within his own sculptural frames for several years, melding his two passions into unforgettable works of art. Be the first to see this stunning one-man exhibition and enjoy refreshments.

Exhibition Event Quick Facts

Event: Public lecture and workshop, *Egg-Tempera: A History and a Challenge*

Date: Saturday, January 9

Time: 2 p.m.

Price: Free with admission*

To end the incredible one-man exhibition of Robear's work, the museum's Curator, Ryan Grover, will join the artist in an exploration of the history of tempera painting and its use in Robear's recent work as well as *The Saint John's Bible*. The presentation will include hand-on demonstrations.

About the 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.

***Admission:** Admission to the Biggs Museum is \$10. Seniors (60 and older) are \$8. Members, children under 12, students and military (with ID) are free. Additional fees may apply to certain programs and special events.

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