



## NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Max Barton, Executive Director  
Email: [max@cantonart.org](mailto:max@cantonart.org)

### ***ReTooled* Exhibition at Canton Museum of Art Illuminates Tools with Wit and Wonder**

#### ***ReTooled: Highlights from the Hechinger Collection* Features Groundbreaking 20<sup>th</sup> Century Artists that Celebrate Everyday Tools in Fanciful Works of Art**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Canton, OH): August 18, 2020 – The Canton Museum of Art (CMA) kicks off its 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season with the featured exhibition ***ReTooled: Highlights from the Hechinger Collection***, an engaging and thought-provoking look at the unexpected subject of tools, through more than 40 inspiring paintings, sculptures, works on paper and photographs. Curated by Jared Packard-Winkler and organized for tour by International Arts & Artists, Washington D.C., *ReTooled* will be on view at CMA beginning August 25 through October 25, 2020. Three additional original exhibitions – ***Approaching the Shift: Drawings by Judith Brandon***, ***Stories: BIPOC Artists from the CMA Collection***, and ***Industry, Innovation, and Progress*** – will also be on view.

While the Museum's galleries will be open for regular hours, with time-ticketed advance reservations, a virtual "opening" via Facebook Live is anticipated for First Friday, September 4, 2020, from 5 – 7pm. Watch for more details on the CMA website and social media platforms.

#### **Museum Hours, Timed Ticketing, and Health Protocols**

Beginning Tuesday, August 25, CMA will return to regular operating hours for its galleries: Tuesday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m. The Museum will be closed to the public on Mondays.

Under CMA's COVID-19 protocols and procedures, masks, social distancing, and limited capacity attendance remains in effect. Advance, timed-ticketed reservations are required through the CMA website at [cantonart.org/reservetickets](http://cantonart.org/reservetickets). Regular CMA admission prices apply. Free Thursdays offer free admission to all, courtesy of PNC Foundation. CMA members always receive free admission.

CMA continues to follow guidelines from the Ohio Governor's Office and Ohio Department of Public Health, CDC, the American Alliance of Museums, and best practices set forth by museum directors across the state and country for safe operations amid COVID-19. To learn what to expect for a comfortable and safe visit, please read "[Visiting CMA with COVID-19 Precautions](#)" at [cantonart.org](http://cantonart.org).

#### ***ReTooled: Highlights from the Hechinger Collection***

*ReTooled* celebrates the prevalence of tools in our lives with art that magically transforms utilitarian objects into fanciful works that speak of beauty, insight, and wit. Providing a dynamic entry point into the rich themes, materials and processes of 20<sup>th</sup> century art, *ReTooled* profiles 28 visionary artists from the Hechinger Collection including major artists such as Arman, Richard Estes, Howard Finster, Red Grooms, Jacob Lawrence, Fernand Léger and H.C. Westermann; photographers Berenice Abbott and Walker Evans; as well as pop artists Jim Dine, Claes Oldenburg, and James Rosenquist.

*ReTooled* is a dynamic exhibition with a compelling mission: to celebrate an overlooked subject by engaging audiences with wildly creative and thought provoking works that highlight formative trends of 20<sup>th</sup> century art.

The exhibition consists of four sections: Objects of Beauty; Material Illusions; Instruments of Satire; and Tools: An Extension of Self.

### **Objects of Beauty**

Hechinger's quest to amass a preeminent art collection unifying the theme of tools rested on a notion that everyday instruments could be objects of beauty. In portraying these objects with a tone of reverence, the artists separate object from function producing works that meditate on tools' distilled purity of design. By photographing a mundane tool in *Wrench* (1955), Walker Evans encourages the viewer to appreciate the beauty of line and economy of form. In the photograph, *Spinning Wrench* (1958), Berenice Abbott contemplates the elegance of a wrench as it dances across the frame lulling the viewer with its hypnotic movement. Jim Dine's series of ten works, *Toolbox* (1966) riff on the theme of beauty by placing screen print images of tools in austere yet dynamic compositions that assert Dine's status as a leading pop artist. These artists underscore the overlooked beauty of objects that facilitate our everyday lives.

### **Material Illusions**

In this section artists modify and distort everyday tools to question their functionality. By reimagining a tool in a material that renders it useless, the artist questions how we interact with that object. In Allan Adams' sculpture, *Lathe* (1979), the artist subverts our initial recognition of a mechanized lathe by producing this sculptural homage in an unexpected medium: maple wood. Adams reminds the viewer that first impressions can be deceiving. A vignette of an oak-fashioned lawnmower in F.L. Wall's *Summer Tool* (1983) takes on a cynical tone as the tool reduces each unique blade of grass to a uniform height—perhaps a commentary on how products of industrialization simultaneously unify and standardize. Each carefully fabricated work in this section contrasts their mass-produced counterparts that lie dusty in our garages. Transforming the tool into art also highlights how our increasingly clean, digital lives are detached from the calloused, tool-wielding hands that laid the foundation for modern society; making a hammer unusable by constructing it in glass, as in Hans Godo Frabel's *Hammer and Nails* (1980), parallels a hammer's irrelevance in a computer-driven era.

### **Instruments of Satire**

While some work, artists play. The artists in this section repurpose, reframe, and redefine tools by injecting a dose of irreverent humor into an otherwise work-driven world. By tracing the way brushes whimsically dance across the canvas Arman's *Blue, Red, Brown* (1988) reminds us that the fundamental purpose of tools—to execute action—can be fun. Claes Oldenburg playfully heroizes a mundane object in the portrait *Three-way plug* (1965) by imbuing an overlooked item with a larger-than-life status. Other artists juxtapose objects to create humorous dissonances. In *Trash Can in the Grass-Calix Krater* (1977), James Rosenquist audaciously decorates a simple trashcan with ancient Greek imagery to elevate it to a Calix Krater—a vessel from antiquity. These works remind us of the joy and sense of play that defines creation.

### **Tools: An Extension of Self**

Tools have the capacity to actualize dreams. They embody the can-do spirit that defines America and symbolize our unalterable quest to improve our quality of life. The artists in this section illustrate how tools are an extension of ourselves, both as individuals and as a society. In his work *The Slob* (1965), H.C. Westermann endows a hammer with personality by showing how a tool conveys the characteristics of its wielder. Jacob Lawrence and Fernand Léger astutely observe how tools shape identity by defining professions in *Carpenters* (1977) and *Les Constructeurs*, (1951). Howard Finster credits tools with advancing civilization by scrawling “tools came first and America was built second,” on a Stanley Thrift saw. Tools do the work that our fragile bodies cannot. Becoming surrogate limbs, tools compensate for our weaknesses and facilitating our greatest achievements. These artists are keenly aware of how tools represent human nature.

### **About John Hechinger and the Collection**

John Hechinger's father founded the Hechinger Hardware store in 1911, but it was John Hechinger along with his brother-in-law who grew the store into a renowned chain throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. Hechinger is often credited as one of the major figures in the transformation of the neighborhood hardware store to the “do it yourself” home improvement business. A fourth generation Washingtonian,

community patron, and activist, John Hechinger was appointed by President Lyndon Johnson to be the first chairman of the D.C. City Council. He used his position to advocate for civil rights and diverse neighborhoods. Hechinger's donation of his collection to IA&A for the purpose of sharing it with a broader public is yet another invaluable legacy.

In the 1980s, John Hechinger's booming chain of hardware stores led him to purchase a new company headquarters. He found the offices to be efficient, but sterile. The barren space sparked an initiative to beautify the headquarters which launched Hechinger's acquisition of a tool-inspired collection of diverse 20<sup>th</sup> century art.

***ReTooled: Highlights from the Hechinger Collection was organized by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC. Gift of John and June Hechinger.***

**International Arts & Artists** in Washington, DC is a non-profit arts service organization dedicated to increasing cross-cultural understanding and exposure to the arts internationally through exhibitions, programs and services to artists, art institutions and the public. Visit [www.artsandartists.org](http://www.artsandartists.org). **MEDIA CONTACT:** IA&A to 202.338.0680, [TravelingExhibitions@ArtsandArtists.org](mailto:TravelingExhibitions@ArtsandArtists.org)

**Three More New Exhibitions Also On-View at CMA**

***Approaching the Shift: Drawings by Judith Brandon***

*Approaching the Shift* focuses on several of Judith Brandon's large-scale drawings, rooted in emotion. About the works chosen for the exhibition, the Rocky River-based artist says, "The shifting world of 2020 is flooding our conscious and unconscious lives. The economic world doesn't know whether to be open or closed, and the emotional world is reacting with fear to a pandemic and to social upheavals. Within each of us is the ability to change the way we view our circumstances, and when we do, it begins to change the environment around us."

Each piece of Brandon's nature- and emotion-fused work begins with scribed elements on cotton rag paper. The scribed lines become geometry, text, and framework that initially define each piece. Colored washes of inks and dyes become an abstract underpainting. Washes saturate the paper, flowing through the incised lines, enhancing them, and creating the emotional framework. Pastels, charcoal, razors and graphite are all used to create top layers of imagery defining the final subject.

***Stories: BIPOC Artists from the CMA Collection***

This exhibition of works from the Canton Museum of Art's Collection seeks to present some of the beauty and complexity of works created by BIPOC artists during the last century. The work of BIPOC—Black, Indigenous, and People of Color—artists in the last century has reflected the struggle of Native Americans, Black Americans, and People of Color to receive the legal protections, rights, and privileges afforded to white Americans. This has been seen throughout the last century in the form of the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and '60s, the work of the American Indian Movement (AIM), the recent Black Lives Matter protests, and the outcry over the disproportionate effects of COVID-19 on Native American and African American communities.

In response to these unique historic developments, Native American and African American artists have continually sought to showcase through their art the joys and pains of everyday life, the richness of culture, and their resiliency in the face of immense cultural, monetary, and human loss. Through their work, every BIPOC artist represented in this exhibition, including works by Dean Mitchell and Romare Bearden, presents a complex statement on their own experience and perception of race in the United States.

***Industry, Innovation, and Progress***

*Industry, Invention, and Progress* highlights the progressiveness of America and its innovations, while examining the shifting economy and ecology of a region, and a nation, undergoing tremendous changes. Depicted in this exhibition are laborers, railroads, automobiles, coal yards, and more. City life and suburban life are also depicted, due to the heavy impacts of manufacturing. During the last century, symbols of industry such as factories, smokestacks, towers, cranes, and trains became icons of the landscape. These themes are detailed through various styles of art, such as Realism. Included in this exhibition are artists from the CMA Collection such as Lawrence Blazey, Arnold Boedeker, Emerson Burkhart, Carl Gaertner, and more.

In addition to pieces from the CMA Collection are items on loan from [Hoover Historical Center](#) and [William McKinley Presidential Library & Museum](#). Paintings created to be used as advertisements for Hoover vacuums will be on display, as well as other products that Hoover made, such as parachutes. On loan from McKinley are prints of workers inside of Timken Steel. All pieces join together to create a cohesive look at how important the industrial revolutions and advancements are to our current day.

CMA's 2020 – 2021 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season is presented with generous support in part from: The Timken Foundation of Canton, PNC Bank, Visit Canton, Stark Community Foundation, The Anthony J. and Susan E. Paparella Family Foundation, and The Hoover Foundation. CMA receives operating support from ArtsInStark and the Ohio Arts Council.

### **About the Canton Museum of Art**

The Canton Museum of Art is recognized for powerful original exhibitions and national touring exhibitions focused on American art – and making the discovery and exploration of art accessible to all. The Museum's education outreach programs, classes, and workshops serve thousands of students of all ages. CMA's collection focuses on American works on paper, primarily watercolors, and contemporary ceramics. Founded in 1935, CMA is one of three museums in Stark County accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and serves more than 45,000 visitors each year. CMA is celebrating its 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in the 2020 – 2021 season. Visit [cantonart.org](http://cantonart.org) to learn more.

###