



Springville Museum of Art

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MUSEUM EXHIBIT SEARCHES FOR BEAUTY & MEANING

SPRINGVILLE, Utah— On August 26, visitors to the Springville Museum of Art will travel much further than the distance they walk.

The Museum's newest exhibit, *A Struggle for Beauty & Meaning: Selections from the John H. Schaeffer Collection of Victorian Art*, will bring visitors on a journey that will open their eyes to the masterpieces of Victorian art. The exhibit contains 40 Victorian-era works from the personal collection of John H. Schaeffer a renowned art collector.

The Victorian Era (1837-1901) is known for its prosperity, rich culture and thriving art world. Artists of the time, free to paint any subject matter, often found their inspiration in Biblical scenes and literary history. Vibrant colors and abundant details add an aura of the sublime to the paintings, and viewers today find their scale and quality to be awe-inspiring.

“This show is surprisingly modern. The pieces are rich in color and meaning,” said Crystal Thomas, outreach coordinator.

The collection is similar to the exhibition displayed last year at Brigham Young University Museum of Art, but it is returning to Utah with several new acquisitions. Among the acquisitions are paintings “An Eastern Interior with a Seated Girl,” by John William Waterhouse and “Angel Playing a Flageolet,” Sir Edward Coley Burne-Jones.

“Eve Repentant,” by Ana Lea Merritt, the first female artist to be featured in the National Gallery of British Art, is another new piece the public can enjoy. Merritt is renowned for her serene depictions of women.

The exhibit includes iconic works and rare paintings from the era. Schaeffer is a passionate collector, and each piece is selected with care. “His collection is, without a doubt, built upon the idea of coupling quality and monumentality,” said curator Dr. Vern Swanson.

John Schaeffer's devotion to art comes from the spiritual connection he feels to it. "John Schaeffer sees a spiritual and visionary nature to works he collects," said Jessica Weiss, assistant curator.

Throughout his life Shaeffer has searched for meaning and has found it in the beauty and narrative of Victorian art. Schaeffer, who has often said that noone has suffered more for art than he has, has traveled around the world to build his collection."

Is this a continuation of the quote?

The paintings and sculptures featured in the exhibit represent Schaeffer's search. He hopes that as visitors walk through the exhibit they will do more than pass through rooms in a museum, they will begin a struggle for beauty and meaning of their own.

The Springville Museum of Art invites the public to follow Schaeffer on his journey for beauty and meaning. The exhibit will open August 26 and will be displayed through July 2010. The public is welcome to visit Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Sunday, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The Museum is located at 126 E. 400 South in Springville. Admission is free. For more information please call 801-489-2727 or visit www.smofa.org.

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