

NEWS RELEASE

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UMass Lowell Department of Art & Design Presents:

E is for Elephants

The Etchings of Edward Gorey

Sept. 1 – Oct. 16, 2015

Lecture: by Curator James Edwards followed by Gallery Reception-

Tues., Sept. 15, 5:30 p.m.

Film Screening: The Edward Gorey Documentary Directed by Christopher Seufert

Thurs., Sept. 3, 5:30 p.m.

LOWELL, Mass. – The UMass Lowell Department of Art & Design is pleased to present an exhibition of prints by world-renowned author and illustrator, Edward Gorey. The exhibition will be on view in the University Gallery from Sept. 1 – Oct. 16. The curator, James Edwards, will give a talk on Tuesday, Sept. 15 at 5:30 p.m. in the O’Leary Learning Commons Rm. 222 on the south campus of UMass Lowell. A reception will follow afterwards in the University Gallery in Mahoney Hall from 6:30 – 8 p.m. In addition, there will be a rough cut screening of “The Edward Gorey Documentary,” directed by Christopher Seufert, in the Comley-Lane Theatre in Mahoney Hall on Thurs., Sept. 3rd at 5:30 p.m. The film screening is a Downtown Lowell First Thursday Event (<http://www.cultureiscool.org/downtown-lowell-first-thursdays>). These events are free, accessible to all, and open to the public.

This exhibit includes a large selection of Gorey’s etchings, original plates, memorabilia, scholarly ephemera and other objects. There will be a multi-media presentation of photographic still lifes documented at his Yarmouth Port, MA residence, made by UMass Dartmouth Professor and Curator, James Edwards.

Edward St. John Gorey (1925-2000) gave to the world over one hundred published titles, including *The Gashlycrumb Tinies*, *The Doubtful Guest*, and *the Wuggly Ump*. He illustrated books by an array of authors ranging from Charles Dickens to Samuel Beckett, John Updike and Virginia Woolf; as well as innumerable illustrations for publications including the *New Yorker* and *The New York Times*. He also designed Tony award-winning sets and costume designs for innumerable theater productions from Cape Cod to Broadway. His animated credits for the PBS *Mystery!* series have introduced him to millions of television viewers. Edward Gorey's masterful pen and ink illustrations and his ironic, offbeat humor have brought him critical acclaim and an avid following throughout the world.

This exhibition presents, at its core, the image of the *elephant* alongside other beasts both earthly and fictional. Elephants cavort, carry figures on their backs, shower, and dapperly hold canes in these enigmatic images. There are also prints of animated thumbs and a balletic series of an oddly endearing alien creature called Figbash. Made in the last decade of his career, these prints reveal Gorey's obsession with animals and all things elephantine. There is tenderness, and the grace of a large, weighty animal moving delicately through mysterious terrain. James Edwards writes that "...as a printmaker, he favored individual forms presented as vignettes, entities and, more often than not, pachyderms in flux in nebulous spaces. It is this Zen-like visual nature that defines the images chosen for this show."

Beyond literary and picture-making pursuits, Gorey was deeply invested in the protection of animals, and acted upon this passion with the full-force of his creative and personal resources. Through the Edward Gorey Charitable Trust, numerous animal welfare organizations receive funding. These are organizations that Gorey expressed a fondness for in his lifetime, and they include the Tufts Veterinary School in Grafton, MA, the Bat Conservation International Foundation in Austin, Texas, and The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee, among others.

The University Gallery and the UMass Lowell Department of Art & Design would like to thank Rick Jones, Director of the Edward Gorey House (Yarmouth Port, MA), their Curator, Gregory Hischak, and The Edward Gorey Charitable Trust. We would also like to thank Curator James Edwards and University Gallery Director Viera Levitt from UMass Dartmouth for the original conception and execution of "E is for Elephants, The Etchings of Edward Gorey," at the University Gallery of the College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) at UMass Dartmouth.

The University Gallery is free, open to the public, and accessible to all. Parking is available in the Wilder Metered Lot, located at the intersection of Wilder Street and Bachelder Street, for both visitors and members of the UMass Lowell community. The entrance to the lot is located on Bachelder Street. After 3:30 p.m. visitors may park in any open campus lot. Please see our website for additional information: http://www.uml.edu/dept/art/galleries_university.htm.

University Gallery Hours: Mon-Wed 10-4pm, Thurs 10-9pm, Fri/Sat 10-3pm. Closed during school breaks.

The University Gallery at the University of Massachusetts Lowell is coordinated by the Art & Design Department and funded by the College of Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (FAHSS). The Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree program is an accredited visual arts program of professional study in Art and Design that maintains the standards, guidelines, and practices established by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). All gallery events are free, open to the public and accessible to all. School groups welcome.

Image credit:

Edward Gorey

Elephant and Prostrate Passenger

Etching

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