

**MEDIA CONTACT**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 19, 2009

***Behold the Day: The Color Block Prints of Frances Gearhart***  
**October 4, 2009 – January 31, 2010**



**LEFT –RIGHT:** Frances Gearhart, *Glacial Majesty*, Color Block Print, 14.5" x 11"; Frances Gearhart, *Untroubled Waters*, Color Block Print, 10.5" x 9"

**Pasadena, CA** - The Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) is proud to present *Behold the Day: The Color Block Prints of Frances Gearhart*, an exhibition examining the remarkable contributions of color block print artist, Frances Gearhart. Embedded in the time and place of the Arts and Crafts Movement, Gearhart's work personifies a handcrafted aesthetic and conveys a sense of directness, immediacy, and strong visual impact while depicting a clearly ideal, Californian subject matter.

Frances Gearhart was a leader in the American Printmaking movement and, in particular, color block printing. The artist lived with her sisters May and Edna in Pasadena, and all taught in the Los Angeles Public Schools. The Gearhart sisters all studied art and all became artists in their own right, although Frances was by far the most gifted and the best known. Although Gearhart began as a watercolorist, she found her voice as an artist in color block printing. The artist's Pasadena home and gallery was a meeting place for the Print Makers Society of California of which Gearhart was a pivotal member.

David Kiehl, Curator of Prints of the Whitney Museum of American Art, lamented at his recent lecture at the Huntington Library, *Printmaking Now: Cycles of Tradition, Innovation, and Change*, “We know far too little of the printmaking which occurred west of the Mississippi between the two world wars. These stories need to be told before we can piece together the quilt of print making in America.” Frances Gearhart is one of these critical untold stories - distinctly American, distinctly western, and extraordinarily strong in subject matter, strength of image and balance of color. In her prints, Gearhart celebrated the California landscape – its mountains, trees, lakes and coastline.

Although Gearhart had exhibitions at the Smithsonian and was included in important group exhibitions, *Behold the Day: The Color Block Prints of Frances Gearhart* is the first retrospective of her oeuvre. Curated by Susan Futterman and Roger Genser and featuring over sixty of her block prints and ten watercolors, the exhibition is the most comprehensive look at the artist’s legacy and influence, including never before seen prints. Also on view will be the prints from the previously unfinished and unpublished children’s book Gearhart co-authored with her two sisters, entitled, *Let’s Play*. The book, now published will be available at the PMCA bookstore.



Frances Gearhart, *October Splendor*,  
Color Block Print, 9.5” x 8”

## **OPENING RECEPTION**

**Saturday, October 3, 2009**

Opening Reception for *Behold the Day: The Color Block Prints of Frances Gearhart* and *Wayne Thiebaud: 70 Years of Painting*.

\$5 admission

Free for PMCA Members

RSVP: 626-568-3665, ext. 14

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**About the PMCA:**

The Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) is dedicated to the exhibition of California art, architecture, and design from 1850 to the present. Informed by the state's rich mixture of cultures and inspired by its impressive geography, California art has long been defined by a spirit of freedom and experimentation. PMCA exhibitions and educational programs explore the cultural dynamics and influences unique to California that have shaped and defined art in all media.

**Hours:**

Wednesday – Sunday, 12:00 - 5:00 pm.

The Museum is closed July 4th, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas and New Year's Day.

**Admission:**

\$7 for Adults, \$5 for Seniors (65+) and Students with valid ID; free to PMCA Members and children under 12. Access for people with disabilities is provided.

**Location/Parking:**

The Museum is located at 490 East Union Street. From the 210 Freeway, take the Lake Avenue exit. Go south and take a right on Union Street. From the 110 Freeway/Downtown Los Angeles, follow the freeway until its end, then take Arroyo Parkway and turn right at Colorado, then left at Oakland to get to Union Street. Parking is available at the Museum.

**PMCA Tours:**

At this time, the museum does not offer regularly scheduled docent tours of our special exhibitions. However, docent tours are available to private groups for a fee of \$75. A non-refundable deposit of \$40 is due two weeks prior to the scheduled date in order to guarantee a tour. We regret that we are unable to accommodate tours for groups smaller than 10 or larger than 50 people. Before requesting a tour, please check the exhibition calendar to see which exhibitions will be available during your visit.

A discounted group rate of \$4 per person is available for groups of 20 or more, and free admission is offered to school groups of K-12 public school students. Please call to notify us at least one week in advance for these special admission rates.

For any questions or to make reservations for a tour or group rate, please call Shirlae Cheng at 626-568-3665 x17.

**PMCA Information:**

For information, the please call 626-568-3665 or visit the website: [www.pmcaonline.org](http://www.pmcaonline.org)