

**NEWS RELEASE
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The Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) Brings a collection of Maynard
Dixon paintings to Los Angeles for the First Time
June 1 – August 12, 2007

PMCA Celebrates Fifth Year Anniversary with *Maynard Dixon: Masterpieces from the
Brigham Young University Museum of Art and Private Collections*

Renowned Actress Diane Keaton Will Lend Two Dixon Paintings From Her Private Collection and
Act as Honorary Chair for the Opening Night Benefit on Thursday, May 31, 2007

Pasadena, Calif. (Feb. 6, 2007) - The Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) proudly announces the highly anticipated exhibition of *Maynard Dixon*, the modern master of early 20th Century Western painting from June 1 – August 12, 2007. The opening night benefit will take place on Thursday, May 31, 2007 with actress Diane Keaton in attendance as honorary chair. The exhibition spans Dixon's illustrious career from the late 19th Century to his work in the late 1940s and is comprised of 53 carefully selected pieces from Brigham Young University (BYU) Museum of Art which are on view for the first time ever in Los Angeles, as well 36 remarkable pieces loaned from private collections. This rare and distinctive retrospective heralds PMCA's fifth year anniversary and is curated by distinguished Dixon scholar Donald J. Hagerty. In conjunction with *Maynard Dixon*, PMCA will premiere the never before seen documentary about Dixon, directed by Jayne McKay and narrated by Diane Keaton, an avid Dixon collector. The film will reveal the rich complexity of Dixon's life through insightful interviews with family, friends, scholars and members of the art community.

Maynard Dixon: Masterpieces from the Brigham Young University Museum of Art and Private Collections tells the story of one of the quintessential Western painters of his time. Dixon's vision of the West is that of a native son, born out of his own intimate connection to the land. Both his portraits and his landscapes reveal a harmony between man and nature, but Dixon avoids the sentimentality often present in Western art through his austere compositions and dry, flat brushstrokes. Like his wife, esteemed photographer Dorothea Lange, Dixon sought to do more than merely recreate the aesthetics of his surroundings. He presents a humanistic view of his subjects that might otherwise be described as

barren or downtrodden. Dixon's sensitivity toward his subjects moves viewers to a better understanding and appreciation of their nature and environments. By following his own uncompromising path, Maynard Dixon redefined the image of the American West.

Maynard Dixon (1875-1946) lived and worked in San Francisco and was attracted to the open spaces of California and the West. He depicted these vast and stark vistas through a distinctive modern style, not unlike his contemporaries Georgia O'Keefe and Edward Weston. An accomplished figure painter, Dixon also demonstrated a keen grasp of the humanity of his subjects, which often included depression-era urban dwellers and American Indians. In the past decade, the public's interest in his riveting landscapes and figurative paintings has grown exponentially. PMCA is pleased to offer visitors this greatly anticipated exhibition, featuring some of the most distinguishing examples of his oeuvre, courtesy of the BYU Museum of Art and private collectors.

The BYU Museum of Art collection originated in 1937, when Herald R. Clark, Dean of the College of Commerce at Brigham Young University, traveled to San Francisco to meet Maynard Dixon and to investigate purchasing work for the University's collection. By the end of his trip, Clark had chosen 85 paintings and drawings spanning all phases of the artist's career, including not only the images of majestic landscapes and sensitive portraits of Native Americans, but also a substantial portion of his haunting and powerful scenes of the Great Depression. The works in the initial and later purchases constitute the world's largest Maynard Dixon collection. Clark and Dixon remained good friends until the artist's death in 1946. The exhibition at PMCA will also feature 36 of Dixon's best paintings held in private collections today.

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. "Since PMCA started out as a small museum five years ago, the exhibitions have reached new heights, successfully attracting both interest and awareness of historical and contemporary California art. It has also been moving in a positive direction towards establishing relationships with institutions such as BYU," says Wesley

Jessup, Executive Director of the museum. Jessup further states, “PMCA is especially proud to honor and exhibit the extraordinary work of Maynard Dixon, a truly important modernist Western artist. California art deserves a more prominent place in the history of American art. PMCA is providing a place on the table for that now.”

Major media sponsorship for this exhibition has been provided by Sunset Magazine.

For more information about the opening night benefit reception on Thursday, May 31, 2007, or general information about the *Maynard Dixon* exhibition June 1 – August 12, 2007, please contact the Pasadena Museum of California Art (PMCA) at (626) 568-3665 or visit www.pmcaonline.org.

PMCA Museum hours are Wednesday – Sunday, 12:00 - 5:00 p.m. Admission prices are \$6 for adults, \$4 for seniors and students, free to members, and free the first Friday of the month. * Special offer with the Pacific Asia Museum on Colorado and Los Robles: Attend both museums in the same day and receive 50% off admission at the second museum when you present proof of entrance.