

South Dakota State University

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South Dakota Art Museum Newsletters and Publications

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### **News from the South Dakota Memorial Art Center, May 1986**

South Dakota State University

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## News from the South Dakota Memorial Art Center

May 1986

**American Painting of the 1930s**, an illustrated lecture by Center director Joseph Stuart, will be presented Saturday, May 3, 5:30 p.m., in conjunction with the opening of the Great Plains 1930 - 1939 exhibition.



Dale Nichols' "City National Bank"

**Great Plains 1930 - 1939** opens at the Center on Saturday, May 3, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. This special exhibition includes work by John Steuart Curry, Oscar Jacobson, B.J.O. Nordfelt, Henry Varnum Poor, and other painters who expressed concern with the Great Plains region during a decade of unprecedented economic depression and drought. While many of these artists were subsequently identified with the Regionalist movement and criticised for turning away from Modernism, their work is now being viewed in much more sympathetic terms, especially since it is obvious that many, including Nordfelt and Leonard Thiessen, were working in neo-cubist and other Modernist styles. The primary significance of this exhibition, however, is the sense of time and place that it conveys. Gladys Lux's "Inflation" is the only painting in the exhibition that deals with a specific South Dakota subject—the 1933 launching of a balloon from the Black Hills for space exploration. The exhibition was organized by Jon Nelson of the University of Nebraska's Center for Great Plains Studies and is being circulated by Smith Kramer Art Connections of Kansas City. It will continue at the Memorial Art Center through June 1.

**The Shooting Party** shows May 8 at 7:30 p.m., the last of this season's International Film Classics. This 1977 film was directed by Emil Lotyanu, has Russian dialog with English subtitles, and is 105 minutes in color. Based on the Anton Chekhov novel, the film portrays the decaying world of the gentry in pre-revolutionary Russia—a favorite theme of Chekhov. A guilt-ridden lawyer reveals through a book he has written that he has killed the woman he loves in a fit of passion and, in his role as prosecuting attorney, has had the woman's husband convicted of the crime. The film is free and open to the public.

**The Memorial Art Center** has again been awarded the highest honor that an American museum can receive—accreditation by the American Association of Museums.

Accreditation certifies that a museum operates according to standards set forth by the museum profession, manages its collections responsibly, and provides quality service to the public. Of nearly 5,000 American museums, only 625 have been accredited. To ensure that a museum continues to meet professional standards, its accredited status is reviewed every five to ten years. The Center became the first South Dakota museum to achieve accreditation in 1977 and is now one of only 233 museums nationally to have reaffirmed their accredited status. The Center's reaccreditation exercise began in 1983 with a self-study, which was submitted to the AAM Accreditation Commission in 1984. Following the review of that material, examiner Rex Moser of the Art Institute of Chicago made an on-site evaluation in 1985. "I expected to find a modern plant, well-managed, well-funded, with exemplary maintenance and handling of its collections," he reported to the Commission, "and that is exactly what I found." His fifteen-page report covered all aspects of the Center's operation, and concluded that "the Center is a valuable cultural resource to its state and region."



Trustee Allen Barnes, director Joseph Stuart, and Board president Phyllis Bartling at a reaccreditation self-study meeting.

**Ten Memorial Art Center Guild members** successfully completed the Docent Training Program of March 3 - 7. Newly certified as docents are Virginia Delaney and Mona Prasuhn. Previously certified docents and the number of training programs they have completed are Phyllis Bartling (8), Alice Berry (4), Naomi Gilkerson (6), Karen Lund (3), Elaine Olson (4), Janet Pearson (5), Kay Romans (4), and Larry Stine (5). All are from Brookings. Forty of the 112 Guild members have now been certified as docents. Docents (from the Latin *docere*, meaning to teach) are museum personnel, often volunteers, who are trained to conduct tours of exhibitions and present programs on the museum's activities in the community. The March program involved study of recent acquisitions of South Dakota art by the Center. According to Guild

president Karen Lund, the Guild provides visitor reception services, conducts tours of exhibitions, and presents art from the collection to Brookings school classes, thus providing the service of at least two full-time paid staff members. The quality of the Guild's service was instrumental in earning reaccreditation for the Center.



Docent Naomi Gilkerson conducting a tour of elementary school students through the special exhibition, Harvey Dunn: Son of the Middle Border. This photograph was part of the photographic essay submitted with the reaccreditation self-study to the AAM Accreditation Commission.

**The South Dakota Arts Council**, through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, is supporting exhibitions of South Dakota art from the Memorial Art Center collection this year, including those which are a part of the Center's Exhibition Loan Service for the state.

**South Dakota Memorial Art Center**  
Medary Avenue at Harvey Dunn Street  
Brookings, South Dakota 57007  
(605) 688-5423

A state center for the visual arts at South Dakota State University, accredited by the American Association of Museums.

Free public hours: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Mondays - Fridays, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturdays, and 1 - 5 p.m. Sundays and holidays; closed New Year's, Thanksgiving, and Christmas days.

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Charles Greener's "L. P. Sawyer's Hunting Dog," part of the Charles Greener Paintings exhibition scheduled for tour in the state during 1986-87 as part of the Exhibition Loan Service.

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