Work of Maynard Dixon Surveyed in Museum Exhibition

More than 30 paintings and drawings spanning the 50-year career of Maynard Dixon (1875-1946) are part of "Maynard Dixon's West: Space, Silence, Spirit," which runs through Sept. 8 at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art.

The exhibition surveys Dixon's painting of the American West with a distinctive modernist vision. Complementing the exhibition will be photographs by Dorothea Lange. Dixon's wife from 1920 to 1935. Lange is well known for her black and white photography that illuminated the human condition in early 20th-century America. Also included will be a watercolor and pen and ink postcard by Charles M. Russell, which the artist sent to Dixon in 1917. Most of the works in the exhibition are from the collection of Mr. and Mrs. A.P. Hayes of Scottsdale, Ariz.

Born into a ranching family in Fresno, Calif., Dixon decided early on in life to become an illustrator of the Old West. He demonstrated great artistic promise while young, but received, in San Francisco, only a brief formal art training, which ended, according to some accounts, after only three months. He nevertheless found work as an illustrator for a number of San Francisco newspapers and for books by such authors as Jack London, John Muir, O. Henry, and Clarence Mulford, who was known for his books about Hopalong Cassidy.

A visit to Arizona and New Mexico in 1900 whetted Dixon's appetite for roaming the West. He then joined another emerging Western artist, Edward Borein, on a trip through several Western states. Back in California, Dixon continued to illustrate Western books and magazines, though by the 1910s he was growing tired of portraying the West in the immensely popular yet unrealistic fashion of the day.

The Panama Pacific International Exposition, the 1915 World's Fair in San Francisco, exposed the West Coast art community to Impressionism and various modernist movements such as Fauvism. Dixon began experimenting with Impressionism and Postimpressionism while continuing to pursue a career in commercial design, particularly posters. Volcanic Hills, a recent gift to the museum of from Jon and Dee Dee Stuart of Tulsa, dates from this time. In 1934, Dixon was commissioned by the federal government to document the construction of the Boulder Dam on the Colorado River in southern Nevada. While there, Dixon painted Volcanic Hills, a fresh, plein air (painted outdoors directly from nature) landscape, no doubt at a single sitting. It is inscribed to "old Snakebit Bob," Dixon's affectionate nickname for Dorothea Lange. Dixon and Lange, who had had two sons together, divorced in 1934.

Admission to the museum and special events is free. For information or accommodations on the basis of disability, call 325-3272 or visit www.ou.edu/fjima.

Mesonet 2002 Scheduled for June 23-26 in Oklahoma City

Mesonet 2002, an international institute presented by the Oklahoma Mesonet, will be held June 23-26 at the Cox Business Services Convention Center. The Oklahoma Mesonet, an environmental monitoring network across Oklahoma, is a partnership between OU and Oklahoma State University. Its operational home resides at the Oklahoma Climatological Survey.

The comprehensive Mesonet 2002 program addresses the planning, design, funding, implementation, and operation of a multi-purpose, mesoscale environmental monitoring network.

The themes of the program focus on both the technical and managerial aspects of planning a successful network, delivering quality data from field sensors, and working with customers to help them succeed.

The Mesonet 2002 Institute will provide a forum for sharing the experiences and insights gained by the Oklahoma Mesonet team and by other national experts. The successful assimilation of existing smaller networks into a single heterogeneous mesonetwork also will be discussed. Technical program topics include site selection criteria, instrument selection protocols, sensor maintenance and calibration procedures, data logging and telecommunication methods, quality assurance and archiving procedures, and design of customer software and Web-based products. Important

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