



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW EXHIBITION AT HILLIARD ILLUSTRATES WWII FRONT LINES WITH PAINTINGS FROM LIFE MAGAZINE WAR CORRESPONDENT

Mark Veteran's Day with paintings & illustrations from Tom Lea

Lafayette, La. – Celebrate Veteran's Day on Nov. 11 with a new exhibition that paints vivid pictures of the experiences by WWII soldiers on the front lines: [Tom Lea: LIFE and World War II](#) opens to the public on Veterans Day at [Hilliard Art Museum](#) and provides first-hand, realistic accounts of battles from the North Atlantic to the South Pacific.

Lea, a renowned artist, was also a highly regarded war correspondent for *LIFE* magazine during WWII. His work provided American audiences with empathetic, detailed images from the war's frontlines.

Curator Ben Hickey said "Tom Lea recorded World War II in high fidelity. He was there drawing fire with the troops. The resulting sense of drama, accuracy and care in his work is palpable. It's a testament to important moments that shaped the world we live in.

[Tom Lea, LIFE and World War II](#)

DATE: November 11, 2022 - February 11, 2023

The exhibition will feature 25 original paintings and illustrations from the United States Army Center of Military History Museum from *LIFE* war correspondent and artist Tom Lea. The closing date will include an accompanying colloquium in partnership with the National World War II Museum.

Tom Lea (1907-2001) was a brilliant artist, novelist, historian and correspondent during World War II. A native of El Paso, TX, Lea's work as a WPA muralist through Texas and

the Midwest was a primary introduction to his stint with the Army. Throughout his time covering the war for *LIFE* Lea traveled more than 100,000 miles, risking his life to document convoy battles from the desks of destroyers in the North Atlantic to the bloody beach at Peleliu.

Given his realistic style, he can be equated to “the Norman Rockwell of the Japanese Pacific Theatre.” His unique methodology of producing sketched forms and situations during the war was used as a prompt for full, emotional and dramatized pieces. Lea once said, “I knew they were with me, and I was with them,” of the soldiers with whom he deployed, and his circulated images brought that sentiment to those on the home front. His images published in *LIFE* rallied support for the war effort using highly realistic depictions of soldiers that exuded humanity and urgency. The artworks in this exhibition depict a realistic view of the war, while also symbolizing Lea’s unwavering bravery as he observed U.S. armed forces from earth, sea and sky.

The Colloquium, made possible with sponsorship from Oats & Marion, will feature a discussion about the war in the Pacific and offer a holistic view of Tom Lea, the man and the artist.

The exhibition is meaningful in further uniting our founding donor Paul Hilliard, who served as a radioman-gunner in SBD “Dauntless” dive bombers in the Philippines. Mr. Hilliard will reflect on his marine experience as part of the colloquium.

OTHER HAPPENINGS:

[A. Hays Town and the Architectural Image of Louisiana](#) -

Release of the second edition of the 200-page book featuring color photography by Philip Gould and architectural drawings, *A. Hays Town and the Architectural Image of Louisiana* by Carol McMichael Reese. Reese, a Favrot professor in the Tulane School of Architecture, traces the evolution of Town's career, including his work on the Historic American Buildings Survey, his award-winning Modernist designs, and his later houses that came to define Louisiana's residential architecture. This work accompanies an exhibition that originated at the Hilliard Art Museum in 2018 and has since traveled to additional venues. Reese’s work led to both the exhibit and the new book.

Author Events include:

[Louisiana Book Festival](#): Baton Rouge - Oct. 29

[Capital Park Museum](#): Baton Rouge - Nov. 10

[Jingle Bell Market](#)

DATE: December 3

Get in the holiday spirit with this annual holiday event. Nearly 20 vendors will be on hand. Shoppers can enjoy free admission to the museum, hot cocoa and cookies. Lafayette Ballet Theatre dancers will be part of the art, posing in the gallery in their Nutcracker finery.

Museum Hours, Admission & General Information

The Hilliard Art Museum is located at 710 E. Saint Mary Blvd. on the campus of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Museum hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Wednesday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Sunday and Monday. For general information, please visit HilliardMuseum.org or call 337-482-2278.

Upon request, press and media kits are available that include additional high-resolution images and selected literature.

About the Hilliard Art Museum

Our Museum is a bridge. Our Museum is a catalyst. Our Museum is for everyone. We connect art and education, our university and our community, generations and cultures. The Hilliard Art Museum-University of Louisiana at Lafayette is not just a place to look at art. It's a place where visitors are encouraged to truly see art. It is a place of learning, where students sketch in the galleries and artists talk about their work. It's a destination for families, where kids express their own creativity through hands-on activities. And it's a resource for academic research and observation. Museum experiences build skills that extend into every aspect of life. Viewing art promotes dialogue and understanding between individuals, among families, and throughout our community. Art makes life richer. And better. For everyone.

IMAGES AND PRESS KIT LINK [HERE](#)

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