

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



DOTHAN, Alabama - April 11, 2019 - The Wiregrass Museum of Art (WMA) is pleased to announce the opening of "Continuum: 1808-2017/Goya to Erdreich" on the evening of Thursday, April 18 at WMA's spring quarter Art After Hours event. The exhibition, comprised of a series of mixed-media works by artist Beverly Erdreich, takes an unflinching look at the enduring and changeless effects of war and other horrendous acts of violence on society. "Continuum" is intended to honor those who have experienced war, violence and acts of hate, and WMA will offer an extensive schedule of related programming to further examine the topics presented in the exhibition, which include the Jim Crow-era South, the Holocaust, World War II, the Vietnam War, and modern-day conflicts and social issues.

Erdreich has worked over the past decade to explore difficult issues and events in an effort to understand the recurring themes of war and social malaise throughout history. This series was inspired by Francisco de Goya's nineteenth-century series "Disasters of War," a series of etchings that were created between 1810 and 1814 to document the Peninsular War.

In "Continuum," Erdreich asks the viewer whether we have learned from the past by drawing direct parallels from Goya's etchings to modern acts of inhumanity. Reproducing and enlarging a selection of Goya's images, Erdreich then worked into each an additive and subtractive process of drawing, collage, erasure, and text. The images speak to us with an urgency, pointing out how little the world has changed in the centuries since Goya's pioneering series of first-hand war reportage.

"Although Beverly has worked in abstract compositions for much of her career, she found herself needing to explore the atrocities of war and violence, and she did that through the lens of Goya's 'Disasters of War' series. While many of these images are challenging to view, it is the role of museums to use their collections and exhibitions, and their relationships with artists, as a tool for important dialogue within their communities. We appreciate the community partners that have been working with us to plan important programs for members of our community to tell their own stories," said Dana-Marie Lemmer, director and curator of the Wiregrass Museum of Art.

A native of Dothan, Alabama, Beverly Erdreich earned her degree in art history from Newcomb College in New Orleans, Louisiana. Her work has been exhibited nationwide and is in the permanent collections of the Wiregrass Museum of Art, the Birmingham Museum of Art, as well as private and corporate collections throughout the United States. She lives and works in Birmingham, Alabama. "Continuum" has been shown at Space One Eleven in Birmingham, Alabama; the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts in Montgomery, Alabama; and the Center for Contemporary Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

"Continuum" exhibition visitors will have a chance to explore Erdreich's work through a series of in-gallery resources, including access to digital recordings of the artist discussing her work and access to images of Goya's original etchings from the "Disasters of War" series.

"Continuum: 1808 to 2017/Goya to Erdreich" has been made possible by grants from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

### **Exhibition-related programming**

Programming for the "Continuum" exhibition has been organized by an independent program manager, Holly Roberts Meyers, alongside WMA staff, and a humanities advisor, Dr. Jeneve Brooks.

"While creating the public programs for the exhibition, I took a strong look at our community members. WMA wanted to provide every member of this community with more learning experiences that directly parallel the themes Erdreich presents in 'Continuum.' We do not want the viewer to walk away with little context; we want to provide a deeper look into the human condition as it pertains to war and acts of inhumanity while honoring those of the past and present," said Holly Roberts Meyers.

"And I hope the programming will reflect the museum's sincere attempt to provide the region with meaningful conversations and learning opportunities. Working with WMA on this exhibition has been a rewarding experience for me personally, and I hope the Wiregrass community will benefit from it," said Meyers.

### **Public programs**

Public programming related to "Continuum" will be presented throughout the run of the exhibition, looking at global events and their effects on local history. The comprehensive schedule includes four categories: Conversation, Performance, Film, and Hands-On. Offerings include art classes, lectures, panel discussions, live performances, and in-gallery activities intended as a platform for subject-matter experts to share their expertise and for community members to share their own experiences.

For a complete listing of programming related to "Continuum," including descriptions, times, and dates, please visit the exhibition page at [wiregrassmuseum.org](http://wiregrassmuseum.org). A printable, full schedule of programming is also available [here](#).

### **Intergenerational Learning Project**

WMA has tasked a small group of high school and college-aged students to conduct interviews with older members of the community. These older community members have unique personal histories to share as many of them have lived through active military duty, the Great Depression, the civil rights movement, and other seminal periods in American history. All participants are of diverse backgrounds and have been paired together based on their ability to learn from one another by making meaningful connections.

The goal of the project is for the interviewers and interviewees to share their cultural and generational experiences, especially those related to topics addressed in the *Continuum* exhibition. WMA will create a film of these conversations to serve as a learning tool and archive for the participants and the Wiregrass community.

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**Featured in header:**

Beverly Erdreich, "Las camas de la muerte - The Deathbeds," 2015-2017, Collage, text, pastel, charcoal, paint, graphite, and erasure on paper

**Additional images available upon request.**

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**About the Wiregrass Museum of Art**

The Wiregrass Museum of Art inspires a lifelong appreciation for the visual arts by providing innovative educational programs that engage diverse audiences through the collection and exhibition of quality works. Since its founding in 1988, WMA has offered educational programs, nationally-acclaimed art exhibitions and community events throughout the year. Its Board of Trustees guides the long-term vision and strategic goals, while its membership, City and County support, and grant funding provide the resources needed to fulfill its mission.

WMA's galleries are open to the public every Wednesday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. General admission is always free. Private tours with guided art activities in the studio can be arranged by appointment on Mondays and Tuesdays. For tour information, visit [wiregrassmuseum.org/museum-tours](http://wiregrassmuseum.org/museum-tours).

**About Art After Hours**

Art After Hours is held at the Wiregrass Museum of Art in January, April, July and October to celebrate the opening of quarterly exhibitions. The spring event will take place on Thursday, April 18 from 5:30 - 8:00 p.m. Admission is free for members and \$5 for non-members. Museum memberships are offered for half price at the door of all Art After Hours events.

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