

NEWS RELEASE

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UNH ART GALLERY PRESENTS TWO NEW EXHIBITIONS – WORKS BY SAMUEL BAK AND UNH ALUMNI

DURHAM –Paintings and drawings by renowned artist Samuel Bak, as well as recent works by three accomplished UNH alumni are showcased in two exhibitions opening at The Art Gallery, UNH, on January 19. *The Art of Samuel Bak: Memory and Metaphor* and *An Eye on Alumni: Elise Freda, Betsey Garand, and Martha Groome* run through April 12. A preview reception, open to the public, will be held on Wednesday, January 18, from 5–8 p.m.

The Art of Samuel Bak: Memory and Metaphor presents 47 drawings and paintings by this prolific artist whose rich body of work is based on his early childhood memories of the Holocaust. Utilizing the power of symbols and metaphors, Bak visually relates the pain caused by war and human destruction, evoked by the haunting memories of his past. He successfully creates a visual language to interpret the loss of childhood, traditions, and loved ones.

Born in Poland in 1933, Samuel Bak endured life in the Jewish ghetto of Vilna and showed early signs of being an artistic prodigy. He and his mother were the only family members to survive; they moved to the newly formed state of Israel in 1948 where Bak furthered his studies. Subsequently he lived in Paris, Rome, New York, and Switzerland, before moving to the United States in 1993. Bak’s paintings—landscapes, still lifes, and figurative works—are filled with symbols and metaphors that represent his memories of the town of Vilna and the destruction of the Holocaust.

The exhibition, *The Art of Samuel Bak: Memory and Metaphor*, is organized in conjunction with the Pucker Gallery, Boston. The exhibition is funded in part by grants from the FEDCO Charitable Foundation, the UNH Center for the Humanities, and the Greater Seacoast United Jewish Appeal, with additional support from the UNH Endowed Fund for Holocaust Education, the Friends of The Art Gallery, the Dean’s Office of the UNH College of Liberal Arts, and the S. Melvin and Mary Jo Rines Art Exhibition Fund. An illustrated catalogue of the exhibition is available for purchase.

Running concurrently is the exhibition *An Eye on Alumni: Elise Freda, Betsey Garand, and Martha Groome*. Focusing on recent work created by three graduates of the University of New Hampshire’s Department of Art and Art History, this exhibition showcases how each of these artists utilize organic and geometric abstraction to explore their unique artistic visions. The encaustic paintings of Elise Freda (BFA ’81) reflect the contrasts discovered when natural shapes and forms respond to the changing qualities of light and atmosphere. Inspired by the pictographs and petroglyphs of indigenous peoples, Betsey Garand (BFA ’81) creates prints and paintings that examine the entwinement of natural and geometric shapes. Works by Martha Groome (BA ’67) demonstrate how the reduction of the number of elements found in a painting leads to an examination of illusion, color relationships, and proportion.

Programs held in conjunction with the two exhibitions include:

ArtBreak Series: Wednesdays at noon

- Jan. 25 Film: *Samuel Bak: Painter of Questions* is introduced by Dr. Jeffrey Diefendorf, professor of history & associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts, UNH. Room A219, Paul Creative Arts Center, UNH, Durham, NH
- Feb. 1 Gallery Talk: Painter Martha Groome discusses her work on view in the current exhibition *An Eye on Alumni: Elise Freda, Betsey Garand, and Martha Groome*. The Art Gallery, Paul Creative Arts Center, UNH, Durham, NH
- Feb. 8 Slide Lecture: Japanese woodblock printmaker Keiji Shinohara discusses his work and printing techniques. Room A219, Paul Creative Arts Center, UNH, Durham, NH
- Feb. 15 Gallery Talk: Renowned artist Samuel Bak discusses his work on view in the current exhibition, *The Art of Samuel Bak: Memory and Metaphor*. The Art Gallery, Paul Creative Arts Center, UNH, Durham, NH
- Feb. 22 Concert: *Joyful Rain*, featuring flutist Ellen Rondina and guitarist David Newsam, present a blend of unique musical harmonies. The Art Gallery, Paul Creative Arts Center, UNH, Durham, NH

The Art Gallery is located in the Paul Creative Arts Center, 30 College Road, on the Durham campus of the University of New Hampshire. Admission is free. Hours are Monday through Wednesday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; and Saturday and Sunday, 1-5 p.m. The Art Gallery is closed Fridays, University holidays (including March 10-19), and during exhibition changes.

School and other groups are welcome at The Art Gallery. Tours are offered free of charge with advance reservation and can be scheduled by calling the Outreach Program at 862-3713.

News Editors: The following high-resolution images of works presented in the two exhibitions are available for downloading:

Images available from the exhibition *The Art of Samuel Bak: Memory and Metaphor*:



Samuel Bak, *Close Up*, 2003, oil on canvas, 63 ¼" x 51 ½"
http://www.unh.edu/art-gallery/images/Bak/Close_Up.jpg



Samuel Bak, *Skies Were the Limit*, 2002, oil on canvas, 36" x 36"
<http://www.unh.edu/art-gallery/images/Bak/Skies.jpg>



Samuel Bak, *Young Vilne*, 2002, oil on canvas, 24" x 18"
<http://www.unh.edu/art-gallery/images/Bak/Young.jpg>

Images available from the exhibition *An Eye on Alumni: Elise Freda, Betsey Garand, and Martha Groome*:



Elise Freda, *Leaves*, 2005, encaustic & oil on wood, 9" x 24", diptych, Collection of Paul Vazquez & Lisette Berry
http://www.unh.edu/art-gallery/images/Alumni/Elise_Freda_Leaves.jpg



Betsey Garand, *Core VIII*, 2004, lift-ground aquatint, drypoint, & engraving, 7" x 5"
http://www.unh.edu/art-gallery/images/Alumni/Betsey_Garand.jpg



Martha Groome, *Means of Exchange*, 2003, acrylic on canvas, 28" x 64", Courtesy of Icon Contemporary Art, Brunswick, ME
http://www.unh.edu/art-gallery/images/Alumni/Martha_Groome.jpg

For more information, call 603-862-3713, send e-mail to catherine.wright@unh.edu, or visit our web site at www.unh.edu/art-gallery.