

ACKLANDARTMUSEUM

***Thoughts on Paper* presents Earliest Drawings by Thornton Dial**

Pioneering exhibition offers an underappreciated side of the renowned artist's work

For immediate release, 19 March 2012



Chapel Hill, NC — One of America's most remarkable living artists, Thornton Dial is widely recognized for his large-scale, mixed media paintings and found-object assemblages, yet his most abundant body of work is his drawings, which he began producing in the early 1990s. On view from 30 March through 1 July 2012, *Thornton Dial: Thoughts on Paper* presents 50 of Dial's earliest drawings from 1990–1991, a pivotal moment in his artistic career.

Coming from vernacular traditions of the American South, the self-taught Dial (b. 1928) has been considered as both an outsider or “folk artist” and as a major figure on the contemporary art scene. *Thornton Dial: Thoughts on Paper* offers a fresh look at Dial's achievements as seen through the medium of drawing. The works on view—characterized by flowing lines, color washes, and evocative images of women, fish, and tigers—provide a touchstone of Dial's creative process.

The Ackland Art Museum is well known for its extensive collection of works on paper and, in particular, its outstanding collection of drawings, making it a natural venue in which to explore this often overlooked but highly significant portion of Dial's oeuvre.

An accompanying publication, *Thornton Dial: Thoughts on Paper*, edited by Bernard L. Herman (guest exhibition curator and George B. Tindall Professor of American Studies at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) and published by UNC Press, offers the first sustained critical attention to Dial's works on paper. The book includes essays by Herman, Juan Logan, Glenn Hinson, Colin Rhodes, and Cara Zimmerman, and is available for purchase at the Ackland Museum Store.

Organized by the Ackland Art Museum, *Thornton Dial: Thoughts on Paper* will travel to the Fleming Museum of Art (UVM, Burlington, Vermont), the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts (Montgomery, Alabama), and the Knoxville Museum of Art (Knoxville, Tennessee).



The presentation of *Thornton Dial: Thoughts on Paper* at the Ackland Art Museum is made possible by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and the David G. Frey Expendable American Art Fund.

Support for all Ackland exhibitions is provided by the William Hayes Ackland Trust, and members and friends of the Ackland Art Museum.

ALSO ON VIEW



Piece by Piece: Quilts, Collages, and Constructions

30 March – 1 July 2012

Celebrating both the act of “piecing together” works of art from disparate elements and the influence of women’s traditional fabric arts on modern and contemporary art, this exhibition features quilts, sculptures, collages, painting, photography, and prints by such artists as Josef Albers, Aldwyth, Romare Bearden, Thornton Dial, Ann Hamilton, Lewis Hine, Betye Saar, Lezley Saar, and Stella Waitzkin.

Curated by Kimberly Kutz.

Chords of Memory: Lithographs by Thomas Hart Benton

Through 13 May 2012

Chords of Memory examines Thomas Hart Benton’s efforts to visually record the folk songs and music of the rural South and Midwest, which were, by the 1940s, beginning to disappear. Benton’s lithographs pay homage to the people, places, and vernacular music of these regions.

Curated by Laura Fravel.



The Ackland Art Museum

The Ackland Art Museum is located on the historic campus of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Ackland’s holdings consist of more than 16,000 works of art, featuring significant collections of European masterworks, twentieth-century and contemporary art, African art, North Carolina pottery, and folk art. In addition, the Ackland has North Carolina’s premier collections of Asian art and works on paper (drawings, prints, and photographs). As an academic unit of the University, the Ackland serves broad local, state, and national constituencies.

Hours and Admission

The Ackland is open Wednesday through Saturday 10:00 AM– 5:00 PM; Thursday 10:00 AM– 8:00 PM; and Sunday 1:00– 5:00 PM. Admission to the Museum is always free, with donations accepted.

Location

The Ackland Art Museum is located on South Columbia Street, near the corner of East Franklin Street, on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Parking is available at several nearby municipal and private parking decks, and at meters on Franklin Street. More information is available at 919.966.5736 or www.ackland.org.

For more information, please contact: Emily Bowles, Director of Communications
esbowles@email.unc.edu, 919.843.3675
www.ackland.org

Thornton Dial, American, born 1928: *Lady Holds the Long Neck Bird*, 1991; watercolor, graphite, and black conté crayon. Gift of the Souls Grown Deep Foundation, 2011.15.6. Betye Saar, American, born 1926; *Coffee*, 2002; mixed media collage and assemblage mounted on paperboard; Ackland Fund, 2005.18. Thomas Hart Benton, American, 1889-1975; *The Music Lesson*, 1943; lithograph; Gift of W. P. Jacobs, 58.2.220.