Art Museum of South Texas Opens Major Exhibition of Pioneering Texas Modernist Artist

The Color of Being/El Color del Ser: DOROTHY HOOD (1918-2000)


The landmark exhibit features 160 works -- 84 paintings, 47 drawings and 29 collages -- produced from 1935 to 2000, including 54 works from AMST’s permanent collection and archives (the largest collection of Hood’s work in existence) and additional pieces from 65 museums, corporations, foundations, and private collections located across Texas and America.

Using the exhibition as a catalyst, AMST will introduce innovative hands-on technologies and educational interactives to bring Hood’s works of art to life and redefine the art museum experience.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a book written by guest curator/author Susie Kalil of Houston and published by Texas A&M University Press, that expands on Hood’s contributions to modern art in Texas and her place in 20th century American art history.

Dorothy Hood at the Art Museum of South Texas

The Color of Being/El Color del Ser: DOROTHY HOOD (1918-2000) is the largest, most expensive project presented in AMST’s history, although Hood’s artwork has been featured previously as part of the Museum’s commitment to Texas artists.

Dorothy Hood Drawings was displayed in 1976, toured from the Everson Museum of Art, only four years after AMST opened the doors of the Philip Johnson building.

In 2003, shortly after AMST acquired the major portion of the artist’s estate, Dorothy Hood: A Pioneer Modernist was displayed and included pieces as they were found in the artist’s studio.

Through The Color of Being/El Color del Ser, AMST guests will appreciate Hood as a major Modernist who left an inspiring legacy.

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Technique and Influences

Hood’s paintings, using the vibrant palette of Latin America, show mature techniques and an eye for color, texture, form, line, and scale.

“Through staining and broad applications of paint across primed canvas, Hood created abstract compositions that often “open up” the painted surface and allow the viewer to optically enter a kind of space not unlike familiar images we now see photographed by cameras located in places far beyond Earth,” stated Dr. William G. Otton, the Director of AMST in 2004.

Hood’s drawings were influenced by surrealism, as well as her lonely youth and her time in Mexico where she lived for a significant portion of her life. Her collages displayed unique depictions of history, as well as space and dimensions of the mind and psyche of people.

A generation of art enthusiasts, art historians, and the viewing public are unaware of Hood’s talent and the breadth of her career and impressive body of work. Her career spanned the second half of the 20th century across multiple continents.

Although well known in Texas, unlike many of her contemporaries, her contributions to American art history were limited beyond the Lone Star State. While she may have become better known had she chosen to move and work in New York, she chose to live in Texas, stating “The spirit of Texas is in my work. We are on Mexican territory here and Mexico is where my art started. I don’t think that I could be anyplace else to do my work.”

From the 2003 exhibition catalogue essay by Lauraine Miller stated: “Dorothy Hood was a major regional artist, some say, the best abstract painter of her generation in Texas….It wasn’t easy being a woman making large, abstract canvases for a conservative art audience in Houston beginning in the 1960s.” Miller went on to comment that Hood’s best years as a painter were in Texas, inspired by the big sky, the pioneer spirit, and “space” in all its manifestations.

The Guest Experience

When Hood’s work was received in 2001, AMST saw the relationship to many iconic Texas topics: geology, space, and a rich Latin American palette. Acquiring the work was a milestone for AMST. Hood’s work had greater reach than the state of Texas, but the Museum saw a challenge in how to communicate the importance of Hood’s work to modern art history through traditional art exhibition design.
Kenneth Frederick, a George Eastman Museum Trustee, recently commented to AMST staff on the need for art museums to take a new approach to displaying abstract art: “Art museums are in the midst of a difficult transition to the next generation of patrons. The next generation grew-up in a very visual, interactive, immersive, high-technology environment. The attention of these individuals, who will determine the financial future of museums, is not held by traditional exhibits of static wall hangings. The patron of the future wants to “experience” rather than “look at” art exhibits. Experiencing an exhibit encompasses understanding the life, times, and philosophy of an artist, as well as gaining insight into the creative process. Explaining these elements through use of modern visualization, audio, and hands-on technologies is the most effective method of creating lifetime art patrons among the next generation.”

Unlike during Hood’s lifetime, innovative technologies exist today which create new opportunities to reach audiences and allow visitors to explore Hood’s paintings, life, and techniques. For The Color of Being/El Color del Ser: DOROTHY HOOD (1918-2000), AMST has teamed with Boston Productions Incorporated, an industry-leading experience design firm. Exhibit audiences will enjoy immersive experiences which bring Dorothy Hood’s large and colorful paintings to life, and come to know the artist and her work through a variety of interactive activities and media including creating their own art through motion capture devices and touch-table experiences.

With this exhibition, The Art Museum of South Texas is redefining the art museum experience. In the “Sparkling City by the Sea”, in a building designed by renowned architects Philip Johnson and Ricardo Legorreta, Dorothy Hood’s work is truly at home.

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VIP events are scheduled for donors, lenders and media prior to the opening, culminating with the Members’ preview reception on Thursday, September 29, 2016, from 6-8 p.m. The reception is free for AMST Members and one guest. Admission is $20 for Non-Members. Additional programs affiliated with the exhibition include a gallery walk and panel discussion. A full list is attached to this release.

For more information about the exhibition, VIP and public events, and sponsorship opportunities or to schedule interviews with AMST staff or program guests: Karol Stewart -- 361-825-3513 or karol.stewart@tamucc.edu.

Media requests for a watermarked, password protected version of the book must be made directly to TAMU Press: Christine Brown, Texas A&M University Press Publicity and Advertising Manager -- 979-458-3982 or christinebrown@tamu.edu.

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The Art Museum of South Texas (AMST), located at 1902 N. Shoreline Blvd., Corpus Christi, Texas is open to the public Tuesday – Saturday 10 am – 5 pm, Sunday 1 – 5 pm and closed on Monday. For admission information details contact the Museum at 361-825-3500 or visit www.artmuseumofsouthtexas.org.

The Mission of the South Texas Institute for the Arts, doing business as the Art Museum of South Texas, is to operate educational facilities and an art museum which advance the awareness, knowledge, appreciation and enjoyment of the visual arts for residents and visitors of South Texas.
Additional Resources

Enclosed:
Timeline of Dorothy Hood's career and life
Calendar of exhibition related events and programs

Available by Request to AMST:
Link to comprehensive media kit
High resolution images with full credit lines
Links to videos and films about the artist
Expanded press releases featuring story angles on science, nature, innovative exhibition interactive experiences, surrealism, Mexican muralists, and astronomy.
Interviews with Guest Curator Susie Kalil, AMST Director Joe Schenk, Past AMST Director Bill Otton, AMST program guests, and more.

Available by Request to TAMU Press:
Link to a watermarked, password protected version of the book
Dorothy Hood Timeline

1918: - Dorothy Hood was born in Bryan, Texas on August 22nd, the only child of Frank and Georgianna Hood.

1930s: - In high school, her artwork was submitted and she won the National Scholastic Scholarship to the Rhode Island School of Design.
  - Studied at the Art Students League of New York and modeled to earn money.

1941: - Went to Mexico for vacation but ended up staying there for the next 20 years (until 1961).
  - Became part of a group of artists and intellectuals that included Ramon Sender, Leonora Carrington, Frida Kahlo, Pablo Naruda, Sophie Treadwell, Remedios Varo, Luis Bunuel, Miguel Covarrubias, Rufino Tamayo, and Diego Rivera.
  - Jose Clemente Orozco was another friend of Hood's who was also her mentor.
  - Exhibited at the Gama Gallery in Mexico City.

1945: - Returned to New York to study for a year.

1946: - Married Bolivian composer and conductor José María Velasco Maidana.

1950: - Was awarded a solo show at the Willard Gallery in New York.

1957: - Named "One of the Year’s New Talents" by Art in America.

  - Exhibited at the Philadelphia Art Alliance.

1961: - Moved to Houston and began to teach at the School of Art of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (until 1976).
  - Exhibited at the Atelier Chapman Kelley in Dallas, Texas.

1962: - Started showing her work in the Meredith Long Gallery in Houston.


1971: - Was featured in an exhibition at Rice University.
  - By this year, Hood had five solo shows in major Texas museums.

1973: - Received the Childe Hassam Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

  - A retrospective of her work traveled to several museums.

1975: - Created sets for the Houston Ballet’s "Allen’s Landing."

1976: - Finished teaching at the School of Art of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.
  - Began teaching at Colorado State University.
  - Was commissioned and created sets for the Royal Ontario Museum’s showing of “Royal Hunt of the Sun.”
  - Showed at the Marianne Friedland Gallery in Toronto, Canada.
  - Exhibited at the Kuntshalle in Dusseldorf, Germany.
  - Showed at the Art Museum of South Texas in Corpus Christi.


1982: - Was included in a documentary about women artists called “From the Heart.”

1983: - Exhibited at Kunstverein in Salzburg, Austria.
1985: - Carolyn Farb, who was a supporter and friend of Hood, produced an award winning documentary about her work titled “The Color of Life.”
   - Hood’s work was shown at the UN Focus International Exhibition in Kenya.

1988: - Received the “Outstanding Achievement in Visual Arts” Honor Award by the Women’s National Caucus for Art.

1989: - Work was recognized at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, DC.
   - Work was shown at the Laguna Gloria Art Museum in Austin, Texas.
   - Husband, Velasco Maidana, died of Parkinson’s disease.

1990: - Awarded an honorary doctorate from the Rhode Island School of Design.

2000: - Dorothy Hood died of breast cancer.

2001: - Art Museum of South Texas in Corpus Christi acquired a major portion of Hood’s estate including her archives and studio contents.


2012: - Art Museum of South Texas engaged Susie Kalil to serve as Guest Curator and Author for the Dorothy Hood Project.

**Dorothy Hood Exhibition Related Events and Programs**

**Wednesday, September 28, 6-9pm VIP Cocktail Reception, Dinner, and Private Preview**
Donors contributing $5,000 or more to the exhibition *The Color of Being/El Color del Ser: DOROTHY HOOD (1918-2000)* will receive an exclusive invitation to preview the landmark exhibition in honor of their generous contributions.

Location: Art Museum of South Texas, 1902 N. Shoreline Blvd.
By Invitation.

**Thursday, September 29, 5-6pm VIP Lenders and Donors Preview Reception**
All Lenders and Donors to the exhibition *The Color of Being/El Color del Ser: DOROTHY HOOD (1918-2000)* will receive an invitation to preview the landmark exhibition in honor of their generous contributions and participation.

Location: Art Museum of South Texas, 1902 N. Shoreline Blvd.
By Invitation.

**Thursday, September 29, 6-8pm Members Preview Reception**
Members and their guests are invited to attend the preview reception of the exhibition *The Color of Being/El Color del Ser: DOROTHY HOOD (1918-2000)*. Experience Dorothy Hood through a variety of interactive activities and media in the largest exhibition ever.

Location: Art Museum of South Texas, 1902 N. Shoreline Blvd.
To become a member or for more information call the Membership Department at 361-825-3509.
By Invitation. Members with one guest - free/Non-members - $20.

**Friday, September 30, 12pm Lunch Amongst the Masters & Gallery Walk with Susie Kalil**
Enjoy a catered lunch with guest curator, Susie Kalil, and visit the newest exhibition *The Color of Being/El Color del Ser: DOROTHY HOOD (1918-2000)* to learn how this landmark exhibition was created.

Location: Art Museum of South Texas, 1902 N. Shoreline Blvd.
RSVP required, Members of the Museum - $15/Non-members - $20

**Friday, September 30, 6-7pm An Evening with Dorothy Hood: Panel Discussion**
Join guest curator, Susie Kalil, and friends and admirers of legendary artist, Dorothy Hood as they discuss the artist’s life and artwork. Learn how this exhibition places an overlooked female artist in time and history as an important 20th century artist.

Location: Art Museum of South Texas, 1902 N. Shoreline Blvd.
FREE to the public

**Saturday, October 1, 10am-12pm Area Art Teacher Professional Development: Introducing Dorothy Hood**
Area art teachers are welcome to attend this professional development workshop providing an overview of the life and work of 20th century Texas artist Dorothy Hood.

Location: Art Museum of South Texas, 1902 N. Shoreline Blvd.
For more information, call the Education Department at 361-825-3504
Pre-registration required

**Related Program Organized with the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra**

**Saturday, November 12 7:30pm Amerindia: Performance by the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra**
Join the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra as they perform excerpts from José María Velasco Maidana’s ballet symphony *Amerindia*. Velasco Maidana was an internationally-recognized Bolivian composer and conductor who was the husband of artist Dorothy Hood.

Location: Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi Performing Arts Center
For more information, visit online at www.ccsymphony.org.