



Erie Art Museum

Be moved.

Contact: Carissa Snarski
814-459-5477; carissa@erieartmuseum.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***I Think I Found It Upside Down* Solo Exhibition by Dietrich Wegner**

June 14, 2016, Erie, Pennsylvania – The Erie Art Museum is pleased to present a new Main Gallery exhibition, *I Think I Found It Upside Down*. The show will run from July 27 to November 20, 2016.

The Opening Reception will be held during the September 23 Gallery Night.

The ephemeral beauty of a mushroom cloud is frightening; it floats, delicate and blooming, but chaotic and utterly destructive. It is this conflicted experience—a contradiction between what our eyes enjoy and what our mind knows—that Dietrich Wegner’s work evokes in the viewer, with intersections of beauty and repulsion, comfort and fear, fantasy and objective reality. These paradoxical feelings create a multilayered understanding, turning our perception of reality upside down.

Wegner often chooses materials that contradict one aspect of an image while simultaneously lending it a comforting realism. A mushroom cloud is fluffy like cotton, and Wegner’s synthetic cotton mushroom cloud becomes fun and cozy. A blood splat sculpture is shiny and exciting, but suggests all the terrors we associate with spilled blood. The cotton (actually Poly-fil) playhouse and urethane blood splat are examples of materials that reflect what an image looks like but contradict what a subject feels like or “means.”

In Wegner’s work, a mushroom cloud can resemble a tree house, an anus a vortex, a suicide bomber a vulnerable human being. His babies are covered in multicolored logo tattoos. These works explore our notions of contentment and security, and provoke us to consider how our identities evolve and how we declare them.

Dietrich Wegner was born in Adelaide, Australia to parents who worked for an organization doing global social work similar to the Peace Corps. His parents’ work brought his family to Egypt and then Houston, Texas. He now resides in northwestern Pennsylvania where he holds a

-MORE-

studio and teaches at Edinboro University. He has exhibited widely throughout Europe and North America, including Banksy's *Dismaland* as well as exhibitions at the Leopold Museum in Vienna, De Meerse in the Netherlands, the Carnegie Museum of Art, Athens Institute of Contemporary Art, the Columbus Museum of Art, the Bellevue Arts Museum in Seattle, and Diverse Works Art Space in Houston. Wegner frequently exhibits in international art fairs in Basel, New York, Miami, and Los Angeles. His work has been discussed and reviewed in *Sculpture Magazine*, *Art Papers*, *Eikon International Magazine of Photography and New Media*, *Art Ltd*, *LA Weekly*, and *Art Map* as well as in numerous college art and sociology textbooks. Wegner was awarded an Artist Fellowship by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. His work is found in over 30 collections in five countries. Wegner is represented by the Carrie Secrist Gallery in Chicago and the Robert Berman Gallery in Los Angeles.

Artwork and captions available for download:

<https://drive.google.com/a/erieartmuseum.org/folderview?id=0BxqYLVq3pVsVR3ZRQlpVcV9TcWs&usp=sharing>

About the Erie Art Museum

The Erie Art Museum anchors downtown Erie's cultural and economic revitalization, occupying a group of restored mid-19th century commercial buildings and a modern, 'Green,' 10,500 square foot expansion. The newly expanded Museum marks the first LEED-certified building in the region, soon to be complete with a planted rooftop.

The Museum maintains an ambitious program of changing exhibitions annually, embracing a wide range of subjects, both historical and contemporary and including folk art, contemporary craft, multi-disciplinary installations, community-based work, as well as traditional media.

The Erie Art Museum also holds a collection of over 8,000 objects, which includes significant works in American ceramics, Tibetan painting, Indian bronzes, contemporary baskets, and a variety of other categories.

The Museum offers a wide range of education programs and artists' services including interdisciplinary and interactive school tours and a wide variety of classes for the community. Performing arts are showcased in the 25-year-old Contemporary Music Series, which represents national and international performers of serious music with an emphasis on composer/performers, and a popular annual two-day Blues & Jazz Festival.

The Erie Art Museum, café, and gift shop is open Tuesday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sunday, 1-5 p.m. For additional visitor information, visit online at www.erieartmuseum.org or call 814-459-5477.

Links:

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

###