

NC State University in Raleigh, NC, Features Works by Chris Hondros and Will Henry Stevens

NC State's Gregg Museum of Art & Design in Raleigh NC, presents twin exhibitions featuring two artists represented in its permanent collection: *Chris Hondros – Conflict* and *Will Henry Stevens – Pastels*, both on view in the Historic Residence, from June 3 through Jan. 9, 2022.

An NC alumnus, photographer Chris Hondros (1970-2011) was killed in 2011 while working in Libya, along with film director Tim Hetherington. Before his death Hondros had arranged for Getty Images to gift the Gregg a selection of his award-winning photos, many of which will be on display in this exhibition. "Hondros," a documentary of the life and legacy of this talented war photojournalist, directed by Greg Campbell, is also available on Netflix.

Hondros majored in English in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at NC State and graduated in 1993. He went on to complete a Masters degree in Visual Communications at Ohio University before becoming a staff photographer for Getty Images. He was killed on the morning of April 20, 2011, while photographing in Misrata, Libya.

Hondros was born in New York City to immigrant Greek and German parents (who were child refugees after World War II) and grew up in Fayetteville, NC. As a professional war photographer he worked in most of the world's major conflict zones of the last two decades, including Kosovo, Angola, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Kashmir, the West Bank, Iraq, and Liberia. His work appeared on the covers of *Newsweek* and *The Economist*, and on the front pages of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*.



Chris Hondros, "Liberia", 2003

On Wednesday, April 20, 2011, *Business Insider* broke the news that Tim Hetherington and Chris Hondros had been killed in Libya. Hetherington was an Oscar nominated film director who had made the award winning film *Restrepo*. Two other photographers working with them were wounded in the same attack. Hetherington had tweeted the previous day: "In besieged Libyan city of Misrata. Indiscriminate shelling by Qaddafi forces. No sign of NATO."

Hondros received dozens of awards, including top honors from World Press Photo in Amsterdam, the National Pictures of the Year Competition, Visa Pour l'Image in France, and the John Faber Award from the Overseas Press Club in New York. In 2004 he was a Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for his work in Liberia, and in 2006 he was awarded the Robert Capa Gold Medal, war photography's highest honor, for "exceptional courage and enterprise" in his work from Iraq. In 2007 he was named a "Hero of Photography" by *American Photo* magazine for his ongoing coverage of the Iraq war, and in 2008 he was a *National Magazine Award* finalist for his photo essay, "A Window on Baghdad."

Chris Hondros had a solo exhibition of his photography at the Gregg Museum of Art & Design in the fall of 2005. He will long be missed by all his friends here at NC State.

All the Chris Hondros photos on display were gifts of Getty Images and are in the Gregg Museum's permanent collection.

Will Henry Stevens (1881 – 1949) was an American modernist and impressionist painter and naturalist. He is best known for his paintings and tonal pastels of the rural Southern landscape, abstractions of nature, and non-objective works, created while he summered in Asheville, NC. Using pastels of his own making, he was influenced by,



Will Henry Stevens, "Forest Stream"

among others, the impressionistic paintings of the Sung Dynasty, the poetry of Walt Whitman, and modernists Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee.

Stevens was born in Vevay, Indiana, where his father was a pharmacist. While working at his father's drugstore as a teenager, Stevens learned to grind and mix his own pigments - skills that later enabled him to develop new formulas for the pastel chalks that would eventually become his preferred art medium.

Stevens studied at the Cincinnati Art Academy for three years before leaving in 1904 to work at the Rookwood Pottery as a painter and designer. In 1906, he made the first of many visits to New York, where he briefly studied at the Art Students League under impressionist painter William Merritt Chase, before becoming interested in the more contemporary art movements being exhibited at The New Gallery. There he met and received the encouragement of artists like Jonas Lie, Van Dearing Perrine, and Albert Pinkham Ryder, and had his first solo exhibition in 1907.

He took a teaching position in Louisville, KY, in 1912 and remained there until 1921, when he joined the art faculty of Newcomb College in New Orleans. For the next several decades, he escaped the heat and humidity of Louisiana by spending nearly every summer in the cooler climate of Asheville, NC, and the surrounding mountains. Because his teaching commitments left little time to paint in his regular studio during the school year, most of his personal work was done during these months.

Stevens preferred to create works on paper that could be rolled up and transported easily while traveling around the mountains by car. Drawing with charcoal, pastel, and watercolor enabled him to work quickly and place greater importance on the graphic design of his compositions.

As an artist, Stevens' interest in nature was inspired by reading the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and Walt Whitman, as well as studying Chinese Sung Dynasty silk paintings and the works of James McNeill Whistler and John Henry Twachtman. During the last decade of his life, Stevens' work became increasingly non-objective (abstract), as he gained greater appreciation for the art then being created at Black Mountain College, twenty miles east of Asheville. Stevens retired from Newcomb College in 1948 to return to his birthplace in Indiana, where he died of leukemia the following year.

All the Stevens works on display were gifts of the Will Henry Stevens Memorial Trust and are in the Gregg Museum's permanent collection.

The Gregg Museum of Art & Design is a free collecting and exhibiting museum with more than 35,000 objects in its permanent collection. From 19th century Japanese color woodblock prints and antique quilts to contemporary photography and industrial design, the Gregg's objects span cultures, disciplines and genres.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings or visit (gregg.arts.ncsu.edu).

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