

For Immediate Release

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~ Now & Then ~

*A side-by-side exhibition featuring the area's premier contemporary painters
and the masters of American art who came before them*

Gratz Gallery & Conservation Studio is pleased to announce an exhibition featuring works by the area's most prestigious and talented contemporary artists, side-by-side with Pennsylvania Impressionists, The Philadelphia Ten and painters from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The exhibition, *Now & Then*, seeks to delineate the push-and-pull of influence and autonomy between the gifted painters of today and the masters of American Art who came before them. The show will include paintings by more than a dozen contemporary painters: Robert Beck, Patricia Burns, John Ennis, Jennifer Hansen, Glenn Harrington, James J. Himsforth, John Kane, Richard Lennox, Jan Lipes, Babette Martino, Elise Phillips, Bob Richey, Materese Roche, Robert Seufert and George Thompson among others. Their predecessors, such as Edward Redfield, Walter Baum, Rae Sloan Bredin, Fern Coppedge, Cora Brooks, Leon Kelly, Hermann Herzog and Antonio Martino will be represented as well. The exhibition will run from March 14 through April 18, 2010. An opening reception for the exhibition will be held on March 13, from 6pm to 9pm. A snow date is scheduled for the following day, March 14, from 3 to 6 pm. A catalog of the show will be available on the Gratz Gallery & Conservation Studio website prior to the event.

The rich cultural heritage of the Bucks County region has long been a source of inspiration for some of the nation's most esteemed artists. The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, founded in 1805, was the nation's first school and museum of fine arts. The school quickly became known as the epitome of fine art instruction, and an array of major American artists taught, studied or exhibited at the Academy. Many of the key players of both the New Hope School and the Philadelphia Ten were students or instructors at the Pennsylvania Academy. In the late nineteenth century, nearly 100 years after the Pennsylvania Academy was founded, art colonies began forming up and down the nation's east coast. One of the most renowned of these colonies was the one that formed in 1898 on the banks of the Delaware River in New Hope. This colony, soon to be coined the New Hope School, was ideally located between New York City and Philadelphia and featured stunning landscapes and four strongly delineated seasons, all of which appealed to the artists who settled there. William Lathrop, Edward Redfield and Daniel Garber are a few of the early luminaries that made New Hope their home. They were soon followed by painters Fern Coppedge, John Folinsbee, and Harry Leith-Ross among others, who also lived and worked in the river town. Nearby, in Philadelphia, a group of talented and driven female artists were organizing in the hopes of having their artwork seriously displayed and considered at a time when art by women was merely considered 'hobby' and 'craft'. This group, The Philadelphia Ten, was composed of approximately thirty women artists over its twenty-eight years in existence. Encouraged by instructors such as Henry Snell, the group was incredibly successful and has left us with the work of such talented painters as Cora Brooks, Nancy Maybin Ferguson, Constance Cochrane and Mary Elizabeth Price and many more.

Today, over 100 years after the founding of the New Hope School, artists continue to make the Bucks County region their home. Painters such as Glenn Harrington, John Kane and Robert Seufert are just a few of the many talented landscape painters in the region. Their river views, rolling meadows and quiet snow scenes bring to mind works by Charles Rosen, Daniel Garber and Walter Baum. Materese Roche uses the instruction she gained at the Pennsylvania of Academy of the Fine Arts to paint beautiful and highly academic still lifes. Robert Beck, a longtime resident of the area, paints wonderful impressionistic genre scenes, bringing to mind the bright and colorful work of Paulette Van Roekens or even the scenes of day-to-day by Robert Spencer. Another inspiring aspect of Bucks County is the support given to local artists by the area's residents. The many sophisticated patrons and admirers of our area's strong artistic heritage continue to make Bucks County an area dedicated to the arts.

Gratz Gallery & Conservation Studio is located at 68 S. Main Street, Doylestown, just a few short blocks away from the James A. Michener Museum of Art and The Mercer Museum. The gallery features 19th and 20th century American Art, as well as museum quality fine art conservation services and custom framing. The gallery is open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and Sundays, 12:00 noon – 6:00 p.m., as well as by appointment. Call 215-348-2500 or visit the Gratz Gallery and Conservation Studio website at www.gratzgallery.com.