

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## Grand Reopening of NCMA East Building Features Four Free Exhibitions

Lyn Triplett, Staff Writer

The North Carolina Museum of Art's East Building reopens November 7 with an unprecedented lineup of inaugural exhibitions, including four free shows in addition to a ticketed exhibition of Norman Rockwell's art. The free exhibitions feature sculpture by North Carolinian Bob Trotman, *Fins and Feathers* featuring children's book illustrations, contemporary photography by Vietnamese American artist Binh Danh, and John James Audubon's *The Birds of America*.

"We're thrilled to have the space to present a diverse schedule of special exhibitions for our visitors," said NCMA Director Lawrence Wheeler. "East Building will certainly be a place of lively interaction with multiple shows and fantastic programming, fulfilling our mission to make the Museum and its range of art accessible for all."

The art of one of America's most beloved and recognized illustrators comes to the North Carolina Museum of Art for the holidays. *American Chronicles: The Art of Norman Rockwell* opens November 7, in the Museum's new home to rotating exhibitions and education program-

ming. (Tickets: \$12- students)

For six decades Rockwell (1894-1978) captured the American experience for the covers and pages of the nation's most prominent publications. He was the consummate visual storyteller, transforming images of everyday life into poignant, and sometimes humorous, works of art with broad popular appeal.

"One of the surprising aspects of this exhibition is the attention placed upon Rockwell's career in the 1960s after he abandoned being Norman Rockwell, the all-American painter," said John Coffey, curator of American and modern art. "Most people are unfamiliar with—or have forgotten—Rockwell's crusade in support of the civil rights movement."

Four Free Exhibitions:

I. The Museum's new North Carolina Gallery, debuts with sculpture by Bob Trotman. *Bob Trotman: Inverted Utopias* presents more than 20 carved and painted figures from the past decade by one of the state's most important artists. Trotman's wood sculptures depict anonymous characters that appear to be in states



Leo Lionni, *Parade*, 1970, from *Fish is Fish* (Random House, 1970), colored pencil, oil stick, and graphite on illustration board, 14 1/4 x 20 in., The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, Leo Lionni Collection, Gift of the Lionni Family, © 1970 Leo Lionni

### Ask Gigi

Dear Gigi,

I am an international student living in an on-campus dorm room, and I have nowhere to go for Thanksgiving break. We don't celebrate it back home, but I still feel left out of this important tradition in my new country. Do you have any advice for how I can spend the long weekend?

Sincerely,  
Bummed Out

Dear Bummed Out,

Even if no one is around on Thursday, you don't have to feel left out of Thanksgiving celebrations! Why don't you suggest the idea of a dorm potluck dinner to your hallmates? That means that every participant brings a side, entrée, or dessert dish to share. A Tuesday or Wednesday night group dinner in the parlor might be just the ticket to everyone's relaxation, bonding, and holiday happiness before you all split for the long weekend, and it would give you a chance to experience the true American spirit—and food!—of Thanksgiving. I suggest that you mention the dinner at your next hall meeting, in your classes, and at your extracurricular activities. Ask the interested people to help you publicize the plans through emails and Facebook. Then designate who will bring the specific dinner dishes on the night of the gathering—but don't forget the turkey! Out of all of those people attending the potluck, you are bound to find a couple who are also flying solo over the long weekend. Perhaps you could make plans together to take advantage of the "Black Friday" (November 26) sales in the Raleigh shopping centers. While the people traveling miss out on the steals and deals that you acquire, you can thank Tom the Turkey and your fellow Meredith Avenging Angels for giving you a good reason to stay in town!

Yours truly,  
Gigi

of flux or change. Clothed in 1950s-style dresses and business suits, his "model citizens" convey an air of Rockwell nostalgia, but their startling poses—upside down, poised on the brink of leaping, or sinking into the floor—and cracked facades contradict an idealized image of American life. Simultaneously humorous and disquieting, Trotman's figures are infused with enigmatic narratives that lie beneath their carved surfaces.

II. The Museum also opens its first special exhibition designed for families in East Building. *Fins and Feathers: Original Children's Book Illustrations* from The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art celebrates the artistic achievements of children's book artists through 33 original picture book illustrations from the last five decades. Focused on images of friendly and comical creatures, *Fins and Feathers* features some of the best works from The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art in Amherst, Mass.

III. A gallery devoted to photography features riveting images by Vietnamese-born artist Binh Danh. *Binh Danh: In the Eclipse of Angkor* includes chlorophyll prints, found butterfly specimens, and daguerreotypes that document and interpret the genocide in Cambodia from 1975 to 1979. Danh has emerged as an artist of national and

international importance with work that investigates the collective memory of war. The artist uses his photographs, in which he appropriates and transforms archival images, as a way of recovering the past.

IV. On November 7, the Museum also unveils its fully restored four-volume set of John James Audubon's *The Birds of America* in a special focus gallery devoted to the 19th-century artist and naturalist. For the first time, this treasure of art publishing that has belonged to the State of North Carolina since 1848 will be exhibited in its entirety. Spectacular 40-inch-tall volumes will be on display in new cases fitted with hydraulic lifts, which enable staff to turn the pages more frequently. The Audubon exhibition will be on view for at least three years.

#### Hours

Each exhibition is open during regular Museum hours:  
Tuesday–Thursday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.  
Friday 10 a.m.–9 p.m.  
Saturday–Sunday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Attribution: Many of the exhibition descriptions in this article are culled from NCMA press releases. Please visit their website for more details: [ncartmuseum.org](http://ncartmuseum.org)