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LIGONIER VALLEY MUSEUM OFFERS TWO SPECIAL 20th ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITIONS

Ligonier – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier Valley is mounting two special exhibitions in honor of its twentieth anniversary. *Two Decades' Delights: Highlights from 20 Years of Exhibitions at SAMA-Ligonier Valley* and *Art from the Heart: A Celebration of SAMA-Ligonier Valley's Founders* both open on August 18 and will remain on view through November 5.

SAMA-Ligonier Valley, the fourth museum in the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art system, opened in the fall of 1997. Visitors first were treated to a sampling of paintings and sculptures from the Museum's permanent collection, followed by a major exhibition by Jacob Eichholtz, an early Pennsylvanian painter known primarily for his portraits in the Roman Victorian tradition. Since that time, the Museum has offered more than fifty notable exhibitions highlighting a variety of artists, genres, and media. More than 100,000 visitors have viewed the Museum's exhibitions since its opening twenty years ago.

On view in the Elizabeth Shaw Gamble Gallery, *Two Decades' Delights* looks back at the many exhibitions presented by the Museum. Visitors will find works that were originally exhibited in popular exhibitions such as *Henry L. Hillman, Jr.: Futuristic Visions in Glass*, *Lost Identities: Surrealist Works of Jo Owens Murray and Clifford Lamoree*, *America's Spirit Revealed: Photographs by Skip Allen*, and *Things, Thoughts & Imagination: Shirley Zampelli Sturtz-Davis and William D. Davis*. Many of the local and regional artists who have exhibited at the Museum over the past two decades have offered fresh works for this exhibition. Among the many exhibiting artists are Lauren Adams, Linda Arnold, Jaime Cooper, Ron Donoughe, Chas Fagan, Jennifer Frudakis, Helen Gorsuch, Rita Haldeman, William M. Hoffman, Jr., Kevin Kutz, Carroll LaBarthe, John Ritter, Donald M. Robinson, Paul Sirofchuck, Nora and Stuart Thompson, and William Coventry Wall. Visitors also will find works by nationally recognized artists John Buxton and Robert Griffing, both of whom were highlighted in the Ligonier 250th exhibition, *Portraits of the Eastern Frontier*. Another highlight of the exhibition is a painting by Eichholtz, *Portrait of Isaac Austin Hayes* (1824). Nearly fifty works will be on view in the exhibition.

Also on view will be *Art from the Heart*, an exhibition that offers artwork from many of the individuals who played instrumental roles in the founding of the Ligonier Valley Museum. The exhibition includes works from SAMA's Director Emeritus, Michael M. Strueber, as well as members of the Museum's original steering committee: B.G. Galey Alexander, Paulette Nickel and Connie Pilz. Rounding out the list of exhibiting artists are others who played significant roles in the Museum's early years, such as Jan Barone, Chas Fagan, William Hamilton, Martha Murphy, Cray Sheedy and Helen Thorne.

Also on view at the Museum is the Walter Carlyle Shaw Collection of 183 classic and modern paperweights. The collection spans 150 years and includes works by some of the world's leading glass manufacturers, including Whitefriars Glass, England; Perthshire Paperweights, Scotland; Baccarat, Clichy-de-Garenne, and Saint Louis, France; and Millville, New England Glass Company, and Orient & Flume, United States. Also featured are weights by a number of modern glass artists such as Rick Ayotte, Bob Banford, Chris Buzzini, Ken Rosenfeld, Debbie Taristano and Paul Stankard, considered the father of modern glass paperweights.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier Valley is located at One Boucher Lane and Route 711 South in Ligonier. Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 5 p.m. weekends. The Museum is handicapped-accessible facility and is open to the public free of charge. For more information, please call the Museum at (724) 238-6015 or visit www.sama-art.org.