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**SAMA-JOHNSTOWN EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS EARLY WORKS OF
MAGIC REALIST, COLLEEN BROWNING**

Johnstown – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Johnstown is pleased to announce the opening of its latest exhibition, *Theaters of the Imagination: The Early Works of Colleen Browning*. The exhibition, on view January 4 through March 15, features 40 works from the Museum’s permanent collection.

Theaters of the Imagination explores the early and pervasive love of fantasy that led to Browning’s emergence as a Magic Realist. Through rare drawings, paintings and watercolors, the exhibition charts the artist’s growth from child prodigy to working professional. It begins with the unusually sophisticated compositions of her childhood and progresses through her student days at London’s famous Slade School of Art. Culminating in the artist’s designs for murals and stage sets, the exhibition offers unique insights into how a gifted young woman becomes an important artistic innovator.

Browning became a leader of the Magic Realist movement following her move from Britain to the United States in 1949. Over the next several decades, she pursued her unique aesthetic and affirmed the continued relevance of representational painting during an era largely dominated by abstract and conceptual styles.

In 2010, SAMA received a major bequest of Browning’s artwork and personal memorabilia from the artist’s late husband, Geoffrey Wagner. With nearly 250 paintings and drawings in its permanent collection, SAMA is the leading repository of the artist’s work.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Johnstown is located in the Pasquerilla Performing Arts Center on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Museum is a handicapped-accessible facility and is open to the public free of charge. For more information, please call the Museum at (814) 269-7234 or visit www.sama-art.org.