

Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery

401 North First Street, P.O. Box 348
Lindsborg, Kansas 67456-0348

September and October exhibitions at the Sandzén Gallery

For Immediate Release

Sunday, August 31, 2014

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Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery, Lindsborg, KS
(785) 227-2220 (Tuesday – Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 1 to 5 p.m.)

**attached photographs: *Across the Plains* by Oscar Larmer and *Oriole Party* by Sally Johnson.

LINDSBORG— New exhibitions at the Birger Sandzén Memorial Gallery include a special invitational show, "Embracing Nature;" along with paintings by Sally Johnson of Bolivar, Missouri, and Oscar Larmer of Manhattan, Kansas; and pre-1895 artwork by Birger Sandzén from the Gallery's collection. The shows will be on display from September 9 through October 19, 2014, with an evening, nature-themed reception on Saturday, September 13, from 5 to 7 p.m.

"Embracing Nature" is an exhibition featuring nature-inspired works by invited artists and from the Gallery's collection. The initial idea for the exhibit came about two years ago during one of the Gallery's quarterly show committee meetings. Occasionally, the group decides it would like to see a special "themed" show in the exhibition areas. After brainstorming possibilities, the group settled on "embracing nature." Nature, as subject matter, has been represented in art from the earliest of times, and is open to wide interpretation. Setting precedence, the Gallery's namesake, Birger Sandzén, wrote in the January, 1915, issue of *The Fine Arts Magazine*, "Fortunately, every artist has the opportunity of consulting a teacher that is always ready to give the very best advice to the sincere and unsophisticated disciple. The name of this great master is Nature . . . Individuality and nature in honest partnership will always create new and fascinating works of art, that will never grow old and never weaken."

Each member was then asked to select three artists they would most like to see in the show, along with a piece of their own artwork. After finalizing the list, all were contacted about participating and the following are included in the exhibit: Lee Becker, Wayne A. Conyers, Jean Cook, Steve Dudek, Noah Flores, Maleta Forsberg, Rick Frisbie, Andrea Fuhrman, Don Fullmer, Hugh Greer, Lisa Grossman, John Hachmeister, Ross Hilgers, Ann Horton, George Jerkovich, Joyce Jilg, Michael Jilg, Sally Johnson, Ken Klostermeyer, Kathleen Kuchar, Elizabeth Liljegren, Ron Michael, Phyllis Liljegren Newson, Frank Nichols, Barbara Waterman Peters, Larry Peters, Leland Powers, Frank Reese, Jim Richardson, Rose Marie Wallen, Kurt Wolf, and Ann Zerger.

"Magical Moments" is an exhibition of acrylic paintings by Sally Johnson. Although now residing in Bolivar, Missouri, Johnson was a longtime Lindsborg resident and continues to show her paintings throughout the area. She received a B.F.A. from Bethany College in Lindsborg, and has been painting and showing professionally for over 40 years – principally in Kansas, with working sojourns and exhibitions in England. She creates acrylic works with subject matter varying from realistic to magical realism. She writes, "I am basically a colorist. Reality often inspires my work, which is carefully composed, placing my paintings in the field of magical realism. Each painting involves the stillness of isolated moments that take place in the mind. Some pieces are based on actual locations, some are composites of different places, while others are completely imaginary. My work involves the function of memory, imagination, and intuition."

Oscar Larmer's exhibit, "Visual Poetry," showcases his watercolor and oil paintings. He believes that "landscapes begin with a reaction to a sense of place. Nature is an ever changing relationship of skies, rolling hills, rocks, water, and roads; thus, painting becomes a statement in an artist's diary of life." Since Larmer lives in Riley County, Kansas, many of his paintings are of the Flint Hills, while others are from recent trips to New Mexico and Texas.

Larmer was born in Wichita, Kansas. While in high school, he attended the school of the Wichita Art Association (now the Wichita Center for the Arts), where he studied figure and portrait drawing with William Dickerson. Following military duty, Larmer earned a three-year certificate at the Minneapolis School of Art and

Design in 1947, his B.F.A. from the University of Kansas in 1949, and an M.F.A. degree from Wichita State University in 1953.

In 1956, Larmer joined the art faculty of Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas. He retired in June 1989, as professor of art. He has shown in over 50 one-person exhibitions and has been accepted in 150 national and regional juried and invitational exhibitions. His paintings are included in many public and private collections.

"Birger Sandzen and the Swedish National Romantic Style" is work selected from the artist's efforts prior to immigrating to the United States in the fall of 1894. His artistic sensibilities were developed in his homeland of Sweden and, for a short time, Paris; and he was trained by two of the most recognized names in Swedish painting, Anders Zorn and Richard Bergh. This exhibit will feature sketchbooks, drawings, watercolors and paintings – giving a glimpse into the artist's formative years. Additionally, a large, rarely seen, multi-paneled painting from 1892 will be included in the show.

The Sandzén Gallery is located at 401 North First Street in Lindsborg and now has extended hours of 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday. The Gallery is closed on Mondays. Admission is free, with donations welcome. Docent tours for groups are available by two-week advance appointment with the Gallery. For more information about Birger Sandzén and the Gallery visit the website www.sandzen.org or telephone (785) 227-2220.