



Greenville County **Museum of Art**

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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—With the precision of a surgeon, the eye of an artist, and the heart of a naturalist, renowned South Carolina carver and artist Grainger McKoy uses wood, metal, and paint to create seemingly structurally impossible sculptures that depict shore birds and woodland waterfowl engaged in flight and in the struggle to survive.

Born in 1947, McKoy grew up in Sumter, South Carolina, and attended Clemson University, earning a degree in zoology, while also studying architecture. After graduating, he apprenticed for eighteen months with the renowned bird carver Gilbert Maggioni in Beaufort. McKoy initially produced realistic carvings, but slowly began transforming his intricately carved birds into gravity-defying sculptures that played with form and space, while continuing to accurately render each species in detail.

Opening July 16 at the Greenville County Museum of Art, the exhibition *Grainer McKoy* features more than 30 sculptures in a variety of media, including basswood, bronze, and sterling silver. Among the highlights of the exhibition is a twelve-foot-high basswood model of *Recovery Stroke* that was carved in 2008 as a maquette for the stainless steel centerpiece of Swan Iris Lake Gardens in the artist's hometown of Sumter.

For a bird in flight, the recovery stroke is the weakest wing position as it produces neither lift nor forward momentum, but it must occur in order for the power stroke to propel the bird forward. For Grainger McKoy the recovery stroke has always been the most graceful. In 1999 McKoy first sculpted *Recovery Stroke*, using the wing of a pintail duck. In 2004 the Hollings Cancer Center in Charleston commissioned the artist to create a work that would resonate with their mission of treatment and recovery, and he selected this vulnerable

moment of a bird in flight. Over the course of a decade, McKoy has rendered this motif in a variety of sizes and materials, including basswood, bronze, stainless steel, and silver.

McKoy's work has been shown at the High Museum of Art, Brandywine River Museum, Brookgreen Gardens, and many other galleries. The GCMA exhibition is on view through August 27, 2017.

The Greenville County Museum of Art is located in the center of downtown Greenville's cultural campus, Heritage Green, at 420 College Street. The GCMA is open Wednesday through Saturday from 10 am until 6 pm and on Sundays from 1 pm until 5 pm. Admission is free.

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