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SAMA-ALTOONA EXHIBITION TO OFFER RECENT WORKS BY CHUCK OLSON

Altoona – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Altoona is pleased to announce its latest exhibition, *The Influence of Place: Recent Work in Lithography, Collage and Painting by Chuck Olson*. Featuring 40 works from the artist’s collection as well as James Gallery in Pittsburgh, the exhibition opens February 10 and will remain on view through June 17.

The Influence of Place represents a pause in the life of the artist to reflect on his recent experiences and the important influence of places and cultures visited. Over the past 18 months, Chuck Olson has been engaged within a trinity of working in three mediums: lithography, collage and painting. Each of these is influenced by the sense of place and the way in which memory acts on the artist within the isolation of the studio. For Olson, Italy, France, Bermuda and Texas form a unique rectangle from which the work in this exhibition is a reaction affected by the experience of these diverse places.

Using varied printed media gleaned from reviews, newspapers, advertising and posters in Italy and France, a series of collage “boxes” is included in the exhibition as the material was reassembled to create new forms. Painting is Olson’s preferred medium and those works featured in *The Influence of Place* show a range in scale in reacting to environments both urban and rural. Travels to Bermuda, Rome and the French countryside work themselves into distinct, varied interpretations as evidenced in the *Bermuda Series*, the *Roma Series* and the *Tree Series*.

Lithography also is represented thanks to an opportunity given to the artist by the art department at West Texas A&M University to realize a series of three large-scale, multi-plate lithographs shepherded by master printmaker Michael Raburn of Amarillo, Texas. These large, hand-made lithographs represent the three subject icons of Olson’s work influenced by the place and working environment within the Raburn Studio located on historic Route 66 in Amarillo. Here, the object/artifact, the monument and the landscape are given new color and definition via the age old lithographic process guided by a master printmaker.

Olson is renowned worldwide for his artistic talent and creativity. His work has been featured in dozens of solo exhibitions throughout the United States and Europe, in addition to more than 100 group shows around the globe. His impact is significant in the area, where for approximately 40 years he has been Professor of Art and Chairman of the Fine Arts Department at Saint Francis University. Among his many awards and recognitions are Indiana University of

Pennsylvania Distinguished Alumni status and Pittsburgh Magazine and WQED-TV's Harry Schwalb Award of Excellence in Visual Art. Most recently, he was awarded the status of Master Visual Artist for Pittsburgh in 2013 with an exhibition at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts and received SAMA's Service to the Arts award in 2015.

To celebrate the exhibition, the Museum will host a Wicked Wednesday reception on March 8. The program includes light supper and libations, as well as a musical performance by Raining Blue. Cost is \$25 per person. Please call the Museum at (814) 946-4464 for reservations.

Olson also will be at the Museum for a Lunch a l' Art on April 5. The program, which begins at noon, includes lunch and a presentation by the artist. Cost is \$15 or \$14 for SAMA members. Reservations are required by calling the Museum.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Altoona is located in the Brett Building at 1210 Eleventh Avenue. Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturdays. The Museum is a handicapped-accessible facility and is open to the public free of charge. Parking is available in the garage across the street or in metered spots in the lot at the rear of the building. For more information, call the Museum or visit www.sama-art.org.