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EXHIBITION CELEBRATES SCRAP AND RECYCLED MATERIALS

Ligonier – What one person considers trash – like crushed soda bottles or a broken computer – is treasure to artists Mei Greer and Ronald Nigro. The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier Valley’s latest exhibition, *Scrap Redefined: Works by Mei Greer and Ronald Nigro*, celebrates two artists who explore non-traditional subject matter to create evocative, visually interesting works. The exhibition opens May 2 and will remain on view through August 10.

For more than twelve years, Greer has worked in the metal recycling industry. It has proven to be the perfect backdrop for her artistic endeavors. With her camera and artist’s eye, Greer finds beauty in scrap and recyclable materials. Her photography captures the essence of the circle of life, giving a rebirth to once beloved or useful materials since discarded and forgotten. The artist’s compositions combine colorful, glistening metal and manufactured parts with repeating patterns, resulting in two-dimensional images that seemingly have a texture of their own.

Greer was born in China during the Cultural Revolution. Early in life, her family migrated to Hong Kong where she grew up. She moved to Washington, D.C. in 2012 and has been a frequent visitor to Western Pennsylvania, where her husband has roots. Although she has had no formal training, Greer has dedicated herself to constantly improving her craft.

Like Greer, Nigro also finds a muse in scrap metal. His sculptural assemblage works are created from a vast assortment of unrelated found objects that, when viewed in the context of the completed sculpture, seemingly could have no other purpose than to exist for the sake of the art. Through the repurposing of these discarded, disassembled materials, Nigro creates mysterious, futuristic subjects that often take on anthropomorphic characteristics. Many of his works involve moving parts, further drawing in the viewer to interact with the mechanical new forms.

Nigro is a retired art educator and adjunct instructor at Seton Hill University. His work has appeared in juried, solo, group and invitational exhibitions throughout the region at locations including The Andy Warhol Museum, Carnegie Museum of Art, the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art, the State Museum of Pennsylvania and the

Westmoreland Museum of American Art. He is a member of Associated Artists of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Society of Artists and Society of Sculptors.

The artists will be on hand for the Museum's thirteenth annual Garden Party, "The Thrill of the Hunt for Art," on Saturday, May 31. The event begins at 5 p.m. with a reception in the Museum gallery celebrating *Scrap Redefined*. Greer and Nigro will be in attendance to greet guests and discuss their works on view. The Garden Party will feature an evening of elegant cuisine, live music, silent and live auctions and a variety of hunt-themed activities, including a "Running of the Hounds." Tickets are \$125 per person. Reservations are required by May 21 and can be made by calling the Museum at (724) 238-6015.

The Museum also will host a Lunch a l'Art with Nigro on June 12. The program runs from noon to 2 p.m. and will include lunch and a presentation by the artist. Cost for the program is \$15 or \$12 for SAMA members. Reservations are required by June 6. Please call the Museum for reservations or additional information.

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 a handicapped-accessible facility and is open to the public free of charge. For more information, please call the Museum or visit www.sama-art.org.