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SAMA-JOHNSTOWN EXHIBITION EXAMINES POP CULTURE OF LATE 1970S

Johnstown – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Johnstown is pleased to announce the opening of its latest exhibition, *Spirit of '76: America after Vietnam*. Featuring 25 posters from the Museum's Mark del Costello Collection, the special exhibition kicks off SAMA's 40th anniversary celebration in 2016. *Spirit of '76* opens December 18 and will remain on view through March 18.

With the Fall of Saigon in 1975, a long and bitter war came to an end. An era of protest and controversy concluded, and American youth were free to contemplate a future without the draft. Despite the ongoing Cold War, there arose new feelings of buoyant optimism and indulgent excess. This sense of joyful liberation gained momentum during the second half of the 1970s and expressed itself most clearly in the period's popular culture, which brought to full maturity such freewheeling social crazes as disco dancing, streaking, and hang gliding. In the realm of entertainment, effervescent opulence – glitz and glamor – became the hallmark of many cinematic and musical productions, and the spectacles of Broadway transcended New York to become national phenomena.

Spirit of '76 celebrates the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art's 40th anniversary by touching upon the art, music, film, politics, advertising, and other aspects of American popular culture at the time SAMA first opened its doors in June of 1976. For those old enough to remember, posters for *A Chorus Line* and *The Rolling Stones World Tour* will bring back fond memories. For those who admire illustration and graphic design, there are fine examples by such masters as Paul Davis, Edward Gorey and John Shaw. For those who like a little humor with their art, J.L. Minton and Gilbert Shelton will not disappoint. And for everyone who appreciates color and excitement, *Spirit of '76* promises a rewarding foray into the larger-than-life world of the late 1970s.

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 5 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.