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EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS SAMA'S MUSEUM/HEALTHCARE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Johnstown- The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art is pleased to announce the opening of its latest exhibition, *The Art of Healing Exhibition: Reflections 2014*. On view March 21 through June 6, the exhibition features nearly forty works created by patients during SAMA's Museum/Healthcare Partnership Program residencies at the John P. Murtha Neuroscience and Pain Institute.

The Museum/Healthcare Partnership Program debuted in 2003 in an attempt to help area residents suffering from mental and physical disabilities. Through the program, SAMA's trained artists and educators work with health care providers to develop residencies and workshops aimed at providing relief for patients dealing with physical pain and discomfort. In recent years, the program has been expanded to include working with disabled veterans and children with autism spectrum disorder, as well as place a greater emphasis on citizens with mental handicaps. By 2013, the program has benefitted more than 1,000 individuals throughout central and western Pennsylvania.

The works in *The Art of Healing Exhibition*, now in its third year, were created during two residencies with SAMA directory artist Kathy Trexel Reed. A proficient papercutting artist, Reed has been active with the Guild of American Papercutters since 1996. During the residencies, she shared a variety of papercutting methods, including Polish Wycinanki, a colorful and exuberant technique.

"Learning folk art techniques like Polish Wycinanki resulted in charming, honest, personal creative expressions," said Reed. "It was an exciting experience for me, and I think it well demonstrated the restorative potential in the concept of the Arts of Healing program."

According to SAMA Education Coordinator Jessica Campbell, Reed's residencies provided an interesting backdrop to the exhibition. "Kathy Reed inspired the participants from day one of the residency. She created a rapport with the patients and helped them learn a new and exciting art form. This exhibition is a compilation of imaginative minds and concise cuttings. The works on view are really cutting edge, no pun intended."

The Museum will host an opening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, March 27. The reception is open to the public free of charge, though reservations are requested by March 23. For reservations or more information, please call the Museum at (814) 269-7234.

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 or visit www.sama-art.org.

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