



# News Release

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\*\*\* FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\*

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**EXHIBITION:** *Circus: The Art of the "Strange & Curious"*

**DATES:** May 5 to July 27, 2007

**OPENING RECEPTION:** Friday, May 11, 2007, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Kresge Art Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

## Step Right Up to *Circus: The Art of the "Strange & Curious"* Kresge Art Museum, MSU

**EAST LANSING, MI** — “Step right up, ladies and gentlemen!” called out the sideshow barker. “See a three-legged man, frog boy, people tattooed from head to toe, and lizard man with his forked tongue!” Huge banners arrayed across tent fronts illustrated these sideshow wonders, enticing viewers inside to see the “real thing” for themselves.

Now tattooing has become quite common, and labeling people as fat or giants or dwarfs is no longer acceptable. And, since modern surgical ways “normalize” most joinings and multiplications of body parts that were once a potential source of income in the circus world – and shame in the real one – the sideshow has all but disappeared.

**Kresge Art Museum** at Michigan State University will host *Circus: The Art of the "Strange & Curious,"* from **May 5 to July 27, 2007**, an exhibition of twelve historical circus sideshow banners of gigantic proportions (8' x 10'), as well as a collection of small, intricately carved and painted wooden scale models of notable circus performers. All items are on loan from the Secreto Collection.

The opening reception for the exhibition is hosted by the Friends of Kresge Art Museum on Friday, May 11, 2007, 6-8 p.m. at Kresge Art Museum. This event is FREE and open to the public. Attendees will be able to purchase packets of tickets to redeem for circus-style refreshments (hot dogs, popcorn, animal crackers), as well as entertainment (face-painting, balloons, etc.). A magician will perform tricks early in the evening, and there will even be booths featuring a fortune teller, exotic animals (courtesy of Preuss Pets). Other lively circus and sideshow-style entertainment will include a visual display of body art by Splash of Color tattoo studio artists, as an homage to the days of “painted ladies” and men.

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Kresge Art Museum is located in East Lansing, MI, on the first floor of the Kresge Art Center at the intersection of Physics and Auditorium Roads between the Alumni Chapel and the MSU Auditorium on the campus of Michigan State University. The museum is closed May 26-28 as well as July 4. Museum hours through May 25 are Monday through Friday, 10 to 5 p.m., Thursday until 8 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. Beginning May 29, KAM adopts summer hours, Tuesday - Friday from 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., and Saturday & Sunday from noon - 5:00 p.m., and closed on Mondays.

For additional information, call (517) 355-7631 or visit [www.artmuseum.msu.edu](http://www.artmuseum.msu.edu).

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**PLEASE NOTE:** High-resolution images of portraits featured as part of *Circus: The Art of the “Strange & Curious”* are available upon request on CD or via e-mail. To request photos or to schedule an interview with collector Jim Secreto or curator April Kingsley, please contact Mariah Cherem at (517) 353-9834 or [cheremma@msu.edu](mailto:cheremma@msu.edu)

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