Master
Photographer

Work of Ansel Adams comes to Lafayette

By Kay O’Donnell
Staff Writer

In the past few years, America has raised its environmental awareness level to an all-time high. With this new-found appreciation for the earth and its resources, comes a more profound respect for its beauty.

And what better way to experience that beauty than through the eyes, and lenses, of photographer Ansel Adams.

From Oct. 18-Nov. 19, the University Art Museum will be the home of 75 of Adams' images in an exhibit titled "Ansel Adams: American Icons." There will be a special preview of the exhibit Saturday (Oct. 16) for new and established museum members. The show formally opens to the public Monday.

The acquisition of the Adams exhibit was quite a coup for the museum due to the fact that its stop in Lafayette will be its only stop in Louisiana. Museum Director Herman Mhire has high expectations for how the show will be received by residents of Lafayette. "Since we mailed out our announcements of the exhibit, the phone has been ringing constantly. We've already had a significant response in terms of new members," Mhire said recently.

Mhire went on to list some of the interest to the city's art community, "Since we mailed out our announcements of the exhibit, the phone has been ringing constantly. We've already had a significant response in terms of new members," Mhire said recently.

The show formally opens to the public Monday. The museum is currently investigating the possibility of acquiring a new building to house, under one roof, both the exhibits at its Fletcher Hall facility and the permanent collection at the USL Foundation.

The museum committee handling the project has already identified national funding sources to aid in the realization of a new facility. "We are not going to pursue any state funding for this project," Mhire said. "It will be funded privately, both through patrons and through national foundations.

"We cannot serve the USL faculty and students and the community to our fullest potential ... the physical facility is holding us back. It's really preventing us from doing all the great things that we know we can do," Mhire said.

"Adams: On display"

enlightening the community as to the museum's need for a new facility.

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"We've simply reached a point where our permanent collection is so large that we don't have the physical space to exhibit it," Mhire said.

"Plus, last year we were offered a portion of Sylvia and Warren Lowe's outsider art collection, a collection of naïve art of the American South. And a collection of that importance and that magnitude really should be exhibited on a permanent basis."

Mhire added that it was the Lowes' offer which helped magnify how desperate the need was for a new facility. "We feel that from an education and a tourism perspective, to have a collection like this (of outsider art) on view in our museum would attract people from far and wide," he said.

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