

# ANIMALS!



**Peninsula Fine Arts Center** June 5-28, 1987

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## Animals

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a group exhibition at the  
Peninsula Fine Arts Center  
featuring 3,000 years of  
art depicting animals

Geneva Beavers  
The Tiger  
Acrylic

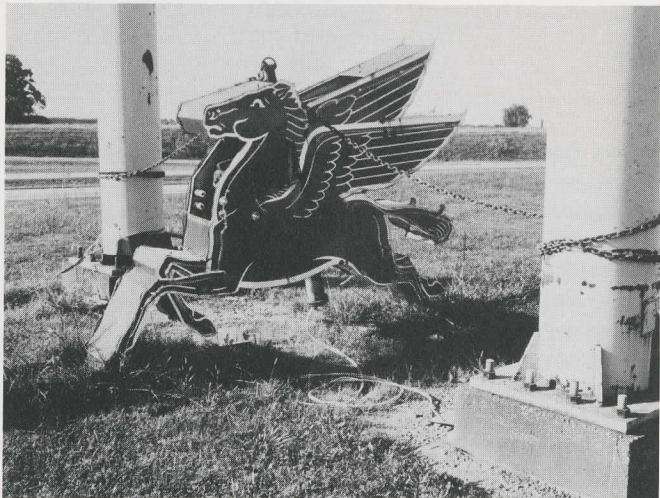
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## Opening Reception

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Sunday, June 7  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

Dale T. Strouse  
Imobile  
Photograph



**Lenders to the exhibition:** the Chrysler Museum, the Hampton University Museum, The Mariners' Museum, Dr. Regenia Perry, the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, private collectors and numerous living artists across the state of Virginia.

**Many contemporary Virginia artists continue the tradition of animal imagery in art, some almost exclusively. The following are statements by some of these artists represented in the exhibition.**

**Contrasts!** Cats fascinate me with their contradictions: aloofness and companionship, soft fur and claws, gracefulness and clumsy antics, curiosity and laziness, purring and hissing. I live with two cats now and hope to always.

**Holland Wentz Etheridge**

Animal imagery has been a symbol in art from the beginning. In *Man and his Symbols*, Carl G. Jung notes that animals, stones and the circle are the primordial symbols of man. Man has embraced animal images in most of the world's religions, folktales and mythologies. Animals are universally revered for their instincts, strength and beauty.

Animals have appeared in my work for a long time. The imagery and symbolism have been enhanced by my studying and photographing the animals and birds in India and Africa.

The plight of the animal is analogous to the plight of man — famine, drought, pollution, overpopulation, annihilation.

We are all endangered species!!

**Lorraine Fink**

I feel that Nature's creations are the most perfect — all man can do is produce poor copies or modify Nature's designs but can never surpass the original animal.

**Yates Miller**

There are many sources for the animal imagery in my work. Many animal images come from my childhood days spent on my grandmother's farm in Alabama. Sometimes, the animals are symbolic of relationships and rituals in my life. In much of my work, I try to represent rhythms of daily life: night and day, the seasons, tides, cycles of the moon, going to work, etc. In these pieces, I have utilized repetition and patterning of animal images to show such rhythms.

**Nancy Beville Prichard**

Frederick Remington  
**The Outlaw**  
Bronze  
Virginia Museum  
Anonymous Gift



Since 15,000 B.C. when prehistoric man at Altamira and Lascaux incised and painted striking images of Bison, deer and horses racing across the walls of their caves, artists depicted animals in their art. These early representations probably performed a role in some magic ritual to ensure a successful hunt. Over the centuries artists have continued to be inspired by animals serving as symbolic, practical, decorative or expressive functions for their creations. The art of early Egyptian, Assyrian, Mayan, Greek and Roman civilizations, spanning thousands of years and all the earth's continents is rich with countless depictions of creatures, both real and imaginary. Animal imagery continues to play an important role in the works of many contemporary artists.

Although comprised mostly of works by contemporary Virginia artists, this exhibition includes a small number of works from earlier periods and diverse cultures to present some feeling for this procession of beasts through the history of art.



Egyptian Sculpture  
**Ibis**  
Bronze  
Virginia Museum  
The Williams Fund,  
1957

The earliest objects in the exhibition, five small Egyptian bronzes, depict animal gods, sometimes represented as a combination of both animals and humans. The form of the god as an animal is believed to have been introduced at a very early period with the more human form (human body, animal's head) appearing later.

*Chrysanthemum and Quail* is a Kakemono (scroll painting meant to hang on a wall) painted by the Japanese artist Tosa Mitsuoki (1617-91), who specialized in painting quail.

The French sculptor Antoine Coysevox (1640-1720) continued the tradition of the equestrian portrait as epitomized by the Romans with his gilded bronze statue of *Fame*. The dynamic and energetic steed bears the alluring and trumpeting symbol of fame and yet reminds us of its fleeting nature.

In contrast to the graceful elegance of the Coysevox work, Frederick Remington's 1916 bronze, *The Outlaw* captures the dynamic energy of an untamed horse in a technically daring piece in

Durant Ball  
**Hidden Cove**  
Canada Geese  
Oil Painting



**Animal Mask**  
Guro, Ivory Coast  
Polychrome Wood  
Virginia Museum  
The Williams Fund,  
1977



Mary Lou Deal  
**Egyptian Flight  
with Ginkos**  
Raku Clay Vessel

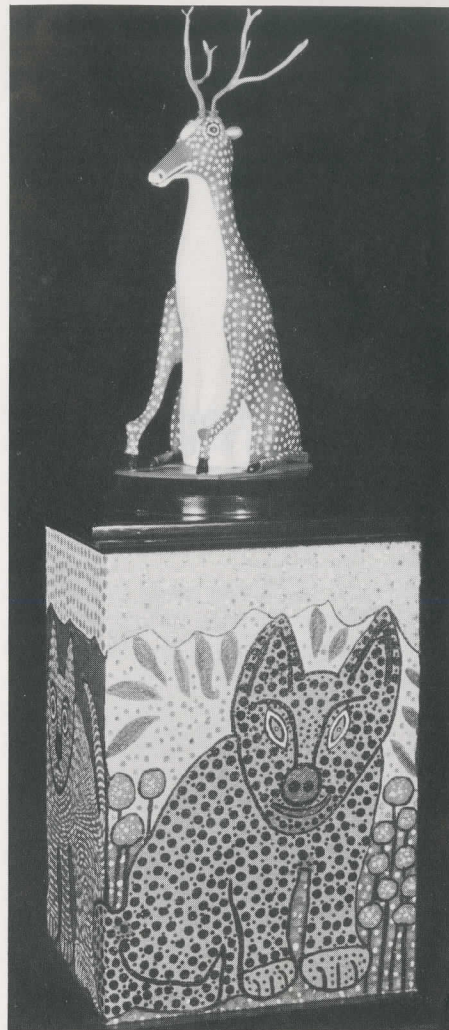
which the whole sculpture is literally balanced on one hoof.

The early depictions of animals give us a view of species which are now extinct. One example is John James Audubon's (1785-1851) *Carolina Parrot* (*conuopsis carolinensis*), a symphony of yellows and greens. Audubon, the best known of numerous artists specializing in ornithological studies, traveled the American wilderness to capture his subjects in their natural setting and created hundreds of paintings of both birds and mammals.

The 20th Century Zamie Mask carved by the Guro people of the Ivory Coast was worn by the males in performing religious and social functions. The graceful lines, precise detail and carefully designed color scheme impart aesthetic merit to this stylized antelope form.

The 19th Century polychromed wood carving of a *Salmon* probably served as a trade sign for a fishmonger. Similar carvings of animals were used as advertisements for stables, butchers and other shops.

Geneva Beavers  
**Oskar The Deer**  
Polychrome Wood



Works incorporating animal imagery were often used in rituals, as in the case of the Cheyenne umbilical cord amulet, designed to protect the infant from evil spirits. Made by the Plains Indians to contain a baby's umbilical cord, the protective ornamentation would be tied to the infant's cradle and later attached to the child's clothing.

Animal likenesses could also serve very practical purposes for the hunter. The *White Winged Scoter* (or male coot) decoy carved and painted by Roswell E. Bliss of Stratford, Connecticut and complete with weight and leather loop still attached to the bottom is a working decoy. Set out on the water, the decoy encourages ducks flying over to land where they become the quarry of the hunter.

Anna Hyatt Huntington (1876-1973) whose husband Archer M. Huntington founded The Mariners' Museum drew on animals as inspiration for much of her sculpture. Her *Alligator* is cast in aluminum, an innovative material for sculptors of her day.

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Permit #176

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The Peninsula Fine Arts Center gratefully  
acknowledges support by: National Endowment  
for the Arts; Virginia Commission for the Arts;  
City of Newport News; City of Hampton; The  
Junior League of Hampton Roads; and The  
Guild of the Peninsula Fine Arts Center.