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OLD MEETS NEW IN PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION NOW OPEN AT PHOENIX ART MUSEUM

Charting the Canyon: Photographs by Mark Klett & Byron Wolfe Combines Contemporary Grand Canyon Photographs with Historic Images

PHOENIX (April 2, 2009) – The Grand Canyon – natural wonder, sacred ground, national park, international tourist attraction—is perhaps the world's best “photo op.” Vivid colors, breathtaking vistas and jaw dropping canyon depths have lured photographers to Northern Arizona for years. A new exhibition, *Charting the Canyon: Photographs by Mark Klett & Byron Wolfe* on view at Phoenix Art Museum through July 12, 2009, explores this celebrated place of dramatic beauty with large-scale sweeping panoramas that marry 21st century color photographs with historic drawings and images.

In 2007, Mark Klett, a Regents Professor at Arizona State University, and Byron Wolfe, a former student of Klett's and now a Lantis' University Professor at California State University at Chico, headed to the Grand Canyon to re-envision the many images made at the site over the last 150 years. During two summers of field work, they identified the exact locations portrayed in early photographs and drawings. From those geographic points they created new photographs that incorporate the original view. Digital versions of the historic images are inserted within the contemporary photograph, creating combined images that convey the big picture surrounding earlier artists' depicted view.

Working collaboratively, Klett and Wolfe challenge one another to invent new ways to integrate the historic images they discover. *Charting the Canyon* reveals their combined invention, offering provocative ways to think about the land, its history and our role in seeing it.

“Many of the things we're trying to do seemed impossible at first – like merging several views of a scene from different times into a continuous space, or extending one photo's frame to include spaces from multiple vantage points,” commented Klett. “We're intentionally using playfulness as a way to stretch ideas, a kind of free form exploration that puts a premium on creative solutions to complex space and time problems.”

“The pleasure the artists experienced in the creative process comes through in their work. *Charting the Canyon* is a joyful exploration allowing Museum visitors to discover the Grand Canyon in a new and thought-provoking way,” commented Rebecca Senf, Norton Family Assistant Curator of photography, Phoenix Art Museum. “Phoenix Art Museum is proud to be the first to show a comprehensive look at Klett and Wolfe's powerful, thoughtful and playful images.”

Charting the Canyon – add one

Charting the Canyon includes 26 photographs ranging from a modest 20 by 20–inch print to a panorama 10 feet wide. Exhibition highlights include:

- The humorous layering of a 19th-century drawing with contemporary photographic details.
- The extension of an Ansel Adams view into a serene panorama.
- The pairing of a black-and-white Edward Weston view with a color image made 66 years later.
- The illusion of three-dimensions with a stereopticon viewer built for the 21st century.

About the Artists

Mark Klett photographs the intersection of cultures, landscapes and time. His background includes working as a geologist before turning to photography. Klett has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Buhl Foundation, and the Japan/US Friendship Commission. His work has been exhibited and published both nationally and internationally for over 30 years, and his work is held in over 80 museum collections worldwide. He is the author of thirteen books including the recently released *Saguaros* (Radius Press and DAP, 2007), *After the Ruins* (University of California Press 2006), *Yosemite in Time* (Trinity University Press, 2005), and *Third Views, Second Sights* (Museum of New Mexico Press 2004). Mark Klett is Regents' Professor of Art at Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona.

Byron Wolfe's photographs connect his interests in time, change, and place. His work is widely exhibited and collected. He is a recipient of the Sante Fe Prize for Photography and is the author of *Everyday: A Yearlong Photo Diary* (Chronicle Books, 2007), and a co-author of *Yosemite in Time* (Trinity University Press, 2005), and *Third Views, Second Sights* (Museum of New Mexico Press, 2004). Byron Wolfe is a Lantis' University Professor at California State University, Chico where he teaches courses in digital photography, design, creative process, and innovation.

Exhibition Details

Charting the Canyon: Photographs by Mark Klett & Byron Wolfe is presented by Phoenix Art Museum and the Center for Creative Photography and is on view in the Museum's Doris and John Norton Gallery through July 12, 2009.

The exhibition is organized by Phoenix Art Museum. Support provided by Lee and Mike Cohn, CFG Business Solutions, LLC. Special assistance on the stereoviewing instrument by Christian Poweleit, Associate Research Professional, Department of Physics, Arizona State University.

Admission to the exhibition is included in general museum admission, which is \$10 for adults, \$8 for senior citizens (65+), \$8 for full-time college students with ID, \$4 for children ages 6-17 and free for children under 6 and for museum members. Admission is also free on Tuesdays from 3:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. and for everyone on First Fridays, 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Phoenix Art Museum is located in downtown Phoenix at the corner of Central and McDowell Road.

Museum hours are Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. and Wednesday – Sunday from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The museum is closed on Mondays and major holidays.

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Charting the Canyon – add two

A Landmark Photography Partnership

In 2006, Phoenix Art Museum and the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona in Tucson inaugurated a highly innovative and unprecedented collaboration to bring the finest in photography to Phoenix Art Museum visitors. It established a vibrant new photography exhibition program at the Museum, while bringing the Center's world-renowned collections to new and larger audiences.

The Center for Creative Photography is one of the world's largest repositories of materials chronicling photography. Founded in 1975, it now houses 3.8 million archival items and 80,000 fine prints by photographers including Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Harry Callahan, Aaron Siskind, Frederick Sommer, W. Eugene Smith, Louise Dahl-Wolfe, and Garry Winogrand.

About Phoenix Art Museum

Phoenix Art Museum is the Southwest's premier destination for world-class visual arts. Popular exhibitions featuring artists such as Rembrandt, Norman Rockwell, Annie Leibowitz and Monet are shown along side the Museum's outstanding collection of more than 18,000 works of American, Asian, European, Latin American, Western American, modern and contemporary art, and fashion design. A community epicenter for nearly fifty years, Phoenix Art Museum presents festivals, live performances, independent art films and educational programs that enlighten, entertain and stimulate. Visitors also enjoy PhxArtKids an interactive space for children, vibrant photography exhibitions through the Museum's landmark partnership with the Center for Creative Photography, the lushly landscaped Sculpture Garden, dining at Arcadia Farms at Phoenix Art Museum, and shopping at The Museum Store.

To learn more about Phoenix Art Museum, visit PhxArt.org, or call the 24-hour recorded information line at (602) 257-1222.

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