

***Jim Dine: Last Year's Forgotten Harvest Reveals Decades of the Artist's  
Portrait Drawings at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art***

Brunswick, ME—September 27, 2023—This December, the Bowdoin College Museum of Art will open *Jim Dine: Last Year's Forgotten Harvest*, an exhibition featuring over 60 of the artist's exceptional portrait-drawings, created over the past six and a half decades. While Dine has long been celebrated for his fearless and candid self-portraiture—which has taken symbolic form through bathrobes and tools in addition to appearing as complex figurative likenesses, a beautiful example of which is included in the show—this is the first exhibition to delve deeply into the artist's portraits of others. Through this constellation of individuals, many of whom Dine has known over many years, we observe how portraiture can register the intensity of human connection experienced through time. The exhibition, which grows out of several generous recent gifts of drawings by Dine to the Museum, will provide audiences with an opportunity to see works never or only rarely presented publicly. *Jim Dine: Last Year's Forgotten Harvest* will open on December 7, 2023 and run through June 2, 2024.

“Jim Dine's portraits form a world of their own, one that reminds the viewer of the push and pull of relationships in our lives and of the gravitational force of fellowship that shapes our own sense of self. Created over more than six decades, these works of art, both together and in their own right, reveal the integrity and intensity of Dine's creative vision and his remarkable technical facility for transforming sensation into image,” said Anne Collins Goodyear, co-director of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art and the exhibition's curator. Added Frank Goodyear, co-director of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, “We are so grateful to Jim for donating these works to the Museum, creating a unique collection of his drawings and his portraiture at Bowdoin and a source of inspiration for future generations of students and the general public alike.”

*Last Year's Forgotten Harvest* delves into the personal relationships that have shaped Dine's life and career, highlighting his likenesses of family, friends, fellow artists, and other significant figures in his life. The exhibition reveals the evolution both of these individuals and their relationship with Dine, as multiple portraits of friends—such as the publisher Gerhard Steidl and the artist Marc Ratliff—and family members—such as Dine's sons Jeremy, Matt, and Nick, and his wife Diana Michener—appear in changing guises. In other works, we witness the motion of the human body—as in a series of portraits of the actor Peter Eyre or the artist Susan Rothenberg.

The technique of drawing is deeply linked for the artist with the phenomenon of memory and with the act of portrayal. The exhibition is an opportunity to reflect on intersecting developments and thematic and formal attributes of Dine's work, such as his return to figuration in the 1970s, his attentiveness to registering the passage of time, and his sensitivity to the confluence of one's personal experience of the past and the present. Dine's energetic drawing captures both likeness and the charge of emotion, conveying a living presence, with the paper registering transformations in texture akin to those of the skin Dine's sitters.

Each image also simultaneously reveals something of the maker himself, as in the case of Dine's drawings from the early 1970s of the nineteenth-century poet Arthur Rimbaud, whose poetry had an impact on Dine's view of the world—and whose drawings of Rimbaud seek to capture some of the poet's rebelliousness as a means of expressing Dine's own. Dine's recent portrait of the artist Max Beckmann, active in the first half of the twentieth century, conjures to mind Dine's own likeness, testifying to Dine's deep-seated interest in the creative achievements of this historic figure.

Among the array of portraits, few stand out as much as those of members of Dine's family. Portraits of his sons Jeremy, Matt, and Nick appear at different moments in their lives, reflecting the growth and evolution of a human life. Such a topic is palpable in Dine's portraits of his first wife, Nancy, whose face appears in *The Sitter Progresses from London to Here in Three Years*, created between 1976 and 1979. The drawing, which was begun in London and later completed in Vermont, is one Dine worked on repeatedly and over time, bringing in pastels, oil pastels, charcoal, and acrylic gesso on paper, and even expanded with additional sheets of paper.

Dine's wife, Diana Michener, appears in multiple, heavily worked portraits. The artist's 2002 portrait, *Diana in Paris*, captures his subject through four drawings, with alternating points of view emphasizing the ineffable tension between the variation and constancy that defines a single human life. Other portraits, such as those of Barbara Wally and John Richardson, bring attention back to the human eye, the site of visual art—and, purportedly, a window to the human soul itself, suggesting through blurring and absence, a poignant inaccessibility. Still others reflect the enduring connection Dine has experienced with friends and creative partners, including the poet Robert Creeley and the master printer, Aldo Crommelynck. Portraits of recent studio assistants—Daniel Clark, Olympe Racana-Weiler, and Jason Treffry—also appear in the exhibition.

Reflecting upon this body of work as a whole, Dine comments: “I am an old guy now; eighty-eight is not summer. I feel fortunate to want to continue this journey of drawing. To harvest what I was born with. I'm still full of desire and I love to work. The determination to *see* pushes me onward. The world, as we knew it, is gone. We and they have seen to that, but still I have the great urge to speak by drawing. It makes me ‘stay’ a little longer out there, in the ether.”

The show's reach is magnified by the accompanying eponymous catalogue, published, appropriately, by Steidl. The collection of portraits donated by Jim Dine to the Bowdoin College Museum of Art represents an important addition to the holdings of the Museum, home to the earliest public collection of drawings in the country, providing rich examples of contemporary works on paper and representations of many notable visual artists, writers, scholars, and other creative visionaries.

### **Bowdoin College Museum of Art**

The Bowdoin College Museum of Art is the cornerstone of the arts and culture at Bowdoin. One of the earliest collegiate art collections in the nation, it came into being through the 1811 bequest of James Bowdoin III of 70 European paintings and a portfolio of 141 old master drawings. The collection has been expanded through the generosity of the Bowdoin family, alumni and friends, and now numbers more than 20,000 objects, including paintings, sculpture, works on paper, decorative arts and artifacts from prehistory to the present from civilizations around the world. [www.bowdoin.edu](http://www.bowdoin.edu)

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