

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Artists Take The Hero's Journey

*Alan Lee, Brian Froud, Charles Vess and Viggo Mortensen headline exhibition
at the Defoor Centre exploring multicultural approaches to myth in contemporary art*

ATLANTA, GA – “Ancient Spirit, Modern Voice: the Mythic Journeys Art Exhibition” will be on display at the Defoor Centre Art Gallery in Atlanta from May 1- June 12, 2004.

A companion piece to **Mythic Journeys**, an international conference and performance festival in celebration of the Joseph Campbell Centennial (June 2-6), this unique multicultural art exhibition boasts works by **Alan Lee** (Oscar-winning conceptual artist of “The Lord of the Rings” films), **Brian Froud** (“Faeries”), actor/poet/artist **Viggo Mortensen**, **Charles Vess** (“Stardust”) and over 20 other contemporary artists whose imagery resonates deeply with the human spirit.

Classical mythology has provided the subject matter for some of the world’s greatest works of art. “**Ancient Spirit, Modern Voice**” redefines and expands that tradition today through more than 100 paintings, illustrations, sculptures, prints and photographs inspired by folklore and spiritual longing from a variety of cultures including Native American, Australian Aboriginal, Haitian and Central American artists.

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“We sought to assemble a truly thought-provoking group of artists, who each bring their unique interpretations to the theme of myth, storytelling and ritual,” says Karen Shaffer, co-curator of the exhibition with Charles Vess. “These artists reinterpret ancient myth into personal visions with a masterful mix of swirling color, inspired light, amazing insight and sometimes, humor.”

The exhibition marks the first time that works from **Viggo Mortensen**'s “Miyelo” series, haunting portraits of the Lakota Native American Ghost Dance, have been viewed in a U.S. gallery outside of New York or Los Angeles. **Alan Lee**'s pieces in the exhibition include a powerful portrait of Merlin, the legendary wizard of the Arthurian Mythos, while **Brian Froud** and **Charles Vess** tap into modern fascination with the legendary World of Faerie.

Dubbed by the Folk Art Society of America as a "Modern Renaissance Painter of Folk Art," Georgia native **Lorenzo Scott**'s depictions of religious subjects evoke a reverence and joy reminiscent of the Old Masters; his works are displayed in both the Smithsonian Institution and Atlanta's High Museum of Art. Japanese-American printmaker **Mayumi Oda** focuses on goddess images inspired by her own experiences in both Japan and the US, while painter **Meinrad Craighead**, a former Benedictine nun, delves into feminine divinity from a Catholic perspective. Tucson, Ariz.-based photographer **Stu Jenks** seeks to capture the power of sacred symbols and spaces through his camera lens. The surrealistic paintings of **Virginia Lee** and the ethereal imagery of **Terri Windling** in mixed media are inspired by fairy tales, folklore and themes of transformation.

“Myth is that great reservoir of human wisdom that has been preserved and made accessible to everyone by concentrating itself into images,” says Mythic Journeys Creative Director Honora Foah. “When artists take on the challenge of bringing one of these images into the world, they must make it new, so that our contemporary sensibilities can perceive the wisdom within it.”

The Defoor Centre is located at 1710 Defoor Avenue in west Midtown. Exhibition hours are 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The Centre's Book Market will also be selling books and prints of the "Ancient Spirit, Modern Voice" artists, plus a 48-page, full-color catalog of the show.

For more info or to arrange an educational or other group outing, please contact either The Defoor Centre at 404-591-3900, www.defoorcentre.com, or Mythic Journeys at (404) 832-4127, www.mythicjourneys.org.

"Ancient Spirit, Modern Voice" Artists

"Myth must be kept alive. The people who can keep it alive are the artists of one kind or another. The function of the artist is the mythologization of the environment and the world."

—Joseph Campbell

Painters:

Alan Lee <http://www.endicott-studio.com/galalan.html>

Australian Aboriginal Artists www.mbantua.com.au

Brian Froud www.worldoffroud.com

Charles Vess www.greenmanpress.com

Greg Spalenka www.spalenka.com

Helena Nelson-Reed <http://www.fine-art-studios.com>

Huichol/Tepehuano Artists www.latinamericanfolkart.com

Lorenzo Scott <http://yp.bellsouth.com/sites/lorenzoscottfineart/>

Mara Friedman www.newmoonvisions.com

Meinrad Craighead www.meinradcraighead.com/index.html

Nancy Warren www.nancywarren.com

Terri Windling www.endicott-studio.com/galterri.html

Virginia Lee www.virginialee.net

Prints/Silkscreen:

Doreen Foster www.studiogallery.pe.ca/mac/sg_nn_mac_frameset1.htm

Mayumi Oda <http://www.womensearlyart.net/reference/oda.html>

Photography:

Stu Jenks www.stujenks.com

Viggo Mortensen www.stephencohengallery.com/artists/Mortensen/Mortensen_exhibit.html

Sculpture:

Gabriel Bien-Amie www.ridgeart.com

Roxanne Swentzell www.roxanne-swentzell.com

Wendy Froud www.worldoffroud.com