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Council Bluffs History Through Art: The Works of Grant Wood and George Simons

Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center opens its newest exhibit June 18

COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA – Pottawattamie Arts, Culture & Entertainment (PACE) will open its newest exhibit, *Council Bluffs History Through Art: The Works of Grant Wood and George Simons*, on June 18 at the Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center.

The exhibition explores the artwork of Grant Wood and George Simons. Both these artists, incredibly important to the history and culture of Council Bluffs, explore and showcase early landscapes of the region. However, the work produced by these two men varies widely in style, skill, and technique.

Simons, often called Council Bluffs' first artist, is best known for his oil paintings and sketches documenting how Iowa's landscape appeared and how people lived in the state's early, pioneer days. He provided the earliest pictorial record of Council Bluffs, the jumping-off spot for pioneers heading west.

Wood, arguably Iowa's most famous artist, was best known for his paintings depicting the rural American Midwest, particularly *American Gothic* (1930), which has become an iconic painting of the 20th century.

Included in the exhibition are:

25 George Simons restored sketches

12 George Simons paintings on loan from the Council Bluffs Public Library and The Historic Dodge House

10 restored segments of the "Corn Room Mural" painting by Grant Wood recovered by Bluffs Arts Council

An opening reception will be held June 18th from 6 – 8p, with remarks from Adam Van Osdel, PACE Program & Gallery Coordinator, and Dr. Richard Warner, local historian. Light refreshments will be served. The event is free to the public, which is sponsored by Harrison Financial Services - Northwestern Mutual. Registrations will be limited to allow for social distancing.

Alongside the exhibition of work by George Simons and Grant Wood, PACE will be facilitating programs and classes based on their body of work. These programs will include lectures by area history and art history subject matter experts, as well as several free-admission classes exploring the art and history context of both artist's work. The first lecture will be presented by Dr. Richard Warner, titled *Regional History Lecture Council Bluffs and its Art*, on Thursday July 9, from 7pm – 8pm. PACE encourages those interested to check their website <https://www.paceartsiowa.org/calendar> as more classes and events are added to the calendar.

The exhibition and speaker series are funded in part by Humanities Iowa, a state-based affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The restoration and conservation of the George Simons sketches was funded in part by a joint grant with the Council Bluffs Public Library from the State Historical Society of Iowa, Historical Resource Development Program.

Join us as we rediscover these significant artists and their works as part of our local history.

Exhibition: Council Bluffs History Through Art: The Works of Grant Wood and George Simons

Host Organization: PACE

Runs: June 18 – December 31

Gallery Hours: Thursdays from 5-8p, Saturdays 12p - 5p, Sundays from 12p - 4p

Registration is required at <https://www.paceartsiowa.org/calendar> or by calling 712-890-5600.

Location: Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center, Nelson Gallery, 1001 S 6th Street, Council Bluffs, IA 51501

Admission: Free

Contact: 712-890-5600

Opening Reception: Council Bluffs History Through Art: The Works of Grant Wood and George Simons

Host Organization: PACE

Date & Time: Thursday June 18, 6p – 8p

Remarks: 6:15p by Adam Van Osdel, PACE Program & Gallery Coordinator, and Dr. Richard Warner, local historian

Registration: Registration is required at <https://www.paceartsiowa.org/calendar> or by calling 712-890-5600.

Location: Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center, Nelson Gallery, 1001 S 6th Street, Council Bluffs, IA 51501

Admission: Free, light refreshments will be served

Contact: 712-890-5600

Guest Speaker: Dr. Richard Warner

Title: Regional History Lecture Council Bluffs and its Art 001

Host Organization: PACE

Date and Time: Thursday July 9, 7p – 8p

Registration: Registration is required at <https://www.paceartsiowa.org/calendar> or by calling 712-890-5600.

Location: McCormick's 1894 at the Hoff Center, 1001 S 6th Street, Council Bluffs, IA 51501

Admission: Free, cash bar available

Contact: 712-890-5600

Due to Coronavirus closures, a significant revenue shortfall is expected for the first year of opening. Now, more than ever, PACE needs your help to support ongoing Hoff Center operations. Members of the community who would like to contribute can visit the PACE's website, www.paceartsiowa.org/donate.

ABOUT PACE

PACE developed and manages the Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center which includes a theater, rehearsal areas, gallery, artist studios, classrooms, teaching kitchen, and more. It is the home for multiple nonprofits including PACE, Chanticleer Community Theater, Kaneshville Symphony Orchestra, American Midwest Ballet, and Kitchen Council. Together, we increase access to the Arts and promote Council Bluffs as a center for excellence in the arts. For more information visit www.paceartsiowa.org.

The Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center is reopening with stringent new health, safety and hygiene procedures in place. So, as we enjoy the art center together again, everyone will need to follow CDC guidelines and the recommendations of health officials regarding Covid-19. Please note the CDC advises that older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Guests should evaluate their risk in determining whether to visit. Any interaction with the general public poses an elevated risk of being exposed to COVID-19, and we cannot guarantee that you will not be exposed during your visit. Guests are required to wear face masks while visiting the Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center.

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