

Georgia Museum of Art to organize *The South in Black and White: The Works of James E. Routh Jr., 1939-1946* at the Robert C. Williams Paper Museum

ATHENS, GA, April 2, 2009 – The exhibition *The South in Black and White: The Works of James E. Routh Jr., 1939-1946* will be on view at the Robert C. Williams Paper Museum from July 20 through October 2, 2009. Organized by the Georgia Museum of Art, this landmark exhibition of James Routh's work contains prints and drawings of images gathered on his travels throughout the South during the Depression.

James Routh was born in New Orleans in 1918 but grew up in Atlanta. Routh studied at Oglethorpe College, now Oglethorpe University, for two years before studying at the Art Students League in New York. Routh then applied for a Rosenwald fellowship to fund his proposed travel through the South. He planned to gather information for a series of prints, stating that he wanted to “paint a number of pictures concerned simply with scenes of everyday life in the South.”

This exhibition contains the images that resulted from Routh's travel in 1940 and 1941 as a result of the fellowship. Routh sketched as he traveled through Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas and Louisiana during the hard years of the Depression, then later created prints and paintings from those drawings.

In 1940, the rural Georgia that Routh observed was dominated by the cotton industry. Even as early as the mid-19th century, Georgia's soil revealed signs of the damage cotton cultivation and its associated agricultural practices had created, and Routh's images document this damage as well as the impoverished state of the South during the Depression.

Routh's prints also capture agricultural scenes that have been lost in the urbanization of Atlanta and its suburbs. Many of the landscapes in his rural images are now buried in the suburbs of the city.

After fighting in World War II with the U.S. Army and following a career in advertising, Routh retired in 1983 to Waynesville, N.C., where he lives today.

"Jim Routh's graphic works, which date from just before World War II, picture a world which no longer exists, a world of manual labor in agriculture and pollution and environmental degradation in industry," said Stephen Goldfarb, curator of the exhibition.

The Georgia Museum of Art (GMOA), located on the University of Georgia campus in Athens, Ga., is the state museum of Georgia. The museum is temporarily closed for the addition of a new wing and renovation of the existing space. During the construction, GMOA will host "GMOA on the Move," a two-year series of offsite events and exhibitions, including this exhibition that provides a unique and important perspective on the state's history.

The Robert C. Williams Paper Museum is an acclaimed resource on the history of paper and paper technology and is located on the campus of the Georgia Institute of Technology at 500 10th Street NW, Atlanta, Ga., 30332. The museum is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is closed on school holidays. The museum website is <http://ipst.gatech.edu/amp/>.

Visit our web site at www.uga.edu/gamuseum or call 706.542.GMOA (4662)

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Museum Information

Partial support for the exhibitions and programs at the Georgia Museum of Art is provided by the Georgia Council for the Arts through appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. The Council is a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. Individuals, foundations and corporations provide additional museum support through their gifts to the Arch Foundation and the University of Georgia Foundation. The Georgia Museum of Art is located in the Performing and Visual Arts Complex on the East Campus of the University of Georgia. The address is 90 Carlton Street, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, 30602. The museum's galleries and shop are now closed in preparation for construction of the museum's expansion. Events and programming will continue while the museum is under construction as part of "GMOA on the Move," a series of off-site events and exhibitions. For more information and event times and locations, please visit www.uga.edu/gamuseum.