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di Rosa

di Rosa Media Contact: Allison Coats
allison@coatspr.com or (707) 363-6508

di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art Announces New Exhibition
Fort Phooey: Wiley in the Studio
Friday, August 20 - Sunday, October 31

Napa, CA (August 4, 2021) – Step inside the studio of the late Bay Area art legend William T. Wiley and experience the sights and sounds of his iconic San Francisco Bay Area studio. di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art announces a new exhibition, [Fort Phooey: Wiley in the Studio](#), open Friday, August 20, through Sunday, October 31. This exhibition recreates Wiley's well-known studio—a work of art in itself and a meeting place for generations of Bay Area artists. The exhibition will combine more than 50 original works from di Rosa's collection with archival objects on loan from the artist's estate.

Wiley's Marin County studio was perhaps his greatest work of art. Densely layered with words, images and objects that meandered into his work and back out again, it was nothing less than an immersive assemblage. "Being in the studio was like entering into a Wiley artwork," explains curator Kate Eilertsen. "The effect could be dizzying. Every surface was covered with scrawled wordplay, found objects and other elements of his distinctive visual vocabulary."

The "Fort Phooey" part of the exhibition title is taken from a little-known work in the di Rosa collection titled "Fort Phooey Mandala," which Wiley created as a meditative exercise in his studio.

Inviting visitors into Wiley's studio, the exhibition draws attention to the legacy of his artistic practice. "Wiley's studio practice—rooted in Zen mysticism and an ethos of open-ended play—was imitated by artists ranging from Bruce Nauman to Deborah Butterfield," states Eilertsen. "To understand his profound impact, it is necessary to grapple with the legacy of his practice as well as the work itself."

The exhibition is both immersive and participatory, and will include such details as Wiley's final painting he was working on at the time of his death earlier this year; his workbench and sketchbook; the sounds of iconic radio station KPFA which informed the political and environmental emphasis of many of his works; works by artists who influenced Wiley's work including Wally Hedrick; musical instruments he encouraged visitors to play when they visited; and objects such as chalkboards and dunce caps that often appeared in his two-dimensional and three-dimensional work.

Visitors will be prompted to create their own artworks and add them to a community wall inside the exhibition space. In addition, di Rosa will host hands-on exhibition-related sessions on [September 25](#) and [October 23](#); "Making Art with Everyone (Haciendo arte con todos)" event details can be found on di Rosa's website and social media channels.

ABOUT DI ROSA CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

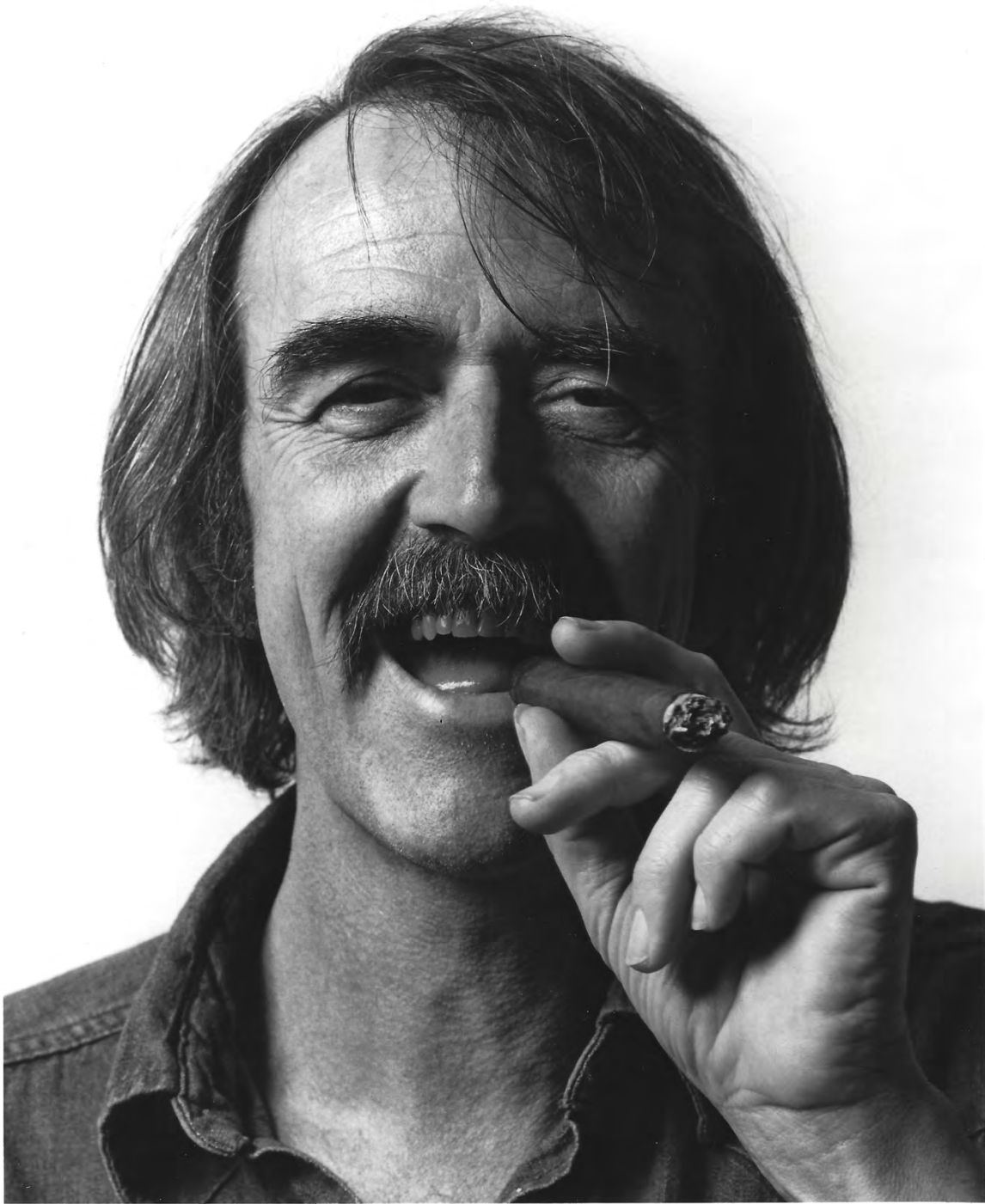
di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art presents contemporary exhibitions and educational programs for all ages and maintains a permanent collection of notable works by artists living or working in the San Francisco Bay Area from the mid-twentieth century to the present day. A wide range of styles, media and subject matter provides an overview of the creative energy and freedom to experiment that characterize this region of California. di Rosa features multiple galleries, a sculpture park and a 35-acre lake, all located on 217 scenic acres in Napa Valley's famed Carneros region that are protected in perpetuity under the Napa County Land Trust.

di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art is located at 5200 Sonoma Highway, Napa. The campus is open to the public Friday to Sunday from 11 AM to 4 PM. For more information visit www.dirosaart.org.

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William T. Wiley (American, born 1937), *Eerie Grotto? Okini*, 1982, color block print on rag paper, 20 7/8 x 27 3/8 inches, Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, Montgomery, Alabama, Association Purchase, 1999.6



Wiley Portrait
Photo credit: Jock McDonald