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**OGDEN MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN ART PRESENTS
*BRIGHT FIELDS: THE MASTERY OF MARIE HULL***

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The Ogden Museum of Southern Art is excited to announce its presentation of *Bright Fields: The Mastery of Marie Hull*, organized by the Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson. Opening Saturday, February 20 and running through May 28, 2016, the exhibition will be celebrated with an opening reception on Saturday, March 12, 6 – 8 PM.

Emily Marie Atkinson Hull remains one of Mississippi's most significant artists and teachers, beloved by generations of collectors and students. Born on September 28, 1890, in Summit, Mississippi, Hull graduated in 1909 with a degree in music from Belhaven College in Jackson, Mississippi. Soon after, she began taking art lessons from Aileen Phillips and focused her energy on her true talent of painting. She went on to study with renowned masters at the Pennsylvania Academy of Art in Philadelphia and the Art Students League in New York. She was awarded her first gold medal from the Mississippi Art Association in 1920, and in 1926 received her first prize at the Southern States Art League. In 1929 she went on an extended study tour of Europe and in 1931 her work was chosen for the prestigious Spring Salon in Paris. As her style evolved over the years, she began to work in a freer, more abstract style and continued to garner many prizes and awards. Her work may be seen in the permanent collections of museums throughout the country. *Bright Fields: The Mastery of Marie Hull* celebrates the artist's legacy as teacher and creator, showcases her prolific life and career, and marks the 125th anniversary of her birth.

The exhibition is curated by acclaimed concert pianist and Mississippi native, Bruce Levingston, who is a life-long admirer and collector of Hull's work. The Ogden Museum iteration will feature 85 oil paintings and works on paper in various media (drawings, watercolors, gouaches). This retrospective exhibition contains selected masterpieces from numerous private collections as well as the Mississippi Museum of Art, the Wright Art Gallery at Delta State University, the Johnson Collection in Spartanburg, South Carolina, and the Ogden Museum's own holdings. Many pieces in the exhibition have never been publicly exhibited.

"Marie Hull is a critical figure in the flowering of modernist painting in the American South," said William Andrews, Director of the Ogden Museum of Southern Art. "Her career as a painter spanned nearly 70 years and was involved with every movement of art imaginable, producing a stunning number and array of artworks ranging from representational still-life, portrait and landscape paintings to the expressionistic tendency she labeled 'lyrical abstraction.'"

“Throughout her life as an artist she was bold and unafraid,” said Andrews, “and in addition to being a teacher of many she was always learning... from everything, every place and everyone she encountered.” Andrews points out that the diversity in her work is an intriguing quality and that viewers tend to have favorite periods. “Although she at times painted as an impressionist, mannerist or expressionist,” said Andrews, “she was - at heart - an experimental modernist... always painting.”

Selected works span the breadth of Hull’s life work, including still lifes, abstract landscapes and portraits of tenant farmers. A book by the same title – conceived, developed, and authored by Bruce Levingston – has been published by University Press of Mississippi in conjunction with the exhibition. A perfect complement to the exhibition, it is the first thorough examination of Marie Hull’s work since the publication of *The Art of Marie Hull* in 1975. His book examines over 200 of Hull’s most important paintings and watercolors and includes state-of-the-art, high-resolution images of these works made especially for this project. It is available for purchase in the Museum Store.

“The art of Marie Hull, from her earliest impressionist paintings, to her remarkable, moving series of Sharecropper and African-American portraits, to her later daring, expressionistic landscapes and abstracts, remains one of the most important bodies of work ever created by a Mississippi artist,” said Bruce Levingston. “Then, as now, her paintings challenge the eye, mind and soul to see, think and feel in unique and open ways. Nearly 125 years after her birth, she remains one of the most influential, powerful voices Mississippi has ever produced. Writing this book and curating this exhibition about Marie Hull’s life and work has been a privilege. It has made me not only a better artist, but a better human being.”

“Mr. Levingston’s passion for the life and work of Marie Hull made him the perfect person to gather such an impressive array of her life’s work and to pioneer this incredible monograph as a tribute. His understanding of the language of art in all its forms has created a vision for this project that we all benefit from; when an artist of such significance is called upon to comment this dramatically upon the work of another artist, the result is spectacular,” said Andrews.

Educational programming will accompany and enhance the exhibition for visitors, including “Free Family Day: Exploring the Mastery of Marie Hull” on March 12, 10AM – 2PM.

Bright Fields: The Mastery of Marie Hull is organized by the Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson.

Bright Fields was developed with support from BancorpSouth, Meredith and Jimmy Creekmore, Betsy and Wade Creekmore, and the Myra Hamilton Green and Lynn Green Root Memorial Fund at the Mississippi Museum of Art.

Premier sponsor for Ogden Museum presentation is Ambassador John N. Palmer with additional support from Susan and Ruff Fant.

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Located in the vibrant Warehouse Arts District of downtown New Orleans, Louisiana, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art holds the largest and most comprehensive collection of Southern art in the world and is recognized for its original exhibitions, public events, and educational programs which examine the development of visual art alongside Southern traditions of music, literature, and culinary heritage to provide a comprehensive story of the South. Established in 1999 and in Stephen Goldring Hall since 2003, the Museum welcomes over 77,000 visitors annually, and

attracts diverse audiences through its broad range of programming including exhibitions, lectures, film screenings, and concerts which are all part of its mission to broaden the knowledge, understanding, interpretation, and appreciation of the visual arts and culture of the American South.

The Ogden Museum is open Wednesday through Monday from 10AM-5PM and also on Thursdays from 6-8PM for Ogden After Hours. Admission is free to Museum Members and \$12.50 for adults, \$10 to seniors 65 and older, \$6.25 for children ages 5-17 and free for children under 5. The Ogden Museum is free to Louisiana Residents on Thursdays from 10AM-5PM courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

The Museum is closed Lundi Gras and Mardi Gras, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

The Museum is located at 925 Camp Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130. For more information visit ogdenmuseum.org or call 504-539-9650.