

NEWS RELEASE



**Montclair Art Museum**

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**For Immediate Release**

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**THE MONTCLAIR ART MUSEUM HOSTS BENEFIT DINNER  
FOR “THE MISSION CONTINUES” TO HONOR VETERANS AND COMMEMORATE  
THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11**

**ERIC GREITENS—RHODES SCHOLAR, FORMER NAVY SEAL, AND FOUNDER OF  
“THE MISSION CONTINUES”—WILL PRESENT AT THE MUSEUM AND AT  
RELATED EVENTS IN MONTCLAIR**

**—Benefit Includes the Launch of an Exhibition of Work by  
Celebrated Combat Photographer Stacy Pearsall—**

*What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments,  
but what is woven into the lives of others.*

—From Pericles’s Funeral Oration

*They [wounded and disabled veterans] had to know that we viewed them not as problems, but as  
assets; that we saw them not as weak, but as strong. They had to know that we were glad they  
were home, that we needed their strength here at home, that we needed them  
to continue to serve here at home.*

From Eric Greitens, *The Heart and the Fist: The Education of a Humanitarian, the Making of a  
Navy SEAL*

*To build an America where every returning veteran can serve again as a citizen leader, and  
where together we honor the fallen by living their values through service.*

—The Mission Continues Mission Statement

MONTCLAIR, NJ, September 8, 2011—The Montclair Art Museum (MAM) is proudly hosting a  
Benefit Dinner for The Mission Continues (TMC), a nonprofit organization that helps disabled  
veterans reintegrate into civilian society, and supports veterans and others in serving their  
communities. The Benefit Dinner will take place in MAM’s Leir Hall on Monday evening,  
September 26, 2011.

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Initiated by Frank Walter, MAM trustee and president, Petrus Partners Ltd., this event will both honor veterans and commemorate the 10th anniversary of 9/11.

The event will include a presentation by TMC's founder and CEO, Eric Greitens, and an introduction by General (ret.) Frank Libutti, USMC, former undersecretary for homeland security and deputy commissioner, Counterterrorism Bureau, New York Police Department.

The evening also marks the opening of an exhibition of the work of decorated combat photographer and award-winning photojournalist Stacy Pearsall. Seventeen of her photographs from Baqubah, Iraq, will be shown in the Arcade Gallery, outside Leir Hall. Lora Urbanelli, director of MAM, and Walter organized the exhibition, which will be on view through Veterans Day, November 11. There is no admission charge for this exhibition. Moreover, the Montclair Art Museum is proud to be extending its status as a national Blue Star Museum and will open all its galleries for free to veterans and their families through Veterans Day.

Eric Greitens—humanitarian volunteer, Rhodes Scholar, and former Navy SEAL—founded The Mission Continues in 2007. A national nonprofit organization, it offers three services to veterans and their surrounding communities: a fellowship program, a service project program, and a research initiative. Wounded and disabled veterans are given the opportunity to reintegrate into their communities through fellowships with nonprofit organizations, providing tangible goods and services to the community. Additional service projects bring together veterans, civilians, and active-duty volunteers in service to our country. The Thought Leadership research initiative aims to change how our nation welcomes home our veterans by investigating the benefits of service for returning veterans.

Greitens knew from his humanitarian work experience with refugees and survivors of war that “those who found a way to serve others were able to rebuild their own sense of purpose, despite all they had lost.” Upon returning from combat duty in Iraq, Greitens found many organizations designed to help veterans, but none, as he put it, “that were ready to ask *of* wounded veterans that they continue their service.”

Walter said: “After reading Eric’s book, the best-selling *The Heart and the Fist*, and after talking to him and others about his cause, I became an enthusiastic supporter. Eric has hit upon a fundamental truth: that we better ourselves by serving others. His organization offers hope to veterans and appeals to the better angels in all of us. I believe that TMC’s approach of using service to heal is relatively unique, and that it is scalable because Eric’s high-quality team partners with local service organizations nationwide.”

He added: “An event like this underscores for the country the need for America to be mindful of the great debt we owe those 20,000 young ladies and men disabled during the past decade of war. I believe it’s especially noteworthy that this event is taking place in Montclair, where it has become an organic community effort from a progressive town within sight of the World Trade Center and much affected by 9/11. Yet this town is also aware that it sends relatively few of its children into national service. I hope this event and Eric’s other appearances in Montclair increase awareness of what has become, since 9/11, the two Americas—one that fights our wars and one that remains relatively insulated.”

Urbanelli commented: “The Montclair Art Museum has always maintained and fostered strong community ties, and we’re very pleased to host this homegrown community effort and to support

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The Mission Continues in its important and invaluable work, which holds lessons for all of us. I'm grateful to Frank as well as to the many Montclair residents and those from throughout the area who have stepped forward to help. These efforts define what community is all about. I'm especially grateful to Linda Sterling, Carol Wall, Linny Andlinger and all the other dinner co-chairs and co-hosts for everything they've done to help make this event happen."

The day following the Benefit Dinner, on Tuesday, September 27, Greitens will make an appearance at Montclair State University.

For more information about The Mission Continues, please visit <http://www.missioncontinues.org>.

For more about tickets to the Benefit Dinner (\$500 per person), please contact Amber Smoke, Petrus Partners, [ambersmoke@petruspartners.com](mailto:ambersmoke@petruspartners.com). Prudential Financial has generously underwritten the cost of the dinner, making donations 100% tax deductible.

For more information on the Benefit Dinner, including the list of sponsors, please visit <http://www.montclairartmuseum/missioncontinues>.

ERIC GREITENS was an Angier B. Duke Scholar at Duke University, where he studied ethics, philosophy, and public policy. Selected as a Rhodes and Truman Scholar, he attended the University of Oxford, where he earned a master's degree and a Ph.D. Greitens was deployed four times as a United States Navy SEAL officer during the Global War on Terrorism: to Iraq, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and Southeast Asia, earning the Navy Achievement Medal, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, the Navy Commendation Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon, the Purple Heart, and the Bronze Star. Lieutenant Commander Greitens continues to serve in the reserves at U.S. Special Operations Command. For his work with The Mission Continues, Greitens served as a White House Fellow in 2005, received the President's Volunteer Service Award in 2009, and was named winner of Major League Baseball and *People* magazine's All-Stars Among Us contest in 2010. Greitens is also the author of two books: an award-winning book of photographs and essays, *Strength and Compassion*, which grew from his humanitarian work in Rwanda, Cambodia, Albania, Mexico, India, the Gaza Strip, Croatia, and Bolivia, and the best-selling book *The Heart and the Fist*, an autobiographical account of leadership and service as a humanitarian and Navy SEAL. He teaches public service as a Senior Fellow at the Truman School of Public Affairs at the University of Missouri and in the MBA Program at the Olin School of Business at Washington University in St. Louis.

STACY PEARSALL comes from a long line of military men and women and enlisted in the U.S. Air Force at age 17. She entered the Combat Camera Squadron in January 2002 and participated in four tours. The National Press Photographers Association named her Photographer of the Year twice, in 2003 and 2007. PBS and The Air Force Band honored Pearsall as the Air Force Veteran of the Year, and her hometown of Charleston, S.C., presented her with the American Hero Award. Her work has been published in a variety of media, including *Time* magazine, *Newsweek*, *New York Times*, CNN, BBC, *LA Times*, *USA Today*, *Soldier of Fortune*, Oscar-nominated PBS: "Operation Home Coming," *The Portrait*, and *GQ* magazine's "This is Our War." After being wounded in action in Iraq, she was medically retired from service and began advocacy work through programs such as the Wounded Warrior Program, Real Warriors, Bob Woodruff Foundation, and the Wounded Warrior Games. She is now the owner/director of the Charleston Center for Photography and a founding member of [legionphoto.com](http://legionphoto.com), a group of combat-photographer veterans. She continues to travel the world on assignment and to give lectures.

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## **Associated Events**

1. September 26, 1:00 p.m., Stacy Pearsall will make a presentation at the Upper School of Montclair Kimberley Academy (MKA) on her work as a combat photojournalist.
2. September 27, 3–5 p.m.: Greitens will make a presentation and do a book signing for students at Montclair State University (MSU), including the Military and Veteran Students Organization. The event will be celebrated as part of Constitution Day and will take place at the Alexander Kasser Theater, where Greitens will be introduced by General Carl Mundy, USMC, and by Newark Mayor Cory Booker. The event is free and open to the public. As of this September, MSU has 200 veterans enrolled in the Yellow Ribbon Program under the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

## **About the Museum**

The Montclair Art Museum, a notable, community-based institution with an international reputation, boasts a renowned collection of American and Native American art that uniquely highlights art making in the United States over the last three hundred years. The collection includes more than 12,000 objects: paintings, prints, original works on paper, photographs, and sculpture by American artists from the 18th century to the present, as well as traditional and contemporary Native American art and artifacts representing the cultural developments of peoples from all of the major American Indian regions. The Museum's education programs serve a wide public and bring artists, performers, and scholars to the Museum on a regular basis. MAM's Yard School of Art is the leading regional art school, offering a multitude of comprehensive courses for children, teens, adults, seniors, and professional artists.

The Montclair Art Museum is located at 3 South Mountain Avenue in Montclair, N.J. Information and directions are available on the Museum website, [montclairartmuseum.org](http://montclairartmuseum.org), or by calling 973-746-5555. MAM is open Wednesdays through Sundays, Noon – 5 p.m., and closed on Mondays, Tuesdays, and major holidays. Museum admission is \$12 for nonmember adults, \$10 for senior citizens and students with I.D., and free for members and children under 12.

*All Museum programs are made possible, in part, by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and by funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Vance Wall Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, and Museum Members.*

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