

PRESS RELEASE FOR MICHIGAN COMICS: MIRTH, MOCKERY AND MAYHEM

June 12 – July 24, Gallery 194: Lapeer

June brings “Michigan Comics: Mirth, Mockery and Mayhem” (**M3**) to Gallery 194 featuring the works of about forty contemporary cartoon and comics creators who have their roots in Michigan. The exhibit opens Friday, June 12 and runs through the end of July.

“Michigan artists and writers have created a significant body of cartoons and comics that is distinctive for its quality, inventiveness and variety. As a group they have received little attention before this exhibition,” explains exhibit co curator and Eastern Michigan University Art Professor Richard Rubinfeld. The exhibition, comprised of original art for editorial cartoons, gag panels, comic strips, comic books, graphic novels and other works on paper, focuses on artworks by native Michiganders and artists who have worked or continue to work in this state.

M3 is curated by Rubinfeld and Dave Coverly, creator and artist of the syndicated panel *Speed Bump*. Building upon the considerable accomplishments of early luminaries in the field, including Winsor McCay and John “Ding” Darling, and the unwavering popularity of works by such Michiganders as Cathy Guisewite (*Cathy*) and Richard Guindon (*The Carp Chronicles*), today’s creators are able to explore a broader range of themes and styles and can choose to work in media and formats that were unavailable until the late twentieth century.

Among the highlights of **M3** are editorial cartoons by Mike Thompson (*Detroit Free Press*) and Larry Wright (*Detroit News*), gag panels by Patrick Hardin, Tom Prisk and Harley Schwadron, along with veteran comic strip creators, Jerry Dumas (*Sam and Silo*) and Jef Mallett (*Frazz*). Also represented in the show are comic book artists, Vince Locke, Bill Messner-Loebs and Mike Vosburg; graphic novel artwork by Jeffrey Brown, Jay Fosgitt, Phoebe Gloeckner, Paul Sizer, Jane Irwin (*Clockwork Game*), David Petersen (*Mouse Guard*) and Jesse Rubinfeld (*Into the Dust*). Classic underground comic book covers by Carl Lundgren and enchanting book illustrations by Laurie Keller are certain to generate discussion among visitors to the show.

“The Lapeer Center for the Arts Council is honored to host the first stop of this exclusively *Michigan* touring show which originated on the walls of the University Gallery at Eastern Michigan University,” explains Carolyn McCarter, Gallery 194 Director. “In January, 2008, *COMICS at Large* featured artists from around North America drawing a huge audience from five counties to Gallery 194. Now it’s Michigan’s turn: **Mirth Mayhem and Mockery** features three times the number of visual artists from Michigan’s borders alone! “

Gallery 194 is located in downtown Lapeer on the corner of Court and Nepessing Streets next to the historic PIX Theatre. Hours of operation are Tuesday through Saturday from 11am to 6pm: admission is free. Log onto www.gallery194.com or call 810.667.1495 for more information.