



**The Walt Disney Family Museum Presents
*Awaking Beauty: The Art of Eyvind Earle***

Enchanting Exhibition Celebrates Artist Behind *Sleeping Beauty's* Iconic Landscapes

San Francisco, March 30, 2017—[The Walt Disney Family Museum](#) is pleased to announce the premiere of its eighteenth original exhibition, *Awaking Beauty: The Art of Eyvind Earle*. On view from May 18, 2017 to January 8, 2018, this original retrospective showcases the life and work of Eyvind Earle. Earle is best known as the lead stylist for Walt Disney's classic feature *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) and for concept art that shaped such enduring favorites as *Lady and the Tramp* (1955) and *Peter Pan* (1953).

Reflecting on his time at The Walt Disney Studios, Earle once said, "I consider my six or seven years at Disney the greatest art school in the whole world, because I worked hard and fast with the very, very best men in the industry." Beyond his work at The Studios, Earle's distinctive interpretation of iconic American landscapes as a fine artist and printmaker continue to impact and inspire generations of artists and designers.

Co-curated by Ioan Szasz, CEO of Eyvind Earle Publishing, and Michael Labrie, Director of Collections and Exhibitions for the Walt Disney Family Foundation and The Walt Disney Family Museum, the artist's first-ever comprehensive museum retrospective will feature more than 250 works, including intricate thumbnail concept paintings for *Lady and the Tramp* and evocative large-scale concept artworks for *Sleeping Beauty*. Alongside Earle's work for The Walt Disney Studios is an extensive showcase of his fine art, including elaborate and lush landscapes, unique scratchboards, rare examples of sculpture, companion poetry, and commercial illustrations. In addition to signature landscapes and enchanting illustrations that are characteristic of Earle's style, the exhibition will feature his limited edition serigraphs and lesser-known pieces, including cartoon drawings from his time in the U.S. Navy and commercial advertisements for American brands.

This retrospective provides unique insight into Earle's colorful life story, his inspiration, and his creative approach to the art-making process. Combined, these elements fueled an extraordinarily diverse career across a spectrum of traditional fine art, commercial design, and filmmaking.

"Eyvind was an honest and humble man, yet he was constantly challenging himself to push the boundaries of his own artistry with his enduring passion to explore, create and innovate," said

Szasz, who began working with the artist in 1988. “Whether it was through a modest snowy landscape for a Christmas card or a more intricate background concept for films like *Sleeping Beauty*, Earle brought magic to everything he touched.”

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Walt Disney Family Foundation Press will publish a fully illustrated 176-page catalog. This lavish art book will showcase an unprecedented collection of artworks spanning Earle’s entire life as an artist—from his early sketches and watercolors to the ethereal oil paintings of his later career. Of the catalog’s more than 250 pieces, 80 date from Earle’s time at The Walt Disney Studios; they include concept paintings for *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), *Lady and the Tramp* (1955), Academy Award–winning short *Toot, Whistle, Plunk and Bloom* (1953), and more. The catalogue is available for purchase at The Walt Disney Family Museum Store.

“You won’t have far to travel in the Diane Disney Miller Exhibition Hall, or turn many pages in this catalogue, to discover the beauty and magic of Eyvind’s work,” said Labrie. “From the scratchboards, cards, serigraphs, sculptures, and awe-inspiring landscapes, you get to ponder in a meadow, perch on a hillside, or soar above the towering cliffs captured, imagined, and shared by Eyvind Earle.”

When Earle passed away in 2000, he left behind a legacy of prolific artwork depicting a life’s journey that spans more than seven decades. *Awaking Beauty: The Art of Eyvind Earle* will bring a far-reaching and much deserved recognition to his influential career and the enduring impact of Earle’s magnificent artwork.

“This past year, the museum presented a comprehensive exhibition chronicling the exacting process that The Walt Disney Studios went through in the late 1930s to create the iconic film *Pinocchio*,” said Kirsten Komoroske, Executive Director of The Walt Disney Family Museum. “Now, with *Awaking Beauty: The Art of Eyvind Earle*, we are proud to provide our visitors with a deep look at Eyvind Earle’s intriguing and inspiring life and work, including his work at The Walt Disney Studios and his influence on a number of films—most notably, *Sleeping Beauty*.”

This special exhibition follows *Ervin Earle: An Exhibit of a Disney Legend* which was on view at Forest Lawn Museum in Los Angeles from May 20, 2017 to January 1, 2017. This new exhibition adds additional works to fully represent the evolution of the artist’s style and to provide a complete retrospective of his life’s work. *Awaking Beauty: The Art of Eyvind Earle* is organized by The Walt Disney Family Museum and is presented in the Diane Disney Miller Exhibition Hall from May 18, 2017 to January 8, 2018.

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ABOUT EYVIND EARLE

Born in New York City in 1916, Eyvind Earle began his prolific career at the age of 11 when his

father gave him a challenge: read 50 pages of a book or paint a picture every day; Earle chose both. He traveled with his father to Mexico and throughout France for nearly four years, painting continuously while attending private schools. This dedication to his craft resulted in a small solo exhibition abroad at the age of 14. Earle returned to the United States in the early years of the Great Depression, and briefly worked as an assistant sketch artist for United Artists (UA). He left UA and traveled in Mexico for a year, painting and living on funds provided by a wealthy friend. After returning to the United States, he bicycled cross-country from Hollywood to New York in 1937, painting and selling watercolors to pay his way. A selection of those watercolors would comprise the first of many exhibitions at the Charles Morgan Gallery in New York City. Works featured in these early shows were strictly realistic, but, after studying a variety of masters such as Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Cezanne, Norman Rockwell, and Georgia O’Keeffe, Eyvind came into his own unique style —one characterized by simplicity, directness, and confidence in execution and delivery.

Earle applied for work at The Walt Disney Studios intermittently for the next 15 years. In the interim, he started a Christmas card company and created artwork for magazine covers while continuing to exhibit his art domestically. Earle finally joined Disney in 1951 as an assistant background painter, and worked his way up to the position of color stylist for *Sleeping Beauty* (1959). He left the company prior to the film’s release to work for John Sutherland Productions, and started his own animation company, Eyvind Earle Productions Inc., in 1961. Earle earned a reputation for innovation and creativity, producing trademark logos, film trailers, print advertisements, television commercials and animated specials for his company and as a contractor with a Chicago advertising agency throughout the 1960s.

After 15 years creating animated art, Earle returned to painting full-time in 1966 and continued working, to much acclaim, until the end of his life. In 1998, Earle received the Winsor McCay Award for lifetime achievement from the International Animated Film Society at its Annie Awards show in Glendale, California. In 2015, The Walt Disney Company posthumously awarded Earle the prestigious Disney Legend Award for his work on *Sleeping Beauty* and his contributions to animation.

ABOUT THE CURATORS

Michael Labrie is the Director of Collections and Exhibitions for the Walt Disney Family Foundation and The Walt Disney Family Museum, and co-curator of *Awaking Beauty: The Art of Eyvind Earle*. Labrie has more than 25 years of art management experience, having managed private art collections for 18 years before taking over the management of special projects for the San Francisco Airport Museum. While at the San Francisco Airport Museum, he prepared exhibits, worked in the collections department, managed preparator staff, and established relationships with the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. Labrie has been with the the Walt Disney Family Foundation since 2003, working alongside Diane Disney Miller and her family, building the collections to tell the story of Walt Disney, his life, family and achievements. Labrie facilitated the move and installation of the collections and opening of the museum in 2009 and

took on oversight of the special exhibitions efforts in 2013. In addition to *Awaking Beauty*, Labrie curated *Water to Paper, Paint to Sky: The Art of Tyrus Wong* and co-curated *The Lost Notebook: Secrets of Disney's Movie Magic* and *Leading Ladies and Femmes Fatales: The Art of Marc Davis* for The Walt Disney Family Museum.

Ioan Szasz is CEO of Eyvind Earle Publishing and co-curator of *Awaking Beauty: The Art of Eyvind Earle*. When Szasz arrived in California in 1987, he responded to an ad in a Monterey newspaper for a position as a “silkscreen printer’s assistant.” While Szasz knew little about silkscreen printing at the time, his new boss, Eyvind Earle, taught him all about the process. Over the years, Earle became more than just a mentor and boss to Szasz—he also became a dear and beloved friend. Szasz worked alongside Earle for 13 years, from 1987 until Earle’s passing in 2000. Szasz continues his work for Eyvind Earle Publishing LLC, publishing and representing Earle’s artwork in the US and worldwide.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The Walt Disney Family Museum presents the fascinating story and achievements of Walt Disney, the man who raised animation to the level of fine art, transformed the film industry, tirelessly pursued innovation, and created a global yet distinctively American legacy. Opened in October 2009, the 40,000 square foot facility features the newest technology along with a vast collection of historic materials and artifacts to bring Disney’s achievements to life, myriad interactive galleries presenting early drawings and animation, movies, music, listening stations, a spectacular model of Disneyland and much more. The museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in the scenic Presidio of San Francisco.

The Walt Disney Family Museum has created many world-class exhibitions, such as *Disney and Dalí: Architects of the Imagination*; *MAGIC, COLOR, FLAIR: the world of Mary Blair*; and *Water to Paper, Paint to Sky: The Art of Tyrus Wong*, several of which have traveled to other museums around the world. The most recent, *Awaking Beauty: The Art of Eyvind Earle*, is the eighteenth original exhibition originated by the museum since 2012. Also open at this time is *Deja View: The Art of Andreas Deja*, on view from March 23 to October 4, 2017.

Hours: 10am to 6pm, Wednesdays through Monday; closed on Tuesdays and the following public holidays: January 1, Thanksgiving Day, and December 25. Early closure at 4pm on December 24 and December 31.

Tickets: Museum admission is free for members and children under 5
General admission + special exhibition: \$35 adults, \$30 seniors and students, \$15 youth ages 6 to 17
General admission: \$25 adults, \$20 seniors and students, and \$15 youth ages 6 to 17
Stand-alone special exhibition ticket: \$15 all levels, free for youth 17 and under.

Museum audio guide: free for members as download, \$7 audio guide rental for members and non-members

Where: The Presidio of San Francisco, 104 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94129

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