

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WORDS & IMAGES: A COLLABORATION BETWEEN WRITERS AND ARTISTS

The Windham Art Gallery is pleased to present ***Words & Images: A Collaboration*** curated by **Stuart Copans**, a WAG Artist, and **Arlene Distler**, a representative of **Write Action**--who received **a grant from the Crosby Foundation**, which will provide support, in part, for the exhibit. *Words & Images* represents a collaboration between writers and artists that will include poems, excerpts from short stories and a children's book along with paintings, photographs, a treasure hunt, and a room-sized installation down the street from the gallery at an artist's studio. This exhibition represents a four-month process in which artists and writers met, teamed up, and created unique collaborations. Several of the participants are member-artists from WAG, with many of the other artists and all of the writers being guests invited from the community. The exhibition will be on display from **Friday, June 1** through **Sunday, July 1**, with an opening reception on **Friday, June 1**, from **5-8 PM**, during Gallery Walk.

In all, fourteen collaborations will be on view in ***Words & Images: A Collaboration*** and viewers will have a chance to learn more about the creative process in a **Writers & Artists Forum on Thursday, June 7 at 7 PM**.

As soon as poet **Lynn Martin** heard about this exhibit, she contacted her friend, photographer **Cindy Hutcheson**. As former co-workers at the AIDS Project of Southern Vermont, they asked themselves, "What do these folks < our former clients at the AIDS Project > have in common other than their illness?" What they both came up with is: pets. So Hutcheson photographed individuals holding, being held by, or otherwise cuddling their parrots, dogs, cats or horses, and Martin wrote poems, fragments of which will accompany the photographs in their collaborative piece entitled *Comfort*. Auschwitz prisoner #26947, Czeslawa Kwoka, a young girl photographed before her death at age 14, is the subject of a collaboration between **painter Lori Schreiner** and **poet Theresa Edwards**, "this collaboration," the artist and writer said in their exhibition statement, "brings Czeslawa's image and voice into our lives."

A painting of an ice hut, *Writing on the Ice*, by Carolyn DiNicola-Fawley, with words from a poem entitled "Skating on the West River," by Arlene Distler, represent a collaboration that "was accomplished by bouncing ideas off one another, and finding solutions that used available materials and was conceptually exciting" to both artist and writer. A trip **Cheryl Wilfong** took with her teenage nieces inspired a children's story, *The Western Adventures of Tammy Tenderfoot and Tracy Toughfoot*, and she called upon friend and illustrator, **Heather Taylor**, to create the colorful, animated pictures for the book, samples of which will be on display in this exhibit alongside excerpts from the story.

Art of the Riddle, conceived by artist **Stuart Copans** and choreographed primarily by writer **Reeve Gutsell**, will be a treasure hunt, in which anyone wishing to participate may pick-up a clue sheet and, by carefully reading and examining both words and images in this collaborative exhibit, can try to solve the "riddle"; one winner, from all those who have correctly answered, will be blind-picked to receive a small prize. WAG's walls will extend beyond 69 Main Street to include a room-sized installation in the studio of local artist (167 Main Street, 2nd floor), **Jason Alden**. Alden, who met poet **Rolf Parker-Houghton** for the first time at a meeting for this exhibition, teamed up to create *The Birches*. Their project grew so large they decided to use Alden's 18' x 25' studio space where viewers, who will be directed down the street from WAG, will walk among an abstracted birch forest with bits of sky, represented by painted panels and oblong shapes hanging from the ceiling, as Parker-Houghton's voice emanates, radio-like, from several areas of the room, as he reads a terzanelle (a formal poem) about a forest.

The following is a list of the collaborative teams, with writers' names first: **Adrasteia Andrews and Stuart Copans; Tom Bitters and Matthew Peake; Dede Cummings and Stuart Copans; Arlene Distler and Carolyn DiNicola Fawley; Theresa Edwards and Lori Schreiner; Pamela Mandell and Marilyn Allen; Lynn Martin and Cindy Hutcheson; Mary Mathias and Charlene Wakefield; Paula Melton and Leonard Ragouzeos; Rolf Parker-Houghton and Jason Alden; Renata Pienkawa and Carolyn Nelson; MaryLiz Riddle and Stuart Copans; Cheryl Wilfong and Heather Taylor; Art of the Riddle: Reeve Gutsell, with Tom Bitters, Stuart Copans, Collin Leech and Paula Melton.**