



NATIONAL VETERANS Art Museum

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National Veterans Art Museum Acquires Thirty-One Screen Prints by Kurt Vonnegut Jr.

Sponsorship to purchase the Vonnegut collection provided by generosity of the Nielsen Family.

Chicago, IL – The National Veterans Art Museum’s (NVAM) has announced the major acquisition of 31 screen prints created by the late World War II veteran and famed author Kurt Vonnegut Jr., currently on view in the museum’s exhibit *Vonnegut’s Odyssey*.

The series of artwork highlights the post-war experience, specifically the many facets of the universal story of the veteran’s return home. The Vonnegut collection is a significant addition to the NVAM permanent collection, which includes over 2,500 works created by veteran artists. In recent years, the museum has been expanding its collection to include veteran-created art from all eras, from WWII to the present. NVAM Executive Director, Brendan Foster states, “The Vonnegut collection is a pivotal acquisition that illustrates both the ubiquitous nature of the veteran experience and the world-class quality of National Veterans Art Museum’s collection and exhibitions.”

The acquisition was made possible by the generous support and sponsorship of the Nielsen Family. On behalf of the family, Peter Nielsen offered to underwrite the acquisition in memory of their beloved wife and mother, Faith Nielsen. As an artist herself, as well as the wife and mother to wartime veterans, Faith recognized the importance of the National Veterans Art Museum and believed that there is a nobility in Veteran art that should be shared and celebrated. Peter Nielsen shares, “The Nielsen Family takes great pride in sponsoring The Vonnegut Collection at The NVAM in honor of Faith Nielsen. The Vonnegut Collection is a perfect exhibition to honor both Faith’s memory and Veteran’s art. Just from the examples of Kurt Vonnegut’s artwork and his literature, the Nielsen Family is quite certain that Faith and Kurt would have been great friends.”

Vonnegut enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1943 and was deployed to fight overseas in Europe during WWII. He was later captured at the Battle of the Bulge and served as a Prisoner of War until 1945 when he returned to the U.S. and was awarded the Purple Heart. These experiences largely shaped his creative endeavors including his well-known published literature and his body of artwork. From WWII through Vietnam and until his death in 2007, Vonnegut was an active voice in American culture and society—openly discussing war and its effects publicly.



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After establishing himself as an important American author during the late 1960's with the publication of *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969), Vonnegut later became recognized for his drawings that often accompanied his writings. These drawings vary in subject matter from his *Purple Heart* to his illustrious *Asterisk*. Building on these drawings, Vonnegut worked with printer Joe Petro III to create a prolific catalog of artwork. Exhibited together, these artworks reflect Vonnegut's experience of returning home from World War II.

In fostering this dialogue about the long-term reintegration process experienced by veterans, *Vonnegut's Odyssey* captures NVAM's mission to inspire greater understanding of the real impact of war and offer visitors a chance to see the world through veterans' artwork, as well as one of the 20th Century's most impactful creative minds.

About the National Veterans Art Museum

Located in Chicago IL, the National Veterans Art Museum's (NVAM) comprehensive permanent collection of combat inspired art comprises over 2,500 pieces. The collection includes art from the time of World War II to the present day. The collection was built to evoke an understanding of the impact of combat on the individuals who served as well as our society at large. And the permanent collection—spanning over 30 years—continues to grow it includes painting, print, photography and sculpture.

While the NVAM is one of the only museums in the world to collect and exhibit artwork exclusively created by veterans in a permanent exhibition, it also provides important programming for veterans, their families, and the community. For more information about the National Veterans Art Museum, visit www.nvam.org, or call 312-326-0270.

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