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March 29, 2017

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GREENHILL PRESENTS NORTH CAROLINA ARTIST RICHARD FENNELL RETROSPECTIVE

(Greensboro, NC) GreenHill presents *The Edge of Perception: Richard Fennell Retrospective* on display June 16 – August 20, 2017. Richard Fennell is most widely known for the luminous landscapes, interiors and still lifes he has painted during the past four decades while based in the communities of Whitsett and Grassy Creek, North Carolina.

The vivid palette and Impressionist paint handling that are most often associated with Fennell's style are the result of a lifelong aesthetic drive. Fennell explains, "My work, as personal as it is, is basically the study of light upon form and space. In pursuit of this study, I try to merge a visual truth of what is seen with basic abstract elements inherent in both painting and nature." As the first comprehensive look at his work, GreenHill's exhibition presents the different means Fennell has used to merge these elements. Fennell's achievement is recounted across over one hundred works in bronze, watercolor, drawing, pastel, painting and printmaking on view in *The Edge of Perception*. A short interview with Fennell can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/mlxvCz_f3hU.

Fennell is recognized as one of the state's leading colorists, and his highly personal vision conveys "not only the landscape but also the elements that make it what it is". A room at GreenHill will present Fennell's large recent paintings of marshes and mountains whose bright hues and expressive brushstrokes evoke the influence of Impressionism. Many early works gathered for the exhibition have not been exhibited before and include interiors scenes, portraits of the artist's daughter, and watercolors of the figure. Fennell is a leading member of the group of artists who studied with Peter Agostini and Andy Martin at UNC Greensboro who have come to be known as the "Greensboro School". Included in *The Edge of Perception* are a group of early bronze sculptures reveals his training with sculptor Peter Agostini who imparted the method of "working from the edge." Early landscapes painted in Whitsett where Fennell owns a century-old former normal school and served for a stint as mayor capture the unassuming beauty of the rural community. While still a graduate student, Fennell's work was purchased by the North Carolina Museum of Art and soon entered the rosters of corporate and public collections across the Southeast including the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, Washington, DC; the Kenan Collection, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill; the Greenville Museum of Art and UNC Rex Hospital, Raleigh to name a few.

Edie Carpenter, Director, Curatorial & Artistic Programs at GreenHill explains, "The study of light in his interior scenes and still lifes conveys a very particular atmosphere that would speak to many readers. His iconic paintings of houses in different corners of the state such as *Tazewell*, *Grassy Creek*, *Hyde County*, *Scottsville* and *Nag's Head* are lush, light-filled paintings that allow the viewer to see anew the architecture of rural homesteads and small towns that are rapidly disappearing in the Southern landscape." For more information about the exhibition visit www.GreenHillNC.org/Richard-Fennell.

The opening reception is on Friday, June 16, 2017. Members invited early at 5:30 PM, open to public at 6:00 PM. Cash Bar. Free and open to the public. On August 16, the artist will give a talk and demonstrate his technique of "working from the edge" from 6:00 – 7:00 PM.

GreenHill is located at 200 North Davie Street, in the Greensboro Cultural Center. GreenHill is the center for NC art and promotes the visual arts of North Carolina by engaging a broad community of artists, adults and children through dynamic exhibitions and educational programs while providing a platform for exploration and investment in art. For more information visit www.GreenHillNC.org.

PRESS IMAGES

Image 1: Richard Fennell, *Oldest House in Hyde County I*, 2014, oil on board, 25 x 29 inches



Image 2: Richard Fennell, *Self-Portrait*, 2014, oil on canvas, 22 x 18 inches



Image 3: Richard Fennell, *Interior with Stairway*, 1993, oil on canvas, 48 x 40 inches, Collection of Kay Stern



Image 4: Richard Fennell, *Interior with Chairs*, 2005, oil on canvas, 26.5 x 20 inches



Image 5: Richard Fennell, *Katie in Red Hat*, 1998, oil on paper, 25 x 25 inches, Collection of Dottie Fennell



Image 6: Richard Fennell, *Grassy Creek*, 2002, oil on canvas, 20 x 25 inches, Collection of Harriet and Elms Allen



Image 7: Richard Fennell, *House at Damascus*, 2000, oil on canvas, 48 x 40 inches

