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New Painted Works Capture Life and Death of Eastern Hemlocks

A suite of 11 large paintings by renowned Appalachian artist Lowell Hayes enhanced with real forest materials like bark and branches will go on display this Friday, December 3, at ASU's Turchin Center for the Visual Arts.

Called *The Hemlocks! The Hemlocks!*, this powerful collection celebrates the beauty and mourns the imminent loss of the vast Eastern hemlock forest, which has been fatally attacked by sap-sucking insects called hemlock woolly adelgids.

"This suite constitutes a tribute to the hemlocks and a celebration of feelings we experience when we are with them," Hayes said. "The exhibition is dedicated to every person who has contributed to the conservation of hemlocks and the control of the hemlock woolly adelgid."

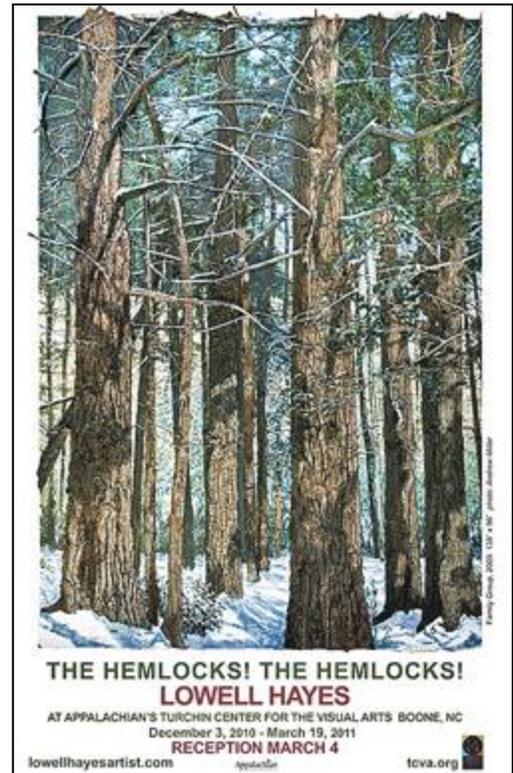
The mixed-media canvases by Hayes will remain at the Turchin through March 19, 2011, before traveling. A two-story exhibition hall at the Turchin will also house a site-specific installation by Hayes that measures 18 feet by 20 feet and includes a nearly 40-foot section of dying hemlock tree beside it.

Other works in *The Hemlocks! The Hemlocks!* measure as large as nine feet by 19 feet and depict the still, dark sanctuary one enters beneath a grove of towering hemlock trees.

Hayes, now in his 70s, has been painting the Appalachian landscape and its people for 40 years, but the bas-relief hemlock canvases are his most evocative and focused work to date. Earlier work was included in a touring exhibition by the National Museum of American Art, and more recent pieces hang in the University of North Carolina complex and at the Tennessee State Museum.

As the Eastern hemlock forest continues a rapid die-off, future generations of Appalachian residents will see only the ghosts of trees that once reached 500 years of age and grew nearly 200 feet tall. "Tsuga canadensis" ranges throughout all the colder regions of the eastern United States, but in the Southern states they are expected to disappear within a decade.

To view images from *The Hemlocks! The Hemlocks!* click to www.lowellhayesartist.com. The Turchin Center is located at 423 West King Street in Boone and is closed Sunday and Monday. Admission is free. For more information, call 828-262-3017.



Lowell Hayes' exhibition at the Turchin Center captures the beauty and character of the hemlock, a tree species that is rapidly declining in the Southern mountains.

"The exhibition is dedicated to every person who has contributed to the conservation of hemlocks."

—Lowell Hayes, artist

View thumbnails on next page.

Lowell Hayes: *The Hemlocks! The Hemlocks!*

