

A.E. BACKUS MUSEUM & GALLERY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTEMPORARY ICONS AT THE BACKUS MUSEUM – A DOUBLE FEATURE
SHOWCASING NEW WORKS OF FAVORITE CELEBRITIES AND IDOLS

Fort Pierce, FL - November 21, 2019 - The Backus Museum will present an exhibition of the works of two husband-and-wife artists. ***Double Feature: Contemporary Icons*** will be on view November 22 through December 29, 2019 at the Museum's location of 500 North Indian River Drive in Historic Downtown Fort Pierce. The Members Opening Reception will be held on Friday, December 6 from 6:00 till 8:00 p.m., free for Museum Members, or \$20 for non-members. The reception will also feature the members-only Holiday Sale Preview in the Museum Store.

Ceravolo and **Candice CMC** (also known as Jim and Candice Ceravolo) are New York-based artists who create eye-catching works with pop art flair. Ceravolo explores much-loved themes of pop culture and the silver screen including celebrities, cowboys, spacemen and more in richly-layered images that speak to the past and the future. Candice CMC indulges in large-scale portraits of famous idols, using intricate photo mosaics of a certain dunkable pastry to sweeten the deal. At this time, both artists are planning to attend and meet guests at the opening reception.

Ceravolo met his wife Candice at college in New York while they were both studying advertising art and design. Two years after graduating, Ceravolo was asked to teach a course in graphic design and painting at his alma mater. A few years later, the two were married.

While working to photograph a Rod Stewart concert, **Ceravolo** had the opportunity to meet and create a large-scale portrait of the rock star. He worked with and photographed the singer for an eight-foot tall oil portrait. Stewart and Elton John were great friends and the next celebrity portrait commission was of Elton John himself. Ceravolo met with John several times to select the image he liked best for his painting. During this time, *Circus*, the rock music magazine did a story on Ceravolo called "Rock and Roll Painter" and New York's newspaper *Newsday* did another article around the same time called "Painter of the Stars of Rock." Ceravolo's reputation was set and his next star-turn for a portrait commission was Alice Cooper.

Ceravolo's current work combines vintage pinups and photographs of pop icons, with richly layered, highly textured backgrounds. Ceravolo's works often feature his new muse, a gopher named "G", who gets into mischief within the compositions of different works by wearing an Elvis wig to impersonate The King, riding shotgun with Steve McQueen, appearing as a deputized ranger with Tonto, or just getting into trouble with a paintbrush in hand.

Candice CMC's work has also achieved a world-wide following and has become a social media phenomenon. Her creative work consists of extraordinary donut portraits or photographic arrangements on paper or canvas that create an immediate response on the part of the viewer. Candice uses the donuts as her palette, the same as if she were creating a portrait with oil paints. She photographs the donuts first, prints them out one at a time, then studies the characteristics of each so that she can arrange them according to their tones, colors, values and intensity to create each luminous mosaic portrait. She chooses the correct placement of just the right donut for each area of the artwork, presenting them on a uniform dark ground. The careful patterns created appear at a distance as pop art images or famous portraits of recognizable figures including Marilyn Monroe, Albert Einstein, Groucho Marx, Mickey Mouse, Alfred E. Neuman, Vincent van Gogh, Gene Wilder as Willy Wonka, and Christopher Reeve as Superman, among others. It is a fun but seriously disciplined process; her version of the iconic painting "American Gothic" by Grant Wood, entitled *American Donuts*, is comprised of more than 123-dozen donuts.

Both Ceravolo and Candice CMC have their work included in the collections of many influential corporate and private collections. Ceravolo's work is collected by Elton John, Rod Stewart, Hugh Hefner, David Brenner, Monique Van Vooren, Warner Brothers and RCA Records to name a few. Candice CMC's work has been featured in prestigious Art Fairs in Miami and New York, as well as several distinguished galleries. Her distinctive art hangs in many corporate and private collections.

The Museum is grateful to partner with Art Link International to present this exhibition to our community.

Coinciding with the special exhibition, the Museum Store will host several special opportunities for guests to add creativity to their shopping lists. As a small nonprofit, the Museum is participating in "**Small Business Saturday**" on November 30, as well as "**Museum Store Sunday**" on December 1. For this weekend only, the Backus Museum will offer a special limited opportunity: a "BOGO Backus" deal on print reproductions! Purchase any beautiful, full-color print on archival paper and receive the second of equal or lesser value for free. Then the next weekend the excitement peaks for the **annual Holiday Sale on Saturday, December 7 and Sunday, December 8** – with free admission and refreshments. For this special event, the Museum Store will offer 20% discounts on most items, a rare 10% discount on the award-winning book *Tropical Light: The Art of A.E. Backus*, and a free Backus print reproduction for purchases over \$100. Holiday shoppers looking for unique gifts will have an opportunity to view the exhibition this weekend while they discover everything from Backus-inspired gifts to one-of-a-kind works of art. Those attending the Members Opening Reception on December 6 will have the first chance to shop on all items while supplies last.

About the A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery

With a recently added, multi-million dollar expansion, the A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery houses the nation's largest public presentation of artwork by Florida's preeminent painter, A.E. "Bean" Backus (1906-1990), and is home to the state's only permanent multimedia exhibition on the Florida Highwaymen.

With a career spanning more than 70 years, Backus was the first Florida-born artist to build his professional renown by painting the landscape and scenes from daily life of his native state. He was fortunate to have known great success during his lifetime, with paintings hanging in the businesses and the private collections of many of Florida's most prominent citizens. A renowned humanitarian who abhorred the racist attitudes and segregation that engulfed the region, Backus taught and mentored the group of entrepreneurial African American artists who became known as the Florida Highwaymen. Their inspiring story is part of the A.E. Backus legacy. In addition to preserving and perpetuating the artistic and humanitarian legacy of Backus, the Museum organizes and hosts changing exhibitions from artists of national and international acclaim.

Regular Hours are: Wednesday – Saturday, 10 AM to 4 PM; Sunday, 12 Noon to 4 PM (closed Monday-Tuesday). The Museum is closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Admission is \$5 per person; AARP, AAA, and Veterans with appropriate ID receive a \$2 discount. Students with school ID, children under 18, active duty military, and current members are always free. During the regular season, the first Sunday of the month is Free Admission Day.

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Images Available

FILE: Ceravolo – Brando, 2019 – Backus Museum
CREDIT: Ceravolo (b.1953). *Brando*, 2019. Mixed media with acrylic and oil stick on canvas, 36" x 52".
Courtesy Art Link International.

FILE: Ceravolo – Star Trek, 2016 – Backus Museum
CREDIT: Ceravolo (b.1953). *Star Trek*, 2016. Acrylic and collage on board with resin, 40" x 30" x 2½".
Courtesy Art Link International.

FILE: Candice CMC – Marilyn in Donuts, 2017 – Backus Museum
CREDIT: Candice CMC (b.1952). *Marilyn in Donuts*, 2017. Photographic arrangement on paper, 33" x 28".
Courtesy Art Link International.

FILE: Candice CMC – Wonka for Donuts, 2017 – Backus Museum
CREDIT: Candice CMC (b.1952). *Wonka for Donuts*, 2017. Photographic arrangement on paper, 33" x 28".
Courtesy Art Link International.

FILE: Backus_Museum_095_Aric_Attas_Web
CREDIT: Museum Store at the Backus Museum, Aric Attas Creative