

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**SJIMA Celebrates The Marine Environment with**

**FRAGILE WATERS: Ansel Adams, Ernest H. Brooks II, and Dorothy Kerper Monnelly**

Friday Harbor, WA: FRAGILE WATERS, a traveling fine art photography exhibition, opens Saturday, April 23, Earth Day weekend, and will run through September 5, Labor Day, 2016 at the San Juan Islands Museum of Art (SJIMA), Friday Harbor, Washington.

**Opening events on Earth Day weekend** in and around Friday Harbor:

**Landscape Photography Walk:** “Seeing with the Inner Eye”, Dorothy Kerper Monnelly

Saturday, April 23, 10 am, location TBA, Tickets: \$30 available at SJIMA or online at [sjima.org](http://sjima.org)

**Museum Gallery Walk,** Ernest H. Brooks II

Sat., April 23, 2 pm, SJIMA, Free to ticket holders and members

**Book Signing,** Dorothy Kerper Monnelly

Sat., April 23, 3 pm, SJIMA

**Art As A Voice Lecture** “Ansel Adams: Artist and Conservationist” Michael Adams, MD

(Ansel Adams’ son)

Sat., April 23, 7:30 pm, Brickworks, Tickets: \$20 non-members, \$15 members, \$10 students,

Available at SJIMA or online at [sjima.org](http://sjima.org). Remaining tickets will be available at the door.

The exhibition is further supported by educational programs focused on relevant global as well as Salish Sea issues. The exhibition and its related programs will provide learning opportunities for a wide audience of all ages through Labor Day.

FRAGILE WATERS is a powerful aesthetic and environmental statement, blending inspiring black-and-white photography by three renowned photographers; Ansel Adams, Ernest H. Brooks II, and Dorothy Kerper Monnelly, who feel a deep reverence for the marine environment and understand the integrity of place.

Water is essential to all life we know. Yet our oceans, rivers, lakes and other sources of water are in crisis. Extreme weather events, aquifer depletion, toxic contaminants, fracking, pollution, spills, ocean acidification, floods, desertification, and the impact of rising seawater, are just a few of the urgent issues that confront us. The FRAGILE WATERS exhibition was born out of these concerns.

The 117 black-and-white photographs present a powerful collective statement. In technique and time these photographers span a century. These artists communicate the beauty and vitality of water, focusing on nature and engage the viewer in affirming the intrinsic aesthetic, emotional and essential life value of water.

**Ansel Adams** laid a foundation for his legendary technical mastery, as he traveled burdened with a cumbersome 8 x 10 camera and glass plate negatives, in pursuit of unspoiled nature. Adams pre-visualized images, expertly crafting elegant iconic landscapes where he intensified and purified the experience of natural beauty, capturing the sublime magnificence of wilderness. His work has been used to persuade lawmakers time and time again to preserve special environments, and create parks for a permanent public legacy.

**Ernest H. Brooks II** is one of the foremost underwater photographers and a trailblazer in the development of underwater photographic equipment and technique. Brooks has chronicled a wilderness unknown to most of us, including more recently, capturing infrared images of light on eerily calving Antarctica icebergs. He remains a tremendous voice for oceanic exploration, and an advocate for the preservation of critical marine environments.

**Dorothy Kerper Monnelly's** intimate portrayal of the beauty of conserved marshland in Massachusetts takes on greater importance as swamps and marshes increasingly vanish in the face of urban development. She has played a key role in the protection of these vulnerable wetlands. Monnelly still forays through the marshes to catch the magic of dawn, but also explores coastal landscapes across the continent in all seasons.

These three artists demonstrate the beauty of and reverence for the nature that inspires them.

FRAGILE WATERS was curated by Jeanne Falk Adams, former CEO of the Ansel Adams Gallery, and daughter-in-law of Ansel. Her expertise in the field has made her a much-sought-after reviewer, juror, and lecturer. Adams' long involvement in environmental issues has convinced her that aesthetics, and black-and-white photography in particular, can alert, inspire, communicate, and motivate. Her goal was to inspire and engage visitors in dialogue and offer direct opportunities for advocacy and involvement.

Photokunst LLC in Friday Harbor, developed FRAGILE WATERS, and is honored to represent and travel this vitally important exhibition.

**Press Photos:** Select FRAGILE WATERS images by each of the three photographers are available by request for press use, please specify the intended use (i.e. print, online media, social media). Images may not be cropped, and photo credits must be included with all use.

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In Celebration of Earth Day 2016

In celebration of Earth Day (April 22) the San Juan Islands Museum of Art will open *Fragile Waters*—a monumental exhibition of black-and-white photographs by three of our most celebrated environmental photographers: Ansel Adams, Dorothy Kerper Monnelly, and Ernest Brooks II. Curated by Jeanne Falk Adams, this show presents exquisitely sculpted icebergs, windless marshes, wave-ravaged coastlines, and dream-like worlds below the ocean's surface. As the title suggests, the exhibition focuses on the delicate and endangered state of our world's water and is a call for us to advocate for it.

Earth Day was established in 1970 to raise awareness about the importance of our environment and environmental protection. 46 years later, it is the largest civic observance in the world with over one billion people participating in activities in over 196 countries. We are proud to be part of and to contribute to such an important day. And our participation is further inspired by the incredible jewel of the San Juan Islands.

To come to this exhibition, many of our visitors will cross the Salish Sea—looking out at orcas, seals, and otters, cormorants and gulls, forests of kelp and eel grass, and the play of sunlight upon the waves. Here in the San Juan Islands, the vast beauty of the Salish Sea is why most of us are here, and our way of life and our economy are dependent upon its health.

It is my hope this exhibition provides a forum for discussing a variety of water-related issues relevant to this region—protection of endangered orcas, regulation of human-produced sound in our waters, salmon recovery efforts, wetlands restoration, municipal water sources and sewage disposal practices, dangers posed by fossil fuel terminals and shipping, and the aim of establishing these waters as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA), just to name a few.

These are all complex issues with a variety of viewpoints. In this arena, the museum becomes particularly alive—it is, after all, the “house of the muses,” the goddesses of inspiration. A calling to our higher selves, art asks us to measure ourselves against beauty, against a world far greater than what any one of us can measure individually. As such, it helps articulate what might otherwise be out of reach. I believe art has the capacity to start complex conversations and to keep them afloat in our collective mind. It is my hope you'll join this collective conversation by attending the museum and sharing what you see and think about.

In 1915, John Muir wrote: “When we contemplate the whole globe as one great dewdrop, striped and dotted with continents and islands, flying through space with other stars all singing and shining together as one, the whole universe appears as an infinite storm of beauty.”

And so it is. This earth is our dewdrop. Our perfect storm of beauty. We have no other.

Ian Boyden  
Executive Director