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Two Exhibit in One to Open at Hartford Public Library's ArtWalk May 17

Brian McClear's "Discards & Discovery" and "Ink & Oil" Combined in new "Beyond Surface" Show

(HARTFORD, CT: May 2, 2019) Artist Brian McClear's new exhibit "Beyond Surface" makes maximum use of the unique space that is the ArtWalk at Hartford Public Library (HPL). Walk through it one way and you're viewing "Discards & Discovery," an exhibit of coupled still-lifes. Walk the other way and you'll see "Ink & Oil," a series of soulful portraits. Though quite distinct, McClear said both exhibits "challenge the viewer to look beyond the surface, whether considering everyday objects or the people they meet."

"Beyond Surface" will run from Friday, May 17 through Saturday, June 29, 2019. The opening reception on May 17 will start at 5:30 pm. An artist's talk will be held on the ArtWalk on Thursday, June 6, at 6 pm. The ArtWalk is located on the third floor of the Downtown Library, 500 Main Street.

McClear's fascination with everyday objects is clear in "Discards & Discovery." He said, "I am that person who buys a rusted hinge because of its frozen shape or carries home a stone because of its feel in my hand." These objects are then painted in McClear's forceful and unique style with its emphasis on texture and brushwork. Each piece in "Discards & Discovery" combines two seemingly unconnected objects. "When paired together," McClear said, "it's precisely those differences that emphasize a commonality or brings new meaning that invites interpretation. When people recognize why disparate items have been put together, there is a connections there, too."

The second part of the exhibit, "Ink & Oil" portrays several people from various walks of life who have chosen to express themselves through extensively tattooing themselves. "Simply put," said McClear. "canvases of people who are themselves canvases." The personality of each subject is drawn out by McClear's artistry and combines with the tattoos themselves to present a unique and incisive portrait of the subject's inner as well as outer being.

A native of Ohio, McClear began painting in his youth and earned a Masters of Fine Arts degree from Columbus College of Art and Design. He came to Connecticut over 25 years ago and soon made a name for himself as a freelance illustrator. He later took a position at the small marketing firm of Adams &

Knight over 20 years ago and has since helped to build it into one of the major players in the region's advertising and marketing scene. After years in front of a computer screen, McClear returned to painting with renewed maturity. The result is "Beyond Surface."

"Beyond Surface" is funded by the Bank of America and the Edward C. & Ann T. Roberts Foundation.

ABOUT HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Now celebrating its 125th year, Hartford Public Library remains at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st Century. With seven locations throughout the city, the library provides education, intellectual enrichment and cultural development for thousands of children, youth and adults every year. Hartford Public Library has also gained local and national recognition for its wide range of new initiatives and partnerships designed to meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic city and region, including immigration services, employment assistance and youth leadership training. Please visit www.hplct.org.

About the ArtWalk

ArtWalk at Hartford Public Library provides artists with a large and visually stunning space to display their work. Exhibitions offer an array of art experiences that reflect a variety of media, styles, and cultures in the art world. The gallery was made possible through the generosity of donors to the Library's completed Capital Campaign, especially the Beatrice Fox Auerbach Foundation Fund at Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.