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TONY FOSTER, “EXPLORING TIME: A PAINTER’S PERSPECTIVE” OPENS AT THE DAYTON ART INSTITUTE

Tony Foster, “Exploring Time: A Painter’s Perspective” opens February 21, presenting a series of extraordinary watercolor expeditions that examine time, nature and humanity’s impact on the planet.

(DAYTON, OHIO) – February 9, 2026 – The [Dayton Art Institute](https://www.daytonart.org/) (DAI) kicks off its 2026 Special Exhibition season with **Tony Foster, *Exploring Time: A Painter’s Perspective***, on view February 21–May 17, 2026. This remarkable exhibition features a series of watercolor paintings created

en plein air during Tony Foster's celebrated expeditions to remote and fragile landscapes around the globe.

An explorer-artist, Tony Foster is recognized for his remarkable 'Journeys', watercolor painting expeditions that unfold over many years in which he reflects and responds to place. In more than 40 years of practice, Foster has never strayed from his purpose to share the extraordinary nature of the world and the importance of its protection. Visiting remote areas, Foster examines how time shapes the natural world, from fleeting changes in light and weather to geological and biological transformations unfolding over millennia.

"Tony Foster's paintings are detailed observations of nature that convey a holistic vision of the artist's expression and experiences visiting remote locations," said Head Curator & Curatorial Affairs Director Jerry N. Smith. "The paintings, often quite large for watercolors, act as invitations to experience the quiet power of nature shaped by time and to discover moments of stillness, which are increasingly rare in modern life."

The concept for this collection of works emerged during a 2007 expedition to Mount Everest when a monk handed the artist an ammonite fossil found near the summit. The discovery provided tangible evidence that the world's highest mountain had once been beneath the sea and sparked Foster's ongoing exploration of deep time and environmental change. With a discerning eye, Foster records not only nature's strength and resilience but also its vulnerability.

The majority of works in **Tony Foster, *Exploring Time: A Painter's Perspective*** were created between 2007 and 2025 during the artist's 19th 'Journey' and reflect a sustained investigation of change across overlapping natural and human contexts. For this 'Journey', Foster made a series of expeditions to specific wilderness locations in Arizona, California, Colorado, the Caribbean, Greece, the Maldives, Galapagos, Tibet and Cornwall in the United Kingdom. Each watercolor work is accompanied by diary excerpts, maps and objects collected during Foster's expeditions, offering insight into his artistic process and the physical experience of working in extreme environments.

"Tony Foster's work invites us to slow down and truly consider the forces that shape the landscapes we inhabit," said Interim DAI Director & President Mark Shaker. "This exhibition reminds us that museums can be ideal spaces for contemplation, where art deepens our understanding of the planet and our responsibility to it."

The exhibition is organized into four thematic sections—**Geological Time, Biological Time, Human Time and Fleeting Moments**—each inviting viewers to engage with time at every scale, from the span of a moment to vast geological eras, while reflecting on the enduring impact of human presence.

“The work is all about trying to bring to people's attention the extraordinary nature of the world we live in, its fragility and its complexity, and hoping to evoke a sense that we should protect everything we've got,” said Foster.

Tony Foster is the only living English painter with an American museum dedicated to his work. He has exhibited widely in the United States and the United Kingdom, including at the Yale Center for British Art and the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. **Tony Foster, *Exploring Time: A Painter's Perspective* is organized and toured by The Foster Museum** in Palo Alto, California. The Foster Museum serves as a major archive of Foster's work.

RELATED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Several related educational programs will be offered in conjunction with the exhibition. They include:

- **Guided Tour: Tony Foster, *Exploring Time: A Painter's Perspective***
Explore the depth and inspiration of the DAI's newest special exhibition, **Tony Foster, *Exploring Time: A Painter's Perspective***, in this guided tour experience.
Dates: Select Saturdays: February 28, March 14 and March 28, from 1–2 PM
Cost: Members: Free | Non-members: Included with the price of admission
Location: Dayton Art Institute Special Exhibition Gallery
Ages: All
- **Artist's Talk: Tony Foster**
Join us for a special presentation by artist Tony Foster, as he discusses his process, his long career of painting remote reaches of the world and his latest Journey, ***Exploring Time: An Artist's Perspective***.
Date: Saturday, March 28, from 2–3 PM
Cost: Members: Free | Non-members: Included with the price of admission
Location: Dayton Art Institute Mimi and Stuart Rose Auditorium
Ages: All
- **Documentary Screening at The Neon**
The DAI is pleased to partner with The Neon for this special screening of *Tony Foster: Painting at the Edge*, a documentary by David C. Schendel.
Dates: Wednesday, April 15. at 7:30 PM
Cost: Tickets are \$12.50. DAI members get free popcorn when they show their DAI membership card.
Location: The Neon, 130 E. 5th St, Dayton
Ages: All

EXHIBITION SPONSORS

The 2026 exhibition season is powered by AES Ohio Foundation. Additional support for this exhibition includes Benefactor Sponsors Patty and Jerry Tatar; Director Sponsors The Berry Family Foundation and Charles D. Berry Foundation; Supporting Sponsor Wagner Subaru; and

Promoting Sponsors Martha and Mark Shaker. The DAI also recognizes and thanks Ohio Arts Council, Montgomery County and Culture Works as Ongoing Sponsors.

ADMISSION & MUSEUM INFORMATION

Admission to **Tony Foster, *Exploring Time: A Painter's Perspective*** is included in the museum's general admission, which includes access to all Special and Focus Exhibitions currently on view, as well as the museum collection galleries. General admission is \$15 adults; \$10 seniors (60+), active military and groups (10 or more); \$5 students (18+ w/ID) and youth (ages 7–17); and free for children (ages 6 & younger). Admission is free for museum members. Membership information can be found online at www.daytonartinstitute.org/membership.

CURRENT AND UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Current Exhibitions at the museum include ***Dayton Printmakers Cooperative: Dayton/Kyoto Invitational*** (December 6, 2025–February 22, 2026), ***Engaged: Rings from around the World*** (November 8, 2025–April 19, 2026) and ***Captivating Clay: Contemporary Japanese Ceramics from the Horvitz Collection*** (April 13, 2024–January 3, 2027). Upcoming Exhibitions for 2026 include ***Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice*** (June 27–September 13, 2026), ***Wall Power! Spectacular Quilts from the American Folk Art Museum*** (October 17, 2026–January 10, 2027), ***Exploring Feminism*** (February 7, 2026–January 31, 2027), ***Symbols of Hope: Eunshin Khang*** (March 14–June 7, 2026), ***All the World's a Stage*** (May 16–August 9, 2026), ***Getting Technical: Alternative Photographic Processes*** (July 18–October 25, 2026), ***Looking for Japan: Early Japanese Photography*** (September 5–November 29, 2026) and ***Good Book: Bible Stories from the Collection*** (November 14, 2026–February 14, 2027).

For more information about planning a visit, including current museum hours and updates, go to www.daytonartinstitute.org/visit or call 937-223-4ART (4278). Connect with the Dayton Art Institute on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#) for additional information, behind-the-scenes photos and videos, and exclusive offers.

ABOUT DAYTON ART INSTITUTE

MISSION: *Through art, we create transformative and diverse experiences, strengthen community connections and inspire imagination.*

VISION: *Through art, we will be a community leader recognized as a welcoming, thought-provoking and collaborative place that nurtures inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.*

The Dayton Art Institute (DAI) is the Miami Valley's premier fine art museum, offering a full range of programming in addition to exhibiting its collection. The museum is currently open Wednesdays, 11 AM–5 PM; Thursdays, 11 AM–8 PM; Fridays & Saturdays, 11 AM–5 PM; and Sundays, noon–5 PM. Go to www.daytonartinstitute.org/visit for the latest museum information and updates. Museum admission is \$15 adults, \$10 seniors (60+), active military and groups (10 or more), \$5 students (18+ w/ID) and youth (ages 7–17), free for children (ages 6 & younger) and free for museum members. Admission includes access to all Special Exhibitions, Focus Exhibitions, The Lange Family Experientcenter and the museum's collection galleries. Some events and programs may carry an additional charge and include museum admission as part of that price. Free parking is available at the museum, and the facility is fully

accessible. The DAI's Museum Store and Leo are open during regular museum hours, offering unique shopping, as well as drinks and tasty treats. The Museum Store also offers online shopping at www.daimuseumstore.org. For more information about the DAI, visit daytonartinstitute.org or call 937-223-4ART (4278). The Ohio Arts Council helps fund this organization with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The DAI also receives support from Culture Works and the Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District.

ABOUT TONY FOSTER

Tony Foster (born 1946) is an English painter known for his painting expeditions into the world's great wildernesses. He creates large-scale watercolor works en plein air that closely observe the remote natural world, relatively untouched by humans. His expeditions from Everest to the Grand Canyon and the ocean floor are personal watercolor diaries, reflecting on the concept and experience of wilderness. He has exhibited widely both in the UK and the USA, including at the Yale Center for British Art and the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, Washington, DC. The Foster Museum in Palo Alto, California, is dedicated to his work.

A 'Journey' is a series of watercolor paintings with accompanying notes and symbolic objects or small souvenirs from wilderness locations. Inspired by Henry David Thoreau, each 'Journey' involves multiple expeditions and can take years to complete. From this, Tony Foster has presented nineteen major exhibitions focused on wilderness, particularly in the United States.

His works have been in exhibitions throughout the world including at the Robert Cripps Gallery, Magdalene College, Cambridge (solo); Royal Academy London (invited artist), London; Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter (solo); Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (solo); Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro (solo); Royal Geographical Society, London (solo); Royal Watercolour Society, London (solo); Science Museum, London (group) as well as the following solo exhibitions in the USA: Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, AZ; Frye Art Museum, Seattle, WA (retrospective exhibition); Phoenix Art Museum, AZ; Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, Washington, DC; Sun Valley Museum of Art, Ketchum, ID; Whitney Western Art Museum, Cody, WY and Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, CT (solo).

His works can be found in many public and private collections including Falmouth Museum and Art Gallery; Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Magdalene College, Cambridge; Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital as well as the Autry Museum of the American West, Los Angeles, CA; Denver Art Museum, CO; Nevada Art Museum, Reno, NV; Phoenix Art Museum, AZ; Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA; The Foster Museum, Palo Alto, CA and the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, CT.

ABOUT THE FOSTER MUSEUM

The Foster Museum was established as Foster Art and Wilderness Foundation in 2013 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization operating in the United States. Its mission is to unite, understand and share Tony Foster's watercolor wilderness Journeys, inspiring connection to art, nature and the protection of place. As a fine art exhibition space, the museum presents the watercolor Journeys of British artist Tony Foster and serves as a venue for quiet contemplation and engagement, offering related lecture and education programs for adults, children and families. It also organizes and collects the artist's archives and facilitates exhibitions of his journeys around the globe. The museum is open to the public free of charge and produces an educational newsletter that can be subscribed to at www.thefoster.org. The Foster Museum also makes its facility available to local education, environmental art and community groups for events and programs. www.thefoster.org/

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