

For Immediate Release – March 25, 2011

***White Mountain: A Tribute to Phil Michaud* opens at Whyte Museum
April 9 – June 12, 2011**

Banff, Alberta – The **Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies** is pleased to present an exhibition that pays tribute to a unique artist.

White Mountain: A Tribute to Phil Michaud honours artist Phil (Gaspar) Michaud (September 28, 1935 – June 12, 2010). Phil lived and painted in Banff from 1964 to 2001. The exhibition documents the journey of an artist from the prairies, through the foothills, to the Rocky Mountains of Alberta. It includes a sampling of representative work from 1968 through 2010, and features Phil's last body of work "White Mountain." Curator for this exhibition is **Craig Richards**.

Phil (Gaspar) Michaud was born in Acadia and as a young boy, became known as "Gaspar." He signed his artwork with this nickname from the very beginning. He studied Fine Art at Sir George Williams University and moved to Banff in 1964 to climb, ski, and paint. He was well-known in the community through his art, and his horsemanship. Phil worked at the Whyte Museum as a Preparator/Conservator from 1978 to 2000.

From the Artist

My works are halfway between the wild and the tame. They're about getting ready for the cold, getting ready for the warmth. It's like living in the mountains, knowing when to wear a jacket or not – familiarity.

Familiarity with nature, and what I want my works to express; nature has taught me everything I know.

~ **Gaspar**

Tributes to Phil Michaud

This last series by Phil Gaspar speaks about the memory of rock faces, the feel of the rock in his fingers and his love of mountains. Peaks, ridge lines, saddles, rock faces, couloirs, each mountain different, each carved out sensitively, meticulously by the old rugged hands of a cowboy.

~ **Sonja Michaud Purcell**

Gaspar had always been interested in the ideas of lines and layers in landscape. The line of a fence, the line of the horizon, the lines of a well-tilled field. Layers in the snow and earth, the layers of time; interpretations that spoke of the ephemeral nature and the fragility of our local landscape.

~ **Sonja Michaud Purcell**

The sun, the wind, the sky, the clouds, the trees, even the distant mountains are all somehow transparent; everywhere we look the earth is gently trembling.

~ **Bob Sandford**

Phil "Gaspar" is an artist who "walks his talk."

Phil's sensitive portrayal of the prairie, foothill and mountain country in the soft tones of oil pastel comes from his intimate association with his subject matter over a period of many years. An artist with acute technical mastery of his medium, he retains the soul of a cowboy, having seen and experienced it all from the back of horse.

Phil is in every sense a "western original."

~ **E. J. (Ted) Hart, Director Emeritus, Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies**

Phil Michaud, as I know and prefer to call him, is in love with transparent things: the patina which gives gloss and depth to a painting of the sky, the unspoken words that form the greater part of conversation, the negative notes in music.

Phil is a painter who is in love with skies, their tempests and illuminations which derive from a thousand diffusing elements all of which are nigh not there at all, the atmosphere.

What is not seen is as important as what is not said or heard.

~ **Jon Whyte**

EXHIBITION-RELATED EVENTS

Exhibition Opening
Saturday, April 9, 7 to 9 PM
FREE

About the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

The Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies welcomes those who are drawn to the power and inspiration of these mountains. We are the gateway for experiencing and enjoying its art, culture and history in order to inspire and cultivate knowledge and the exchange of ideas. Visitors from near and far experience the Museum's galleries, programs, archives and library, heritage homes, museum shop, guided walks, tours, and special events.

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For more information about the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, contact:

Katie Daniel, Marketing & Communications Specialist
111 Bear St, Box 160, Banff, Alberta T1L 1A3
403-762-2291 ext. 316
kdaniel@whyte.org www.whyte.org