

The Pratt Museum Hosts “World on Fire” by American Artist Geoffrey C. Smith

Homer, Alaska (September 3, 2025)

New Special Exhibition in Homer at the Pratt Museum: “World on Fire”, Featuring Oil Paintings and Driftwood Sculpture by American Artist Geoffrey C. Smith



The Pratt Museum’s final special exhibition of the year will open in the Main Gallery on October 3, 2025 and be on display through January 3, 2026. A First Friday opening reception will be held at the Museum on Friday, October 3, 2025 from 4 – 6pm.

In *World on Fire*, American artist Geoffrey C. Smith brings viewers face-to-face with the wild heart of Alaska and the profound transformations it now endures. Painted over the course of three summers spent in the state’s most remote and majestic landscapes, this exhibition captures both the awe-inspiring beauty of Alaska’s wildlife and the subtle, sometimes startling signs of a world in flux.

Using a palette knife and bold, expressive strokes, Smith renders creatures like moose, polar bears, ravens, and brown bears with emotional intensity. Some of the works in the series are almost dreamlike: animals suspended in flame-colored fields, their forms emerging from abstract heat and color. Others are grounded in traditional realism: brown bears fishing for salmon, salmon threading their way upstream, and bull moose standing alert in the quiet boreal light. These moments speak not just to climate change, but to the deep, enduring beauty that still exists in our natural world.

It’s this tension between reverence and urgency, realism and abstraction that gives *World on Fire* its power. While the title conjures an image of devastation, the show itself is far more layered. It is not a

parade of catastrophe, but an act of bearing witness. The wild is still alive. The animals still move with grace and dignity. And the land, though changing, continues to inspire.

Smith, known for his large-scale bronze monuments and nationally recognized wildlife sculptures, approaches painting with the same sense of scale, presence, and emotional resonance. His background as a sculptor brings weight and structure to the compositions, while his painter's hand channels immediacy and energy. These paintings are not imagined; instead, built from time spent tracking animals in the field, observing migrations, watching ice melt, and listening to silence.

World on Fire speaks to institutions that recognize the transformative power of art to explore environmental change, cultural identity, and our relationship with place. It is a show that invites thoughtful dialogue between science and emotion, tradition and innovation, beauty and urgency. Rooted in firsthand observation and artistic mastery, the exhibition offers not only a striking visual experience but also a meaningful platform for public engagement. It appeals to museums and cultural foundations that seek to illuminate the challenges of our time while honoring the landscapes, species, and stories that define them. Through this work, art becomes a bridge connecting people to the natural world and to one another.

Ultimately, *World on Fire* is both an elegy and a celebration. A call to see more clearly, feel more deeply, and protect more fiercely.

About Geoffrey C. Smith Geoffrey has been characterized as a representational artist, although stylistically he may be viewed as a naturalist. Geoffrey's very large works and his signature artistic style can be deemed "loose, wherein the subjects of his work are represented by basic elements such as fingerprints suggesting feathers or fur. He mixes fine wax and oil paint, then uses a palette knife to sculpt the painting and giving his work a distinctive deeply dimensional feeling displaying large strokes and layers of texture. Geoffrey is a Conservationist and lover of nature. Much of his time, talent, and treasure goes toward supporting charities that foster his ideals. More information is available at <https://www.geffreycsmith.com/>.

About the Pratt Museum The mission of the Pratt Museum is to explore and preserve the culture, science, and art of the Kachemak Bay region. The Museum is open daily from 11am - 4pm every Tuesday - Saturday September 2, 2025 through May 23, 2026 and 10am-6pm from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Visit the Pratt Museum at 3779 Bartlett Street in Homer. Tel (907) 235-8635. More information is available at <http://www.prattmuseum.org/>.

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