Witness to the 20th Century: An Artistic Biography of Fritz Eichenberg
August 25 - October 29, 2000

Witness to the 20th Century: An Artistic Biography of Fritz Eichenberg opens the Guilford College Art Gallery's fall season in August, 2000. This engaging exhibition chronicles the life and career of Fritz Eichenberg, artist, printmaker, teacher, author, and social activist, whose life bore witness to the political military and social follies of the 20th century. This exhibition, the first comprehensive presentation produced with the cooperation of the Fritz Eichenberg Trust, contains previously unexhibited works from the artist's personal collection, as well as other pieces on loan from museums and private collectors.

Philip Harnden, an author, former publisher of The Other Side magazine, and an acquaintance of Eichenberg's, will present a talk titled, "The Spiritual Pilgrimage of Fritz Eichenberg" on Wednesday, October 4, 2000 at 7:30 p.m. in the Art Gallery. This event is free and the public is cordially invited.

The exhibition is organized into seven thematic sections that correspond to important phases of Eichenberg's life and career: introduction to the artist; his years as a student and commercial artist in Germany; his early years in New York; his success in book illustration; his religious-themed work; large-scale prints and portfolio projects; and autobiographical work. This structure conflates a scheme of ten autobiographical chapters devised by Eichenberg in 1986 for his final exhibition at Associated American Artists gallery in New York, but never realized by Eichenberg because of the onset of Parkinson's disease. Each part joins Eichenberg's works of the period with a chronology of his life, excerpts from his unpublished autobiography, and relevant text concerning concurrent world events. This synthesis of materials gives viewers both a sense of the context from which Eichenberg's images emerged and an opportunity to reflect personally upon the political and social issues that he presents.

Witness to the 20th Century was organized by the Vanderbilt University Fine Arts Gallery and curated by Robert Conway, Director of the Eichenberg Trust, and Walter Schatz. The exhibit is supported through through the generosity of the Louise Bullard Wallace Foundation; the Goethe-Institut Atlanta; and the Fritz Eichenberg Trust.