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Fine Arts Faculty Member Paul Martyka Mourned By Campus

Winthrop University

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Fine Arts Faculty Member Paul Martyka Mourned By Campus

Quick Facts

- The Detroit, Michigan, native taught drawing, painting and printmaking in the Department of Fine Arts.
- Funeral arrangements have not been completed.



ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – Long-time Winthrop University **Fine Arts Associate Professor Paul Martyka** passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, Jan. 27.

The Detroit, Michigan, native taught drawing, painting and printmaking in the **Department of Fine Arts**. Funeral arrangements have not been completed.

At a prayer vigil held Tuesday night at **Rutledge Building** in the printmaking studio, students and friends came together for a powerful display of love for their professor. As Martyka spent his last

hours in intensive care, his students recalled a man who ordered his life so that nothing was wasted, always put the students' interests first and displayed a quiet compassion and concern for their well-being. One of his favorite sayings was: "Now, get to work."

His admirers said Martyka had a knack for taking materials, redefining them as sculpture and changing their meaning. His printmaking abilities were equally gifted and were laden with icons and symbolism.

"Paul Martyka brought an unusual perspective to our art students," said **Tom Stanley**, department chair. "They regarded him fondly and with respect because of his influence and generosity as he urged others to become passionate about their work. As alum Joey Hays pointed out, 'He was such an amazing artist, teacher, mentor, and friend.' Paul was all about his students."

Chad Dresbach, chair of the **Department of Design**, said Martyka was a major factor in his decision to work at Winthrop. "His loss will be felt profoundly, and the gleam of the institution is slightly dimmed by this loss," Dresbach said. "A great man will be missed."

Before coming to Winthrop in 1979, Martyka worked as master printer at the **Michigan Workshop of Fine Prints** and completed a staff assistantship at the **University of Michigan**. In addition, his art has been displayed in many private, institutional, and corporate art collections and exhibitions.

At Winthrop, Martyka was the fourth recipient of **Winthrop's Elizabeth Dunlap Patrick Faculty Grant**, a grant established to further new work, research or collaboration by faculty culminating in an exhibition project in the **Patrick Gallery**. An exhibition of his hand-printed cut paper collages, called *Conversations with an Echo*, ran in fall 2009 in the Patrick Gallery.

One of the collages still hangs in the **DiGiorgio Campus Center** classroom across from the lobby desk. In the intricate details of this work, Martyka references cultural identities or art historical pieces

as inspiration for color and form.

The collages attracted regional attention and accolades poured in. In fall 2008, Martyka's collage Totemic Talk, was featured in the **S.C. State Museum's 20th Anniversary Juried Exhibition**, and won Best in Show and the museum's Purchase Award. His collages also have been featured in an **Arts Council of York County** exhibition.

Martyka earned his B.F.A. and M.F.A. degrees at Wayne State University and the University of Michigan, respectively.

For more information, contact **Judy Longshaw**, news and media services manager, at 803/323-2404 or longshawj@winthrop.edu.

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