

## **The Press Room**

### **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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May 23, 2007

### **CLEVELAND CLINIC OPENS “THE VISUAL VOICE: PAINTINGS BY SETH CHWAST” ON ITS MAIN CAMPUS AND BEACHWOOD FAMILY HEALTH CENTER**

Diagnosed With Autism as a Child, Seth Chwast Discovered His Artistic Talent at Age 20

Cleveland Clinic is exhibiting select paintings by Greater Cleveland artist Seth Chwast in the M lobby on main campus and in the Beachwood Family Health Center, May 22 through Sept. 29. The exhibit is titled “The Visual Voice: Paintings by Seth Chwast.”

Chwast was diagnosed with autism as a very young child. Knowing Chwast’s high non-verbal IQ, his parents attempted to find alternative methods of creative expression for Chwast to engage in. They signed him up for music and dance classes, but the dramatic change came at age 20, when he took an oil painting class at the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Chwast, who rarely speaks, began describing his world in paint. It turned out that he has an innate ability to mix colors and create amazing, large oil paintings that give a “voice” to his world and that connect with viewers of all kinds. Now 23 years old, Chwast has filled his entire house with his art.

Chwast chooses the subject matter, palette and does all of the painting. Through passionate discipline he has evolved his paintings into spectacular landscapes with aurora borealis skies and mysterious forests to magical worlds populated with griffins and Pegasus. He has translated his early obsession with horses and the love of repetition into immense color grids, and frequently engages in the discipline of the self-study, which is now one of his recurring subjects.

Chwast’s art has been featured in several recent exhibitions in the Cleveland area, and is in art collections both in the Cleveland area and nationally. Along with articles in the Cleveland Plain Dealer and the Cleveland Jewish News, a documentary about Chwast was shown on “Applause,” on WVIZ-Ideastream in 2006.

His work has also been featured on NBC’s “Today” show, and an exhibition of Chwast’s paintings will be included at the Ingenuity Festival in Cleveland, July 19-22nd. Seth Chwast is represented by the Red Dot Project. More information about his work can be seen at [www.reddotproject.org](http://www.reddotproject.org).

The paintings on view on main campus and in the Beachwood Family Health Center are on loan courtesy of the artist.

A reception for Seth Chwast will take place in Cleveland Clinic’s Bunts Auditorium lobby on Tuesday, June 5, 5:30-7:30 pm. For more information or inquiries about the artwork, please contact Cleveland Clinic’s Art Program at 216-297-8941 or [sherwod@ccf.org](mailto:sherwod@ccf.org).

The mission of The Cleveland Clinic Art Program is to enrich, inspire and enliven our patients, visitors, employees and community and to embody the core values of the institution: collaboration, quality, integrity, compassion, and commitment.

The collection evidences a commitment to supporting the national and local arts communities. An emphasis on contemporary art fosters an environment of creative excellence, encourages dialogue and challenges viewers to experience diverse points of view. The art reflects an interest in underlying concepts such as innovation, teamwork and service which are fundamental cornerstones of The Cleveland Clinic.

Cleveland Clinic, located in Cleveland, Ohio, is a not-for-profit multispecialty academic

medical center that integrates clinical and hospital care with research and education. Cleveland Clinic was founded in 1921 by four renowned physicians with a vision of providing outstanding patient care based upon the principles of cooperation, compassion and innovation. U.S. News & World Report consistently names Cleveland Clinic as one of the nation's best hospitals in its annual "America's Best Hospitals" survey. Approximately 1,800 full-time salaried physicians and researchers at Cleveland Clinic and Cleveland Clinic Florida represent more than 100 medical specialties and subspecialties. In 2005, there were 2.9 million outpatient visits to Cleveland Clinic. Patients came for treatment from every state and from more than 80 countries. There were nearly 54,000 hospital admissions to Cleveland Clinic in 2005. Cleveland Clinic's Web site address is [www.clevelandclinic.org](http://www.clevelandclinic.org).

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