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**Media Web site:** [americanart.si.edu/press](http://americanart.si.edu/press)

**Media preview:** Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2009; 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

## **“What’s It All Mean: William T. Wiley in Retrospect” Fact Sheet**

### **Exhibition**

“What’s It All Mean: William T. Wiley in Retrospect”

Oct. 2, 2009 – Jan. 24, 2010

### **Location**

Smithsonian American Art Museum

Eighth and F streets N.W.

### **Description**

William Wiley (b. 1937) has stood the test of time in the face of changing styles, successive movements, critical theories and passing fashion. His self-deprecating humor and sense of the absurd make his art accessible to even those who do not comprehend his more ambiguous ideas, allusions, narratives, private symbols and layers of meaning. Puns are fun, and they make more palatable his deadly serious commentary on war, pollution, global warming, racial tension and other threats to contemporary civilization. His work pays homage to earlier artists whose art has been important to him with the same good-natured mocking.

“What’s It All Mean: William T. Wiley in Retrospect,” the first full-scale look at Wiley’s career since 1979, features approximately 100 works from the late 1960s to the present, borrowed from public and private collections as well as from the artist. It will provide a serious overview of Wiley’s career while exploring important themes and ideas expressed in his work. Joann Moser, senior curator for graphic arts, is the curator of the exhibition.

### **Publication**

A fully-illustrated catalog written by Moser will accompany the exhibition.

### **Tour**

Following its presentation in Washington, the exhibition will travel through 2010.

### **Credit**

“What’s It All Mean: William T. Wiley in Retrospect” is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum is located above the Gallery Place/Chinatown Metrorail station. Open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., except Dec. 25. Admission is free. Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000; (202) 633-5285 (TTY). Recorded museum information: (202) 633-7970. Web sites: [americanart.si.edu](http://americanart.si.edu) and [reynoldscenter.org](http://reynoldscenter.org).

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