

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

February 24, 2009

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**PITTSBURGH MURALIST DOUGLAS COOPER
FEATURED SPEAKER AT THE STATE MUSEUM**

Author of Steel Shadows

Harrisburg, PA – Douglas Cooper, Civic Muralist and Professor of Architecture for the Carnegie School of Architecture, Carnegie Mellon University, will present a gallery talk titled *Story Murals* on Sunday, March 8, 2009 at 2:00 pm. in the first floor gallery of The State Museum of Pennsylvania. This talk coincides with Charter Day 2009, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's commemoration of the founding of Pennsylvania in 1681 and the Charter given to William Penn by King Charles II of England. Admission is FREE to the public. No advance registration is required.

Over the years, Doug Cooper has created public murals for cities in Pennsylvania and around the world. One of the unique aspects of these murals is the way in which they integrate stories—and even drawings—culled from the artist's interaction with local residents. Professor Cooper will describe what led him to work in this way and retell some of the stories behind his civic murals. He will also discuss one of his most recent works, commissioned for the executive boardroom of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission headquarters. A full-size reproduction is on display at The State Museum of Pennsylvania. Copies of *Steel Shadows*, a book which explores Cooper's Pittsburgh murals, will be available for purchase and signing.

Professor Cooper's lecture is the last of a series of three gallery talks being offered in conjunction with *A Common Canvas*, a special exhibit at The State Museum of Pennsylvania on view through May 17. This special exhibit offers visitors a glimpse of some of the extraordinary murals and sculptures created for Pennsylvania post offices during the New Deal, and the stories behind the artwork.

The State Museum's Dr. Curt Miner, senior curator of Popular Culture and co-curator of *A Common Canvas* will be available for discussion after the talk.

The State Museum of Pennsylvania, located at 300 North Street, is one of 25 historic sites and museums on the Pennsylvania Trail of History™, administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 9 am to 5 pm., and Sunday, 12 Noon to 5 pm. Closed Mondays. Individuals who need special assistance should call (717) 787-6887 or the Pennsylvania TDD relay service at (800) 654-5984. More information on The State Museum is available online at www.statemuseumpa.org.