

F O R W A R D

I met Ross Coates for the first time twelve years ago, while I was wandering the halls of Washington State University's School of Art and contemplating a cross-country move from Miami, Florida to the Northwest Palouse. Ross, a Professor of Art at WSU, was teaching at the time and he invited me into the studio. We talked about art and its making, about being an artist, and about living in the Northwest. That informal meeting left an indelible mark in my memory. From this artist, this person, flowed an aura of exuberance and joy, and an inquisitiveness about people and places and I left that informal meeting with a sense that I had just met someone special.

Twelve year later, I have had the great pleasure of getting to know Ross and know that my first impressions were sound. His stories have continued to unfold to me as we have prepared this exhibition and catalog of his work. Both figuratively and literally, his artwork is generated from his travels through life. His stories – rich with tales of travel, personal anecdotes, memories of friends and family, incidents and coincidences and observations – are compiled in the artwork he creates. These works are made from objects encountered in his journey through life.

I extend a special thanks to the artist and to Marilyn Lysohir Coates whose unbounded enthusiasm for this project has propelled it to reality.

There are many organizations and individuals to thank: Ron Glowen, Alberto Mayo, Patricia Watkinson, Luisa Betancourt, Deborah Haynes, Jeremy Caddy and Meagan Rhoades and Arwyn Larson, who all contributed thoughtful insights on the work and on the artist; Fox Mountain LLC for their support of this project; special thanks to Terry Cho and Sancho of Seattle, Washington for accepting the daunting task of designing the book and for their sensitive solutions to the many problems that they faced with equanimity; and thanks to the many photographers who documented over the years, particularly Mark LaMoreaux, Michele Kimberling, Ann Saberi, and Stephen Keen.

I would like to extend thanks to the University of Idaho, the Idaho Commission on the Arts, and the Friends of the Prichard Art Gallery, for their support and encouragement in presenting leading contemporary artists to our audiences.

Gail Siegel

Director

University of Idaho

Pritchard Art Gallery