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Emily Dickinson Museum and Emily Dickinson International Society Present Exhibition by Artist Alberto Mancini

AMHERST, Mass.— I'll tell you how the Sun rose, an exhibition by Italian artist Alberto Mancini, will be on view at the Eli Marsh Gallery at Amherst College from Sunday, Aug. 3, to Sunday, Aug. 10. The exhibit, sponsored by the Emily Dickinson Museum, includes 29 paintings inspired by the poetry of Emily Dickinson and is on view in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Emily Dickinson International Society (EDIS). The Society will hold its annual meeting in Amherst this year on the weekend of Aug. 1.

Even the most dedicated student of Dickinson will see her work in a new light as a consequence of viewing Mancini's paintings, said Jane Wald, executive director of the Emily Dickinson Museum. "It is an insightful and provocative body of work by Mancini," she explained. "It's no small achievement to engage Dickinson's poetry so sympathetically and perceptively in the visual arts."

More a conversation with the poet than a systematic interpretation, Mancini's exhibition has no central thesis, but rather serves as a series of visual rejoinders to Dickinson's interest in the endless flux of human perception. The artist's fascination with transfiguration derives in part from a personal encounter with rebirth that took place in 1990, when a cerebral hemorrhage left him in a coma for six weeks and resulted in partial paralysis that lingered for two years. Fighting back from memory loss so profound that for a time he didn't know his name, he witnessed first-hand the way worlds materialize unexpectedly, flooding darkness with light.

"His title for this exhibit, I'll tell you how the Sun rose, indicates that he is still transported by the beauty of that awakening," remarked Paul Crumbley, president of the Emily Dickinson International Society.

Now in his late 40s, Mancini lives in the small village of Atina, between Naples and Rome, where his family has lived for more than 400 years; he also spends part of the year in Easthampton, Mass. His paintings have been exhibited throughout Italy, in Saudi Arabia and Florida and most recently in a solo exhibition at The Morrison Gallery in Kent, Conn. He was the youngest recipient of the Golden Lion Medal, the highest honor awarded by the Ministry of Art and Culture in Venice.

The 2008 meeting to celebrate the 20th anniversary of EDIS will take place at Amherst College and will introduce the first Dickinson Discussion Institute. Appearing as featured speakers at the event—which is dedicated to the general theme of celebration—are poets Mark Doty, Elizabeth Willis and Michael Ryan. For more information about the Emily Dickinson International Society, visit their Web site at www.emilydickinsoninternationalsociety.org.

The Emily Dickinson Museum, comprising the Dickinson Homestead and The Evergreens, two historic house museums in Amherst, is devoted to the story and legacy of poet Emily Dickinson and her family. Both properties are owned by the Trustees of Amherst College. The museum is overseen by a separate board of governors charged with raising its operating and capital funds. The Dickinson Homestead was the birthplace and residence of the poet (1830-1886), while the Evergreens was the 1856 home of the poet's brother and sister-in-law, Austin and Susan Dickinson.

The Emily Dickinson Museum is located at 280 Main Street in Amherst, Mass. Hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., March through December, with extended hours, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., June through August.

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