



## NMSU Library News Release

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### Painting Commemorating September 11 On Permanent Exhibit at University Library



*Joan Zuhl with her painting, "9/11."*

Most Americans were profoundly affected by the events of September 11. Las Cruces artist Joan Zuhl is no exception. After watching CNN nonstop for a few days, she was inspired to express her strong emotions through her art. The result is a striking contemporary painting, acrylic on canvas, entitled "9/11." The painting is on permanent display on the third floor of Zuhl Library on the New Mexico State University campus.

Zuhl, whose professional name is Joan Talty, worked continuously on the painting until it was finished. Her largest piece of artwork to date, the three panels express her initial pain and anger at the attacks, the eventual resolution of her feelings into hope and faith, and her belief in the energy and resilience of the American people.

With her husband, Herbert Zuhl, Joan moved from New York City to Las Cruces in 1991. Manhattan, where the Zuhls ran a gallery for six years, has a special place in her heart. The Zuhls returned to New York a month after the attacks, keeping a previously made appointment for October 12.

Taught music as a child by her mother, Zuhl originally aspired to a career as a pianist, and she studied music at Sarah Lawrence College. When she returned home from college, bedridden from an illness, she began to draw in bed. She credits her recovery to her drawing and says that throughout her life, art has made her well.

At the suggestion of both an uncle and a Sarah Lawrence sculpture instructor, Zuhl studied at the prestigious Art Students League of New York, whose alumni includes such noted contemporary artists as Georgia O'Keeffe, Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollack. Founded by and for artists, the Art Students League provided an intensive course of instruction that nurtured Zuhl's creativity.

Zuhl has some advice for aspiring artists. Work hard, believe in yourself and don't be discouraged. She says, "Don't give up before the miracle." It is also important to attend a good school and have good rapport with your instructors.

In addition to Zuhl's large painting "9/11," which is displayed in a public space, additional paintings by Zuhl are hung in offices in Zuhl Library and the NMSU Advancement Office. In March 2000, Joan and Herbert Zuhl pledged a donation of \$3 million to NMSU as a naming gift for what was then called the New Library.

Zuhl Library also houses and showcases the Zuhl Geological Collection, consisting of more than one thousand pieces of petrified wood, fossils and minerals. Zuhl is appreciative of the artistic qualities of the collection, describing them as God's art and nature's sculptures.

The painting "9/11" and the Zuhl Geological Collection are available for public viewing on a walk-in basis at Zuhl Library. For more information, call Library Dean Elizabeth Titus at 646-1508.