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ENTERTAINMENT

Marvel superheroes coming to Sheboygan in upcoming exhibit of works by artist Alex Ross



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SHEBOYGAN - The works of Alex Ross, referred to by some as the “Norman Rockwell of comics,” will soon be on display in Sheboygan.

The Sheboygan County Historical Society & Museum has announced it will be one of the first places in the country and only current Wisconsin venue to host “Marvelocity: The Art of Alex Ross.”

The exhibit opens April 2 and runs through June 25 at the museum, 3110 Erie Ave., Sheboygan.

Considered to be one of the greatest comic book artists of all-time, Ross has created some of the most iconic images of superheroes. The exhibit is largely based on Ross’ 2018 book, “Marvelocity: The Marvel Comics Art of Alex Ross.” The retrospective coffee-table-style book, published with Chip Kidd, demonstrates the depth of Ross’ talent in bringing the characters of the Marvel universe to life. His creations of familiar characters such as Spider-Man, the Avengers, and others bridge the space between reality and fantasy.

Included in the exhibit is one of Ross’ first forays into drawing superheroes — his Spidey-Man drawing created at age 4.

After seeing Spider-Man on PBS’s “The Electric Company,” Ross set out to become a comic book illustrator.

At age 13, he was scripting and drawing original comic books.

His post-high school education at the American Academy of Art in Chicago led to his use

of live models, a technique he still uses today.

Working from photographs of models posing, sometimes wearing character costumes he has designed, Ross creates his works first with sketches, then with gouache paint. None of it is done by computer.

Ross' photorealistic style has led some to call him the "Norman Rockwell of comics." That, combined with his commitment to the craft, has resulted in his nearly three decades of work in the comic book industry.

In 1994, Ross' paintings of Marvel Comics' central characters were featured in the groundbreaking comic book event "Marvels."

Two years later, his comic book series "Kingdom Come" marked the transition from the "Dark Age" to the "Modern Age" in comics, a new era marked by optimism and strong superheroes, a news release said.

Ross has been recognized many times for his work. He won the Comic Buyer's Guide award for Favorite Painter so many times the award was retired in 2001 when he won for the seventh year in a row. He also created a limited-edition promotional poster for the Academy Awards and in 2015 became the first artist in 30 years to paint The Beatles.

MORE: Sheboygan native Tim Jacob was part of the expedition that found Ernest Shackleton's sunken ship, the Endurance, off Antarctica.

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"Marvelocity: The Art of Alex Ross" will feature more than 50 pieces created by Ross, including sketches, original illustrations for the "Marvelocity" book, full-size head busts and childhood works. It will also tell the story of Ross' emergence from childhood drawings and models to the preliminary sketches that form the basis of his fine art depictions of today's most popular superheroes.

"Once upon a time, there was a little boy who decided that drawing superheroes was his only realistic option, if he couldn't actually become one," Ross said in the news release.

Admission to the exhibit is \$9 for adults, \$7 for ages 62 and older, \$7 for active military members, \$5 for ages 6-17, and free for ages 0-5 and museum members.

The museum is open 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Mondays-Fridays and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturdays.

More information is at sheboyganmuseum.org or call 920-458-1103.

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