



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 9, 2010

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### **The Swedish Invasion Continues in Colorado**

Artist Birger Sandzén to be featured in Christmas Day CPT12 documentary,  
"Sandzén: Ecstasy of Color"

Denver, CO – The Larsson Millennium trilogy...IKEA coming to Denver...master artist Birger Sandzén. Interest in all things Swedish and their super-sized cultural impact seems to be sweeping the nation and right here in Colorado, a special spotlight will illuminate the artist phenomenon Sandzén on Colorado Public Television. In partnership with documentarian Joshua Hassel, CPT12, is delighted to shine our lens on Swede turned Kansan and part-time Coloradan Birger Sandzén with a 6 p.m. Christmas Day debut of "Sandzén: Ecstasy of Color."

Often compared with Van Gogh, Sandzén was part of the Swedish National Movement that adapted impressionist and pointillist styles with subject matter native to his homeland. With his immigration to Lindsborg, Kansas in 1894 and to Bethany College where he would later become Director of the Art Department, Sandzén began to capture the color and drama of his new home. With adventures into Colorado and the entire southwest, Sandzén found his visual voice in a thick impasto style.

"The art of Birger Sandzén is beautifully adapted to the interpretation of the American Rocky Mountains. Our Rockies are stark, strong, ruthless things..." "Birger Sandzén knows the mood of nature. He goes to it unafraid. And comes back triumphant, capturing it, subduing it, translating it into human terms." "He grapples with its joy. He translates its terror and dread without compromise, without understatement."<sup>1</sup>

"We're delighted to highlight the life and work of a master painter who spent many summers in Manitou Springs and Estes Park and who took great inspiration from the landscapes we call home here in Colorado," said Willard D. "Wick" Rowland Jr., President and CEO of CPT12. "This program is a great example of the diverse and high quality programming that CPT12 enjoys presenting, providing opportunities for our audience to learn and discover interesting the facets of our communities, state and world."

Birger Sandzén first visited the Rocky Mountains of Colorado in 1908 and began painting in the Colorado Springs area around 1916. The artist made his first trip to New Mexico in 1918 and was a frequent visitor to Santa Fe and Taos in the years

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<sup>1</sup> William Allen White, Editor of the Emporia Kansas Gazette

that followed. Sandzén spent the summers of 1923-24 teaching at the Broadmoor Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado (presently the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center). Birger also taught at the Chappell House summer program in Estes Park, Colorado (the forerunner to the Denver Art Museum).<sup>2</sup>

“With the recent renewal of interest in Sandzén and with a personal admiration of Birger Sandzén’s dynamic color-pact painting style, the time was right to produce a documentary about his life and artwork,” said Joshua Hassel, producer of the program. “A Sandzén painting was recently highly valued on “Antiques Roadshow,” an exhibit at David Cook Galleries in Denver was held in 2009 and a major exhibit at the Palm Springs Art Museum was held this year. In 2011 there is a significant exhibit planned at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center. “Sandzén: Ecstasy of Color” tells the story of a true original whose bold, brilliantly colored paintings forged a link from impressionism to abstraction.”

### **About Colorado Public Television – CPT12 (formerly KBDI)**

Colorado Public Television, celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010, has set itself apart with carriage of an unparalleled amount of local public affairs programming. Channel 12’s “community voice” programming engages viewers in community-based discussions of state, national and global issues. The station delivers three digital channels: its flagship main broadcast signal with a strong mix of local, national and international programming (12.1); the best of independently produced documentaries, music, travel, exercise, cooking, public affairs and more (12.2); and MHz Worldview, a channel providing international news from five continents and diverse cultural perspectives for a globally minded audience (12.3).

cpt12.org

*World View – Community Voice*

This program airs on December 25 at 6 p.m and 11 p.m. and again on December 26 at 4 a.m.

To see a preview, go to

[http://www.cpt12.org/tv\\_schedule/program\\_details.cfm?series\\_id=37888638](http://www.cpt12.org/tv_schedule/program_details.cfm?series_id=37888638).

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<sup>2</sup> LegendFineArts.com.

Program funding for "Sandzén: Ecstasy of Color" provided by:

Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation

Anschutz Foundation

Jim Prugh

Robert and Julie Lewis

Robert and Gwen Tyler Charitable Foundation

Evan and Elizabeth Anderman

Edenhurst Gallery

David Cook Galleries

Alan and Carol Ann Olson

Dana Crawford

Kathy Loo

Jeane and Justin Hilb

Simon K. Chiu

R.S. Westin

Ruth Browne

In-kind services provided by:

The Swedish Country Inn

David Cook Galleries

The Oxford Hotel

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