Gregory Van Maanen:
The Happy Survivor

January 25–March 29, 2009
The materials included in this notebook offer background information about the war in Vietnam to help place Gregory Van Maanen’s military service between June 1968 and January 1970 within a historical context. A brief definition of PTSD, as well as a short history of this disorder are included to explain the condition which has had such a profound effect on the artist’s life. Also included are a bibliography of selected books and films about the Vietnam War from the past four decades, and a list of the public programs the Memorial Art Gallery is offering in conjunction with this exhibition.

This information may be found on the Gallery’s website under Current Exhibitions: *Gregory Van Maanen: The Happy Survivor*. Please feel free to share responses to your Gallery visit on the museum’s newly launched blog:

https://blogs.rochester.edu/MAG/
February 8, 2009
3:00 pm
Auditorium
Dr. Jonathan Shay, a nationally-known psychiatrist who has worked with veterans in the Boston area and a 2007 MacArthur Fellow, has written studies of Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and their clear parallels to the plight of soldiers today. Shay’s explorations of these connections will be subject of his lecture as they are in his two acclaimed books, *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character* and *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming*.

Sponsored by Robert Lewis and Florence Foster Berg Fund, with additional support from the Educational Endowment Fund, the Department of Psychiatry of the University of Rochester Medical Center, and the Interdisciplinary Cluster for Humanities and Health Care administered by the Center for Ethics, Humanities and Palliative Care at the University of Rochester Medical Center.

March 1, 2009
3:00 pm
Auditorium
*When Will the Wolf Return? Gregory Van Maanen in Context*
Randall Morris, Director, Cavin–Morris Gallery, New York
Randall Morris is director of the Cavin–Morris Gallery, New York, the gallery that represents Van Maanen’s work. Morris is a frequent contributor to journals and anthologies dedicated to the work of self-taught artists, also referred to as outsider or visionary artists.

March 22, 2009
3:00 pm
Auditorium
*Reflections on Images of War from the Gallery’s Collection*
Dr. Hannah Solky, clinical associate professor of psychiatry, University of Rochester and a Gallery docent.
What is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder?
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, PTSD, is an anxiety disorder that can develop after exposure to a terrifying event or ordeal in which grave physical harm occurred or was threatened. Traumatic events that may trigger PTSD include violent personal assaults, natural or human-caused disasters, accidents, or military combat.

Signs & Symptoms
People with PTSD have persistent frightening thoughts and memories of their ordeal and feel emotionally numb, especially with people they were once close to. They may experience sleep problems, feel detached or numb, or be easily startled.

*This definition of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is from the National Institute of Mental Health.*

History of PTSD
Medical literature of the American Civil War refers to a condition suffered by soldiers that was commonly referred to as “soldier’s heart.” It was later named “Da Costa’s Syndrome” for the physician who studied this condition with symptoms similar to heart disease but without any physiological evidence. In the early decades of the 20th century, Freud’s patient/pupil Abram Kardiner was the first in the scientific community to describe the symptoms that came to be known as PTSD. During the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–1905, the Russians were the first to diagnose and treat a mental disease that was the result of war stress.

In World War I, PTSD was called “shell shock,” so named by medical officer Charles Myers, as it was initially believed to be a physical injury to the nerves due to close proximity to bombs, etc. During World War II, it came to be known as “battle fatigue.” Throughout both world wars, developing knowledge of the condition, its causes and treatments was modest and fraught with misunderstanding. Both the military command and medical professionals were skeptical. Military leaders felt that a soldier’s first battle should steel the combatants against any “future stresses. Civilians, leaders and doctors could not understand or sympathize with those suffering, and believed “combat stress reaction” (the military’s term for PTSD) was due to the sufferer’s weakness and/or cowardice.

PTSD was brought to the world’s attention as a legitimate disorder only after Vietnam veterans vocally insisted on the condition’s recognition. The veterans’ success can be seen in the disorder’s addition to the American Psychiatric Association’s *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)*, and the fact that PTSD is often associated with them. For years, it was actually called “Post–Vietnam Syndrome.” The inclusion in the American Psychiatric Association’s *DSM* encouraged research and the recognition of medical professionals to diagnose and treat those suffering from PTSD.

*This history of Post–Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is based on educational materials developed by the National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum in Chicago, Illinois.*
Chronology of the Vietnam War
Developed by National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum, Chicago Illinois

President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933–1945)
1941 May Formation of the Vietminh.

July Japanese wrest control of Vietnam (named Annam by Imperial France) from French.

President Harry S. Truman (1945–1953)
1945 Vietminh demand Vietnamese independence from Imperial France and Japan.


1946 December French refuse to abandon their ambitions for Vietnam. War breaks out between the French and Vietnamese. Start of first Vietnam War; also called the Indochina War.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953–1961)
1954 May The Battle of Dien Bien Phu; following this: the Geneva Accords.

1950 Ngo Dinh Diem refuses participation in upcoming scheduled elections. US assists and backs Diem's regime.


President John F. Kennedy (1961–1963)

1963 November US and South Vietnamese have had enough of President Ngo Dinh Diem's administration. There is a military uprising to oust Diem, backed by the US. President Diem and his brother, Ngo Dinh Nhu, are assassinated on the first of the month.

Before he is assassinated, US President Kennedy expresses desire to reduce number of American military advisors in Vietnam. By this time, there are 16,000 American military advisors in Vietnam.
President Lyndon B. Johnson (1963–1969)

1964 August On the second of this month, the North Vietnamese attack the USS Maddox. On the seventh, the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution is passed by the US Senate.


1966 Number of American troops in South Vietnam reaches 190,000.

1967 Nguyen Van Thieu is elected president of South Vietnam.

1968 January Tet Offensive takes place.

March 16 My Lai incident occurs.


1970 April Nixon announces to country that US and South Vietnamese troops have invaded Cambodia to oust Vietcong camps and stop supply and personnel lines to North Vietnamese forces.

May 4 Kent State University tragedy occurs.

1971 Nguyen Van Thieu is elected president of the Republic of Vietnam.


February POWs begin to come home.

March Last of US combat troops leave Vietnam.


1975 North Vietnamese offensive launched against South Vietnam. US Congress denies South Vietnam’s requests for US aid; South Vietnamese president Thieu flees the northern half of South Vietnam.

April 30 North Vietnamese troops march into Saigon.

1976 July Vietnam is formally reunified. Saigon is renamed Ho Chi Minh City.
Selected Books on the Vietnam War


Del Vecchio, John M. *The 13th Valley.* (Bantam Books, 1982)


Fall, Bernard B. *Street Without Joy.* (Stackpole Books, 1961)

Glasser M.D., Ronald J. *365 Days.* (George Braziller, 1971)


King, Stephen. *Hearts in Atlantis.* (G.K. Hall, 1999)


McNamara, Robert S. and Brian Vandemark. *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam.* (David McKay, 1996)

Moore, Harold G. and Joseph Galloway. *We Were Soldiers Once…and Young: la Drang – The Battle that Changed the War in Vietnam.* (Harper Trade, 1993)

Myers, Walter Dean. *Fallen Angels.* (Scholastic, 2003)


Santoli, Al. *Everything We Had.* (Ballantine Books, 1981)


Shay, Jonathan. *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming.* (Scribner, 2002)

Selected Movies on the Vietnam War

*Hearts and Minds* (1974)

*Coming Home* (1978)

*The Deer Hunter* (1978)

*Go Tell the Spartans* (1978)

*Apocalypse Now* (1979)

*Uncommon Valor* (1983)

*Platoon* (1986)

*Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam* (1987)

*Full Metal Jacket* (1987)

*Good Morning, Vietnam!* (1987)

*The Hanoi Hilton* (1987)

*Born on the Fourth of July* (1989)

*Casualties of War* (1989)

*Heaven and Earth* (1993)

*The Bright Shining Lie* (1998)

*We Were Soldiers* (2002)


*Return With Honor* (2008)
Images of War and Warriors from the Ancient World to Contemporary Times: Art from the Permanent Collection of the Memorial Art Gallery

Dr. Hannah Solky will present a lecture on these and related images on March 22, 2009 at 3:00 pm.

Etruscan Warrior, 5th Century BCE (53.41)

Mycenaean Krater, 1275 BCE–1225 BCE (51.203)

Mycenaean Krater, 1275 BCE–1225 BCE (51.204)

Brunswick Armory
Partial Armor made for the Dukes of Brunswick–Wolfenbüttel, 1560s
Breastplate, 1562 (2006.57)
Historical and Mythological Images

Anthony Van Dyke
*Portrait of an Italian Nobleman*, 1622–1625
(68.100)

Sir Henry Raeburn
*General Hay MacDowell*, ca. 1805
(68.102)

Peter Paul Rubens (studio of)
*Ulysses Landing on the Island of the Phaeacians*, after 1625
(61.27)

Francesco Solimena
*The Triumph of Judith*, 1704–1708
(77.109)

Bernard Duvivier,
*Cleopatra Captured by Roman Soldiers after the Death of Mark Antony*, 1789
(84.40)

James Henry Beard
*The Night Before the Battle*, 1865
(78.15)
20th Century

George Grosz, *The Wanderer*, 1943
(51.6)

Norman Rockwell, *Soldier on Leave*, 1944
(74.98)

Contemporary

(2004.13)

(2006.07)
To encourage visitation of this exhibition and attendance at related programming, the Memorial Art Gallery has worked with the following community educational and service organizations:

Department of Psychiatry, University of Rochester Medical Center

Rochester Outpatient VA Clinic and Canandaigua VA Medical Center

Vet Center

Veterans Outreach Center, Inc.

As a community service, educational materials from these organizations are included here for visitors to take if interested.