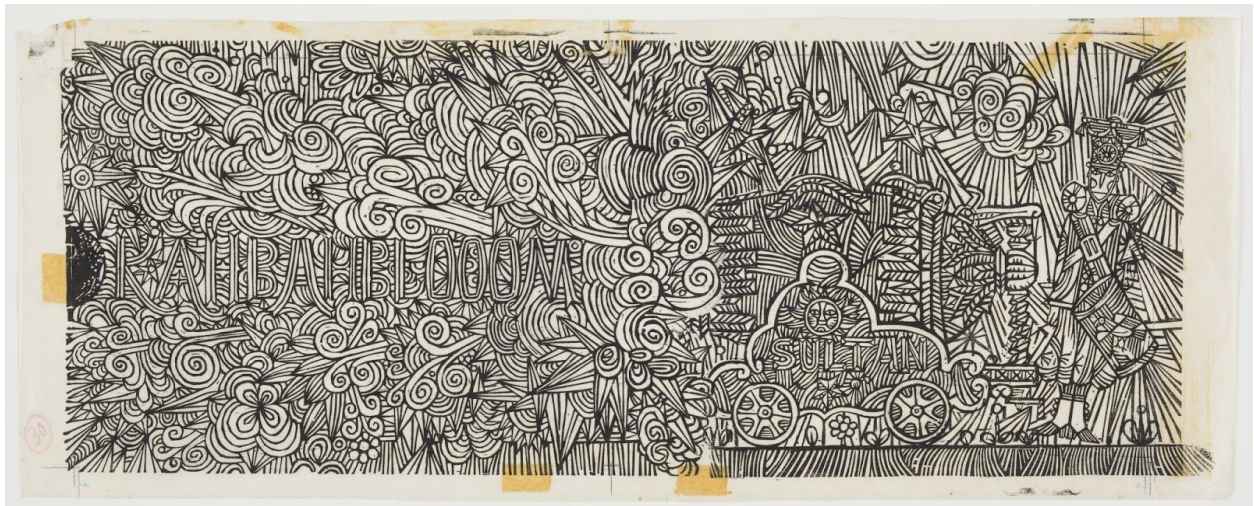


**KAHBAHBLOOM: THE ART AND STORYTELLING OF ED EMBERLEY,
FIRST CAREER-SPANNING EXHIBITION FOR ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S
FOREMOST PICTURE BOOK ARTISTS, AT THE WORCESTER ART MUSEUM**

**Selected from the Thousands of Never-Before-Exhibited
Original Works In Emberley's Own Archive,
Kahbahbloom Showcases the Artist's Skill, Styles, and Teaching Methods**

Worcester, MA—June 1, 2016—Opening this fall at the Worcester Art Museum is the first comprehensive retrospective for artist Ed Emberley, among the most prolific and respected illustrators of children's literature of the last 60 years. *KAHBAHBLOOM: The Art and Storytelling of Ed Emberley* draws on the Massachusetts-based artist's personal archive of original hand-drawn sketches, woodblock prints, final proofs, and first edition books to survey Emberley's career and examine his influence on generations of readers and nascent artists. An interactive exhibition for intergenerational audiences, the show includes a specially designed reading area, as well as an active drop-in studio program where visitors of all ages can try their hand at making art using the lessons from Emberley's books, at a replica of Emberley's own studio table. *KAHBAHBLOOM* opens November 16, 2016, and will run through April 9, 2017, and is being curated by artist, writer, and historian Caleb Neelon, in partnership with the Museum's Audience Engagement Division.



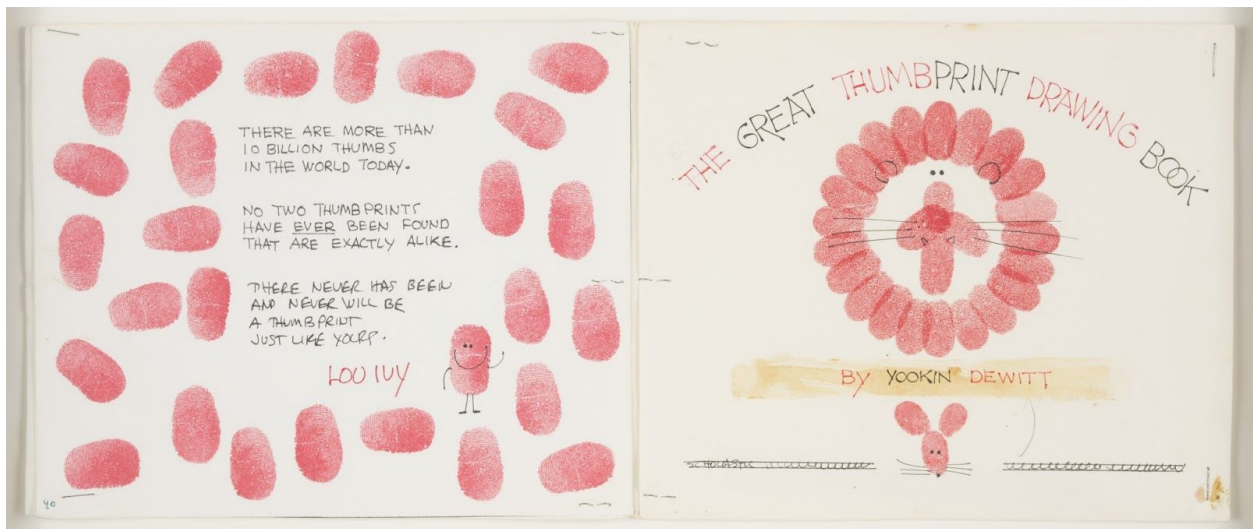
"KAHBAHBLOOM" woodblock print for production of *Drummer Hoff*, written and illustrated by Ed Emberley, 1967

Emberley's career as an artist for children began in 1961 with *The Wing on a Flea: A Book About Shapes*, which was on the list of the top 10 *New York Times* illustrated books of the year, and was an American Library Association (ALA) Notable Book. Since then, Emberley's output includes the Caldecott Honored *One Wide River To Cross* (1965), the Caldecott Medal-winning *Drummer Hoff* (1967), the bestselling *Go Away, Big Green Monster* (1992), and over 100 others. He was and remains unusual for a children's book illustrator, with a style and approach that varied radically from book to book. As a result, some of his books have become out-of-print cult

classics, such as *Suppose You Met a Witch* (1973) and *The Wizard of Op* (1975), respected more now than they were at the time they were first published.

In 1970, Emberley published his first teaching book, *Ed Emberley's Drawing Book of Animals*, which launched a series and remains one of the bestselling books of its kind. Focused on teaching children and young adults an 'alphabet' of simple shapes and marks, the books show step-by-step ways to draw faces, dragons, boats, devils, outer-space scenes, and more. These books—including *Ed Emberley's Thumbprint Drawing Book* (1977), *Ed Emberley's Big Green Drawing Book* (1979), and many more—have had an enduring impact on a generation of professional artists and illustrators working today.

"It only took two of Ed Emberley's drawing books to change me forever and set me on a path as an artist," said guest curator Caleb Neelon. "He is so restlessly creative that he worked in radically different ways, changing styles and media from book to book, and that's quite unusual. *Kahbahbloom* allows viewers to experience all of Ed's diverse output and artistic energy, going beyond the books and into his entire creative process."



Mockup pages for *Ed Emberley's Great Thumbprint Drawing Book*, 1977

KAHBAHBLOOM will be organized into sections that represent the primary media and methods of Emberley's work as a picture-book artist, including over 100 works of art from Emberley's own archive, and a presentation of all 100+ of Emberley's books. The exhibition will also include a variety of interactive areas, where visitors, including families with children, can explore both the artistic techniques and books in greater detail. The exhibition will feature:

- A section examining Emberley's Drawing Books, including original mockup pages he created for his editors. Among these are Thumbprint Drawing Book mockups with Emberley's own thumbprints.
- A stylized reproduction of the artist's drawing and light table from his home studio, where participants of all ages can try their hand at his techniques.

- A section on Emberley’s use of printmaking media, ranging from his Caldecott-winning woodcuts, to silkscreen media of hand-cut rubylith, to cut cardboard and other media so simple they could be replicated in most any household with available materials.
- Another section focuses on Emberley’s story books, exploring the artist’s lyrical and imaginative hand-drawn works, including both mockups and finished products. Also included are a range of other sketches that Emberley experimented with but that never made it into print. The section will provide insight into his techniques as an artist and the process of developing illustrations to accompany a story.

“The art of the picture book may just be the most important art form there is, because it is the picture book that introduces most of us to art when we are children,” said Adam Rozan, director of audience engagement at the Museum. “Ed Emberley’s art engages on multiple levels. His use of line and color, and his evolving styles, demonstrate that illustrators are as much a part of art history and culture as photographers, painters, and sculptors. At the same time, by creating an exhibition that is as inviting as a ‘book nook’ at school or in a library, Emberley’s work inspires and cultivates the next generation of art lovers, artists, and museum visitors.”

Edward R. Emberley was born in Malden, Massachusetts, in 1931. He received a BFA from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design in painting and illustration. In 1955, he married Barbara Collins, who became his partner in life and work, along with their two children, Michael and Rebecca, who continue in the family business of books for children. Ed and Barbara have lived in the same 300-year-old house in Ipswich for more than fifty years.

KAHBAHBLOOM: The Art and Storytelling of Ed Emberley is guest curated by artist, writer and historian Caleb Neelon and is co-curated by the Worcester Art Museum’s Audience Engagement Division, including: Adam Rozan, Director of Audience Engagement; Marcia Lagerwey, Curator of Education; and Katrina Stacy, Associate Curator of Education. Neelon—an international public artist — has authored or collaborated on more than twenty books on urban history and art, including the landmark *The History of American Graffiti*, co-authored with Roger Gastman (HarperCollins, 2011), and *ED EMBERLEY*, a retrospective he co-authored with Todd Oldham (AMMO Books, 2014).

About the Worcester Art Museum

Founded in 1896, the Worcester Art Museum’s encyclopedic 38,000-piece collection covers 51 centuries of art. Highlights include the Medieval Chapter House, Renaissance Court, and Worcester Hunt Mosaic, as well as the recently integrated John Woodman Higgins Armory Collection of arms and armor. The Museum is internationally known for its collection of European and American art. It was the first in America to acquire paintings by Monet and Gauguin and one of the first to collect photography. As the first U.S. museum to focus on collaborating with local schools, it has been at the forefront of engaging audiences and giving them a meaningful and personal experience.

The Worcester Art Museum, located at 55 Salisbury Street in Worcester, MA, is open Wednesday through Friday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and every third Thursday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Admission is \$14 for adults, \$6 for children 4-17, \$12 for seniors 65+, and \$12 for college students with ID. Members and children under four are free. Parking is free. For more information, visit worcesterart.org.

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