

**VCAM News is published for members of the Volunteer Committees of Art Museums.**

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*VCAM was founded in 1952 in Toronto, Ontario. In 1976, VCAM was incorporated in the state of Minnesota as a non-profit Corporation 501(c)(3) tax status.*

## VCAM MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

**Who:** VCAM membership is open to volunteer committees of visual arts museums. The committee is the member of VCAM.

**What:** Dues are \$150 U.S. funds for a three-year period.

**Where:** Complete the registration form available at: [www.vcam.org](http://www.vcam.org) and mail with a check of \$150 U.S. funds to

Lynne Hiller  
702 North Walden Drive  
Beverly Hills CA 90210  
310-275-0072

**Why:** Dues must be paid in full for the three-year period in order to send delegates and observers to the 2009 conference in Kansas City

**We would love to have you join us!**

**Deadline for next Newsletter  
October 30, 2009**

**Keep up to date with VCAM news!  
Please visit [www.vcam.org](http://www.vcam.org)**

Return address:  
VCAM Administrative Office  
400 Loring Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90024



An aerial view of the complete campus. From left to right are the Memorial Arts Building, Table 1280, Anne Cox Chamber Wing, Wieland Pavilion and Stent Family Wing surrounding the new Siffy Piazza. "House III" by Roy Lichtenstein in foreground. Image © Timothy Hursley 2005

**In our continuing effort** to chronicle a city for consideration of a museum tour, we are highlighting Atlanta, Georgia. Atlanta is a beautiful and diverse city that has become one of the nation's top destinations. Below are some ideas for a trip to Atlanta and its surrounds.

**The High Museum of Art** is a leading art museum in the Southeast. The High is a division of the Woodruff Arts Center, which also includes the Alliance Theatre, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Young Audiences and the 14th Street Playhouse. The High Museum holds more than 11,000 works of art in its permanent collection. Included are 19th- and 20th-century American

art; European art; decorative art; African American art; modern and contemporary art; photography and African art. In 2005, three new buildings designed by Italian architect Renzo Piano more than doubled the Museum's size to 312,000 square feet, allowing the High to display more of its growing collection and increase educational and exhibition programs.



View of the new High Museum of Art from Peachtree Street in Midtown Atlanta. Roy Lichtenstein's "House III" and Auguste Rodin's "The Thinker" in foreground. © Jonathan Hillyer 2009

The High launched *LOUVRE ATLANTA* in 2006, an unprecedented three-year partnership with the Musée du Louvres in Paris that has brought hundreds of works from all eight of the Louvre's collections. Many of these

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## Letter from the President

**Dear Members,**

Here's some good news for a change. •\$50,000,000 should be going to the National Endowment for the Arts. •"Since President Obama and his family are lovers of art", Mariana Nork, senior vice president the Corcoran Gallery of Art stated, "we're going to have new trends set."

Our job, should we accept it, is to capitalize on this happy state of affairs. And how can we do this?

**YOU NEED TO ATTEND THE TRIENNIAL IN KANSAS CITY AT THE NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM.**

It takes place from October 8-10, 2009. It is from that vantage point that you can gain the insight on how to help your museum through troubled times, and to set the stage for a future that appreciates the civilizing and critical function that art plays in our lives.

We all know that funds are at a premium, but it is my thinking that this expense to your museum or your council will be repaid many times by teaching you techniques, giving you cost saving tips, exposing you to new fund raising ideas, and networking about those ideas

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## Atlanta is Burning with Excitement...continued

have never before been seen in the United States. The final installation, The Louvre and the Masterpiece, will be on view through September 6, 2009.

**The King Center** was established in 1968 as the official memorial dedicated to the advancement of the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., leader of America's greatest nonviolent movement for justice, equality, and peace. More than 650,000 visitors from all over the world visit annually to pay homage and view exhibits illustrating his life and teachings.

**The Atlanta Botanical Garden** has grown since its inception in 1976 to become one of the most visited attractions in the city. With dozens of permanent pieces of art, including sculptures and water features, the garden has earned a reputation for forward vision.

Collections in the **Michael C. Carlos Museum** of Emory University span the globe and the centuries. Housed in a distinguished building by architect Michael Graves, it maintains the largest collection

of ancient art in the Southeast with objects from Egypt, Greece, Rome, the Near East, and ancient Americas.

**The Georgia Aquarium** opened in 2005 and is the world's largest aquarium. It features more animals than any other aquarium in more than 8 million gallons of water. Bernie Marcus, cofounder of Home Depot, made the \$250 million gift to the city. It is a leading facility for aquatic animal conservation and research.

Next door is the **World of Coca-Cola**, the largest collection of Coke memorabilia in the world. You can sample different Coca-Cola products from all over the world, some strange to our American palates. There is also a Pop Culture Gallery, a 4D theatre, and a fully functioning bottling line.

**CNN Center** is located downtown next to Centennial Olympic Park. The CNN Center is directly connected to the Philips Arena, home to the Atlanta Thrashers of the NHL, as well as the Atlanta Hawks of the NBA. Studio tours are available and include demonstrations of the technologies such

as Chroma key as well as visits to viewing galleries overlooking the newsrooms and anchors of CNN, CNN Headline News, CNN International and CNN en Español.

**Stone Mountain Park** is located just 16 miles east of downtown Atlanta. It is the world's largest exposed granite rock

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## Letter from the President

*continued from page 1*

that have worked and equally those ideas which haven't.

### JUST DO IT! YOU WON'T REGRET IT.

This newsletter serves as our final hard copy, printed, stamped and snail mailed to your address. We are moving forward into the 21st century with on-line newsletters, and we are saving money in the process. It is important that you make sure that your emails are up-to-date with our data base. Please contact Peter Milne, [sznm3v@yahoo.com](mailto:sznm3v@yahoo.com) with any changes, additions or deletions.

This issue has many interesting articles that should grab your attention. For example, we have chosen Atlanta as our city to highlight. After attending our yearly board meeting in that city, I can report that selecting that destination for your members will gain you many kudos. It is a city rich with art, beauty, history and innovation.

Many of our museums groups have been hard at work planning and executing fabulous events. Take a page from their creativity and adapt some of their ideas for your own needs.

Please contact your regional directors. They want to hear from you. They want to help you with your issues. They are a conduit to other parts of the country and they need your input to be truly effective. But I want to reiterate that there is no substitute for the face to face interplay that comes with attending the triennial. I hope you will attend and I look forward to meeting each and every one of you.

Wishing you a flowering of all good things this spring.

*Nancy Rosenbloom*

## Atlanta is Burning with Excitement...continued

known and the centerpiece of a 5 square mile state park. Visitors can climb this mountain known as one of the "35 natural wonders of Georgia".

**The Atlanta History Center** is not to be missed! Located on a 33 acre site in the heart of Buckhead, in north Atlanta, the campus includes the Atlanta History Center, Centennial Olympic Games Museum, Swan House, Tullie Smith Farm, six historic gardens, and the Kenan Research Center.

**Historic Oakland Cemetery** is the final resting place of many famous Georgians such as Bobby Jones, Margaret Mitchell, Maynard Jackson, and several Georgia Governors. This peaceful setting offers the

full scope of Atlanta's fascinating past. From the hilltop where General John B. Hood watched the Battle of Atlanta, visitors today can stand on the same spot among the ancient oaks and magnolias and marvel at the modern Atlanta skyline as well as the sculpture and architecture of the cemetery.

**The Georgia State Capitol** building is one of the most important architectural and historical landmarks in Georgia. Completed in 1889, the Neo-Classical style building features a distinctive dome and lantern covered in gold leaf, mined in the north Georgia mountains. The steps, floors, and walls are covered with Georgia marble. Beneath the rotunda is a hall of

fame displaying marble busts of the Georgia signers of the Declaration of Independence, as well as other Georgia notables. A portrait gallery houses portraits of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his wife, Mrs. Coretta Scott King. The fourth floor houses the Georgia State Museum of Science and Industry.

If your travel schedule allows time for a day trip, go to north Georgia for Cartersville and the Booth Western Museum of Art or to Dahlonega, the site of America's first gold rush. Or travel to Plains to see Jimmy Carter's childhood home or to Augusta, home of the Masters. A wonderful addition to your trip would be a couple of days in gorgeous Sea Island or historic Savannah.♦

## Did You Know?

• **An exhibition, Masterpieces of European Painting Museo de Arte de Ponce**, will be on exhibit at the Flint Institute of Arts until March 8, 2009. From there it will travel to the Frist Center for the Visual Arts in Nashville, Tennessee. That will be the last stop in the United States. Among the more than 50 European masterpieces, which span six centuries and nine nationalities will be exquisite examples of Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo and Neo-Classical painting.

• **The Volunteers' Circle of the National Gallery of Canada** produces Pastiche, a semi-annual newsletter for its members. It's most unusual attribute is that is written in both English and French, each language sharing the page vertically.

• **The Los Angeles Times** reports that President Obama and his family are lovers of the arts. On February 6, 2009 they attended, with their children the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Obama also set up a national arts policy committee during the campaign to offer him advice.

If outings to arts venues become a habit with the first family, "it would be a huge boon to the arts community in Washington and for the United States and the world," says David Andrew Snider, president of the League of Washington Theaters

• **The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria** in British Columbia has formed a "Think Tank" to explore other sources of fundraising opportunities. This group is looking at a wide variety of fundraising ideas from high end fashion shows to establishing an "Art Film Festival". Their motto is—The sky is the limit!



Georges de La Tour, "The Card-Sharp (with Ace of Diamonds)," 17th century. Oil on canvas, 41 3/4 x 57 1/2 inches. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Dates on View: Feb. 17 - Sep. 6, 2009. Photo Credit: Réunion des Musées Nationaux / Art Resource, NY.

## THE VCAM MISSION

### Volunteer Committees of Art Museums

Is committed to providing a forum for information exchange, mutual education and

enhancement of services to its museum volunteer committee members through international conferences, regional meetings, published comprehensive conference

reports, website ([www.vcam.org](http://www.vcam.org)) and the VCAM News publication.

VCAM was founded in 1952 in Toronto, Canada

## A WORD FROM RENOWNED ARCHITECTURAL SCHOLAR, PAUL GOLDENBERG

**No art museum in the United States** has a better site than the Nelson-Atkins, in Kansas City. It sits on a hill overlooking a vast lawn that slopes down in terraces and gives it the air of a royal palace.

In June 2007, a new building was added to the museum's sacrosanct frontage by architect Steven Holl. The building is not just Holl's finest, by far, but also one of the

best museums of the last generation. Its boldness is no surprise, but it is laudable that it is matched with a functional layout, handsome and logically designed galleries, and a suffusion of natural light. Furthermore, Holl's five glass structures, punctuating the hill, don't mock the old building as you might expect; they dance before it and engage it.

# Visiting the COLUMBUS MUSEUM of Art

By Peter Milne

**As Gertrude Stein once remarked\***, the Columbus Museum of Art houses an outstanding collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century American and European modern art. I was delighted to have visited there in July. This collection includes major works by Monet, Matisse, Picasso, Renoir, Hopper and O'Keeffe and other spectacular examples of Impressionism, German Expressionism, and Cubism. Also recognized for extraordinary regional collections, the Museum boasts the largest public collection of woodcarvings by Columbus folk artist Elijah Pierce as well as the world's largest repository of paintings and lithographs by Columbus native George Bellows, who



is widely regarded as the finest American artist of his generation. In 2001 in a watershed event in the growth of the Museum's holdings in photography, a significant collection entitled The Photo

League was acquired, which consists of 170 photographs by 69 artists including Berenice Abbott, W. Eugene Smith and Weegee. I found a sense of intimacy as I walked from gallery to gallery; there was also for me a sense of sanctuary in appearance, one that reminded me of European galleries I have visited. Later I shared a very interesting conversation with Volunteer Coordinator Nancy Johnson who kindly provided insight into the use of volunteers at the CMA. The Museum also hosts a continuous program of national and international traveling exhibitions. Recent noteworthy exhibitions organized by the Museum include

Symphonic Poem: The Art of Aminah Robinson, the 2003 winner of the Greater Columbus Arts Council's Award for Artistic Excellence and Illusions of Eden: Visions of the American Heartland, chosen by the U.S. State Department as one of only three Millennium projects to tour outside the United States to help promote political, economic and cultural ties and exchanges.

*\*"In the Columbus Museum of Art I came into a room and it was a pleasant one. It was all Cubist and good Picassos and Juan Gris and others but really good ones. There had never been anything like that either in choice or quality or like that in any other museum."*

—Gertrude Stein, *Everybody's Autobiography*

Columbus ranked #10 in the June issue of *American Style Magazine*. Columbus, Ohio was heralded as the 10th "Top Arts Destination" among big cities in the United States in the June issue of *American Style Magazine*. The national publication geared to toward art enthusiasts and collectors ranks cities based upon their public art, gallery offerings and institutional arts according to readers polls. Of the top 25 destinations, only Columbus, New York, Chicago, Washington, and Portland were highlighted with an accompanying photo in the article. Columbus' photo is an image of the "In Dreams Again" public art totem in the Short North's Poplar Park. The associated caption reads: "Enriching Columbus Ohio: creativity in the Short North Arts District."

Reliable mainstays like New York City and Santa Fe, N.M., rising giants like Buffalo, N.Y., and quiet contenders like Asheville, N.C., have all earned top spots in the 2008 competition for *American Style's* Top 25 Arts Destinations.



Their annual reader's poll never concludes without at least a little upheaval, and this year was no exception. Rising populations in cities like Albuquerque, NM, and Las Vegas, Nev., which ranked No. 2 and 3, respectively, in last year's Mid-Sized Cities category, moved them into our Big Cities list, but voters ranked them into lower positions. Charleston, SC, on the other hand, benefited from its population increase, rising from No. 7 on last year's Small Cities & Towns list to No. 6 on the 2008 Mid-Sized Cities list.



- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. New York, NY      | 14. Phoenix, AZ      |
| 2. Chicago, IL       | 15. Denver, CO       |
| 3. Washington, D.C.  | 16. Tucson, AZ       |
| 4. San Francisco, CA | 17. Charlotte, NC    |
| 5. Boston, MA        | 18. San Diego, CA    |
| 6. Seattle, WA       | 19. Las Vegas, NV    |
| 7. Albuquerque, NM   | 20. Milwaukee, WI    |
| 8. Philadelphia, PA  | 21. San Antonio, TX  |
| 9. Baltimore, MD     | 22. Nashville, TN    |
| 10. Columbus, Ohio   | 23. Dallas, TX       |
| 11. Portland, OR     | 24. Houston, TX      |
| 12. Los Angeles, CA  | 25. Jacksonville, FL |
| 13. Austin, TX       |                      |



## MUSEUMS MAKE DEEP CUTS in Face of Global Financial Crisis

### US budgets slashed, programming reduced and expansions halted

By Jason Edward Kaufman | From News | Posted: 8.1.09

**NEW YORK. A survey of art museums** across the US has found that most institutions have lost at least 20% of the value of their endowments and directors are retrenching amid the worsening economic crisis. The survey of around 40 museums, conducted by The Art Newspaper in early December, revealed that nearly all directors had begun trimming between 5% and 20% of their 2009 budgets and were preparing for deeper cuts in 2010.

The Guggenheim Museum has cut 10% of its operating budget, the Denver Art Museum plans up to a 15% reduction, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) initiated a staff freeze and cut back on travel. "We are looking hard at every single line item and squeezing nickels," says MassMoCA director Joseph Thompson, who has trimmed expenses and programming by around 8% and has plans that could involve staff reductions by mid year.

Even the richest museums are not immune to the effects of the downturn, but directors expressed confidence that they can weather the crisis without massive lay-offs and drastic reductions in programming.

Nevertheless, the scenarios revealed by the survey are grim. The museums reported that state and local governments

are already dealing with their deficits by reducing funding. Corporate, charitable and private support is also expected to fall off. (US foundations shed \$200bn in value from the market peak in late 2007, according to a November report in The Wall Street Journal.)

Plunging endowments are the most ominous indicator of museums' circumstances. The affect of shrinking portfolios is incremental because most museums annually draw down around 5% based on the average value over the previous 12 quarters. But if the markets do not rebound the impact eventually will be severe.

The endowment of the Indianapolis Museum of Art (IMA) fell from \$382m at the start of 2008 to \$293m at the end of November. In the same period, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts' investments went from \$193m to \$153m and the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, shed 19% to approximately \$107m. Each of those museum's directors has exacted budget cuts and prepared for more if needed. "My experience has always been that philanthropy suffers little during recessions," says Maxwell Anderson, director of the IMA. "I am hopeful we will continue to benefit from our patrons' generosity." Dan Monroe, director of the Peabody Essex, does not share his optimism.

"We have seen delays in decision-making over major gifts and we expect a different philanthropic climate in 2009," he says.

John Buchanan, director of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, has also seen indications of flagging corporate support. "The sponsorship landscape has changed dramatically in the past quarter. Some of our previous supporters have had to take a long look at their priorities going forward," he says, adding that "many corporations are scaling back on the parties and events that they hold at the museum."

The Seattle Art Museum (SAM) stands to lose \$4.6m a year in rent from Washington Mutual, a bank that leases eight floors of a tower jointly owned with the museum. JPMorgan Chase acquired the company but may vacate the space, leaving a gaping hole in the museum's \$24m budget.

Larger institutions are reluctant to let the public know the state of their investments, fearful that fluctuations will give the impression of instability and lead philanthropists to spend elsewhere. But this cannot mask the reality: every institution has suffered painful losses in portfolio value.

THE ART NEWSPAPER 



## DAYTONA GETS THE CHECKERED FLAG

### Inventive Ideas Increase Membership

• The Guild of the Museum of Arts and Sciences in Daytona Beach, Fl. had a very successful season. The annual Art Festival had over 200 artists participating. This has become a wonderful family event since we have added children's activities and

even a dog costume contest! Then our Festival of Lights included an elegant Gala Party, with a fabulous fashion show. It was such a huge success that we doubled our profits from last year!

• Our Guild is also working on a fabulous new cookbook which we expect to publish this summer. This project has generated

a huge amount of enthusiasm and support. • We have had more Artful Interludes than ever! These small intimate parties and gatherings have become very popular. Our membership has increased nicely due to the fact that we are such an active group and new members want to be a part of that.

### Mark Your Calendar for October 8-10<sup>th</sup>

The 2009 VCAM Triennial Conference is hosted by The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri. The Conference offers VCAM members opportunities to:

- Learn from each other through workshops, regional meetings and informal interaction.
- Be inspired and educated by dynamic and entertaining speakers.
- Make and strengthen connections with other VCAM members.

Now more than ever, museums need dedicated, energized, and creative volunteers. The VCAM Conference is a great investment in yourself, your volunteer program and your museum.

### Conference Highlights

**Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>** (daytime) - participate in one of the pre-conference tours, which include:

**Lunch and Walking Tour of the Country Club Plaza** - Modeled after Seville, Spain, "the Plaza" was the first suburban shopping center in the United States. It's now Kansas City's premiere upscale shopping and dining destination.

**Lunch at Union Station and Tour of National World War I Museum** - Enjoy lunch at Kansas City's historic Union Station followed by a tour of the new and highly acclaimed National World War I Museum.

**Harry S Truman Presidential Library** - Visit the Truman Presidential Library in historic Independence, Missouri, and enjoy a tour led by "Harry" himself.

**Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>** - The Conference opens with a late afternoon reception and welcome by "Harry S Truman." Enjoy dinner on your own at one of the Plaza's many restaurants.

**Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>** - Start the day with opening speaker Robert Cohon and a tour of the Nelson-Atkins. Lunch and regional meetings will be followed by afternoon workshops. Dinner in private homes.

**Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup>** - Guest Speaker Tom Bloch starts the day, followed by a continuing tour of the Nelson-Atkins. Afternoon workshops will be followed by a closing dinner in the Nelson-Atkins' beautiful Rozzelle Court Restaurant.

### Workshops & Speakers

Thanks to the many VCAM members who submitted proposals for workshops. We'll offer workshops on the topics you requested: fundraising, volunteer/staff relations, touring options, communications, technology, outreach and diversity. Your registration packet will have detailed workshop descriptions.

### Opening Speaker Robert Cohon, Ph.D. "Ooops! All Errors Large and Small"

Robert Cohon has been Curator of Art of the Ancient World at the Nelson-Atkins and has taught at the University of Missouri-Kansas City as a joint-appointment since 1985. With a doctorate from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, he has published extensively in international journals on Roman decorative marble sculpture and forgeries of ancient art. His work at the Nelson-Atkins has included the development of the shows *Discovery and Deceit: Archaeology and the Forger's Craft* (1996-7); *Treasures of Deceit* (1998-2000); *Spring Fashions, 1 B.C.* (1998); and *Echoes of Eternity: The Egyptian Mummy and the Afterlife* (2000).



### Guest Speaker Thomas M. Bloch



Tom Bloch followed in his father's footsteps. In 1976, he joined H&R Block, the world's largest tax services provider, and eventually succeeded his father Henry Bloch as its Chief Executive Officer. He had it all - or so it seemed. Then, he stunned his father, his company, and the business community by stepping down in 1995 to become a teacher in the inner city.

Tom Bloch's career change from CEO to inner city teacher drew national media attention. He appeared on numerous television shows, such as *Today* and *Oprah*, and his story was featured in many

publications, including *The New York Times* and *People* magazine.

His second career began in 1995 as a middle school math teacher at St. Francis Xavier, an inner city parochial school. Five years later, he co-founded the University Academy, a public charter school in Kansas City. Tom Bloch continues to teach 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade math at the urban college prep school he helped design and launch. He is also President of the school's board.

### How To Register for the VCAM 2009 Triennial Conference

1. Registration materials will be mailed and emailed in April or May.
2. Hotel reservations can be made separately anytime between now and September 15, 2009. Call the Kansas City Marriott Country Club Plaza at 1-800-810-3708. Room rate is \$134 per night plus taxes. Identify yourself as a VCAM Conference attendee.
3. To update your contact information, add colleagues to the VCAM mailing list or if you're not sure you are receiving all VCAM correspondence, email [vcam@nelson-atkins.org](mailto:vcam@nelson-atkins.org).

**IMPORTANT!** To help us plan for the conference, please provide a "tentative r.s.v.p" as soon as possible. We estimate the conference fee will be \$400. At this time, do you plan to attend the conference?

Yes       No       Uncertain

If "yes," name(s) of other attendees from your museum: \_\_\_\_\_

You may mail this form to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 4525 Oak, Kansas City MO 64111 c/o Mary Beth Sloan - OR - email your information to [vcam@nelson-atkins.org](mailto:vcam@nelson-atkins.org). Thank you!



## FRANK GEHRY LAUNCHES ago's ship of art

TRANSFORMING THE ART  
GALLERY OF ONTARIO

drawn into the building by light: into the old classically arched Walker Court by the light flooding from its new glass ceiling and further into 101 galleries on four floors, most filled with natural light by an ingenious system of skylights.

The staircases are irresistible. From Walker Court a beautifully balanced pair of scissors staircases climbs to the second floor; from there, a spiraling off-center staircase punches through the glass ceiling up and up. At the back, on the exterior of the new blue titanium addition, another spiral, a glass-enclosed stairway, curls down, taking the visitor out over the adjoining open space of Grange Park.

"I just came to look at the architecture," one early visitor complained to me, "but I find I keep looking at the art." That, of course, is the point. Transformation AGO is not simply about an iconic building. Thousands of works were added to the Gallery's collection, including Gian Lorenzo Bernini's magnificent sculpture, *Corpus*, and the recently rediscovered masterpiece, *The Massacre of the Innocents*, by Peter Paul Rubens, only two of a large number of European pieces from the Middle Ages to the 19th century. A major collection of works by Canadian artists was also donated to the AGO as well as historical African and Australian Aboriginal art. With a 47 percent increase in viewing space, more art is on display than ever before.

New ways of exhibiting art are designed to make the viewer pause and think again. Although the historical time lines are basically followed, contemporary pieces regularly break up the chronology to offer a new perspective. In some galleries provocative statements are stenciled on the walls; in others, there are books to read or drawing stations for visitors to try their hands at sketching. There are comfortable,

moveable chairs and footstools throughout: you can actually put your feet up and contemplate art!

Designed with the streetscape and the surrounding buildings in mind, the new Gallery relates strongly to the city outside. The New York Times noted that the great

"strength of the museum design is how it suggests the interrelationship of art and the city... Mr. Gehry does not put art on a pedestal; he asserts its importance while wedding it to ordinary life." The result is an extraordinarily welcoming building.



For the Times, as for most visitors, the climax of the architectural experience is in the Galleria Italia, the 450 foot long sculpture gallery which runs along the second story of the curving glass façade. Touring the building just before it opened, Frank Gehry paused there to look out over the bustle of Dundas Street. One of Toronto's red streetcars pulled up, filling the lower part of the view. "That's what I want," said Gehry, "a streetcar in the building." ♦



The billowing glass and Douglas fir façade extends for a long city block. It makes many think of a ship under sail, and it sets the themes for the interior: glass, wood, natural light. From the lobby, you are

## SEATTLE ART MUSEUM Docent Evaluation Program

Rebecca Aubin, Museum Educator for School and Educator Programs

Mary Rae Mattix, Evaluation Chair, Docent Executive Committee

**One of the significant ways** the Seattle Art Museum realizes its vision of "connecting art to life" is through the Docent program that has been part of the museum culture from the very beginning in 1934. Today this committed group of 121 touring volunteer educators continues to provide meaningful art experiences to a diverse community of adult and student museum visitors. As Docents align their efforts with the goals of SAM's Education and Public Programs Division, they continually assess their effectiveness through a formalized process of self-evaluation.

**Initial Steps:** All touring Docents are evaluated every three years following graduation from a training program planned by the museum. Annually each fall Docents to be evaluated receive letters confirming the dates of their evaluations, the name of their museum evaluator and a list of Docent evaluators. Docent evaluators are selected from a list of currently touring Docents who have been successfully evaluated within the previous three years. Docents select their peer evaluator sending that person and the museum educator a copy of their written touring goals stated in Part I on their Docent Self-Assessment Guide seen below.

**Finalized Evaluation:** The two evaluators observe the Docent's tour as scheduled, critique it immediately afterward and invite the Docent to join them in a 3-way discussion of tour results. Within the following week, the Docent completes her/his self-assessment (Part II.) and sends it to the Museum Educator. The evaluators summarize their comments in the tour summary (Part III) based on five defined criteria that include 1) tour preparation, logistics, tour presentation, engaging strategies and tour outcome. The completed form is sent to the Docent and a copy retained in her/his file.

### Seattle Art Museum - 2008-2009 DOCENT SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE

(Return to Museum Educator only in year of evaluation)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Touring Block/Day/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Audience: \_\_\_\_\_ #on tour: \_\_\_\_\_

Exhibition/Tour Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Last Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of 08-09 Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

Attach additional pages as necessary.

**I. Touring Goals:** To be completed annually in the fall, or prior to first block of tours. State your specific learning goal(s) for this year. Consider the 5 Touring Skills categories (Tour Preparation, Logistics, Tour Presentation, Engaging Strategies, Tour Outcome) outlined in the Evaluator Feedback Form on page 50 of the Docent Handbook. For example a goal could be "To encourage more tour group participation by using more inquiry-based questioning."

**II. Touring Self-Assessment:** To be completed as part of evaluation procedure or at end of touring block for personal reference by docents not being evaluated. Critique your successes/challenges in reaching this year's goal(s).

**III. Evaluation Tour Summary (Attached)** Narrative summary completed by Docent evaluator and museum evaluator of their evaluation feedback comments. Written summary is formatted to follow the 5 Touring Skills categories.

**Partnership:** The Museum Educator and Evaluation Chair plan the yearly calendar, orient the Docent evaluators and seek their feedback, provide monthly evaluation reminders in the Docent newsletter, and monitor the effectiveness of the program. There is a remediation plan

option for additional touring Docent support and, as the staff person ultimately responsible for the success of the Docent program, the Museum Educator may elect to join other Docent tours throughout the year. The Evaluation Chair is accountable to the Docent Executive Committee.

Rebecca and Mary see the evaluation process as a "partnership providing a way for each Docent to assess her/his own effectiveness" and as Rebecca adds "assists the museum staff in planning timely and effective educational programs." ♦

## WINNIPEG ART GALLERY'S FIRST 60 YEARS

Synopsis: Laudable and Lasting

**The Volunteer Associates** of the Winnipeg Art Gallery can be credited with the following:

- Over \$900,000 in donations to the Gallery
- 78 works of art were donated while 1341 were purchased with their support funds
- Art scholarships were begun in 1976. In

the last 10 years almost 300 youthful artists have been supported

- There have been 30 Presidents, each providing unique and exceptional leadership
- Travel tours have been offered for 23 years. These trips have visited 18 countries

and have raised \$100,000.

- Numerous books have been donated to the Clara Lander Library annually, and many of those books have been dedicated in recognition of superior service by volunteer members. ♦

# CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR

## Festival of Trees

Presented by Council 101, Orlando Museum of Art

Every year Central Florida kicks off the holiday season at the Council of 101's *Festival of Trees* to benefit the Orlando Museum of Art (OMA). This traditional event is made possible by hundreds of community volunteers who donate thousands of hours to transform the OMA into a magical place.

This year's Festival theme was "Celebrate!" The Opening Evening of the Festival, allowed guests to *Celebrate in Holiday Elegance* at the Patrons' Gala, a black-tie event that featured culinary creations from renowned area chefs, live entertainment and a silent auction. Guests strolled through the galleries to preview and purchase their favorite trees and holiday items during an evening filled with elegance, glamour, and excitement.

The following day the Festival began its nine day run. Taking inspiration from Dale Chihuly's *The Cobalt and Citron Tower* on display at OMA, guests were greeted by flowing columns of fabric, sparkling crystals and a beautifully appointed Christmas Tree in the colors of the piece. The galleries were filled with incredibly decorated trees, wreaths, and vignettes created by local artists, designers, businesses, community groups and Council of 101 members. These designers not only created these works of art but also procured donations of decorations, gifts and services to enhance their exhibit.

A special area called Toyland Town was created specifically for younger guests. It was a children's wonderland filled with creative crafts, fun games and activities, an internet connection for emails to the North Pole, a children's gift shop and the jolly old man himself, Santa Claus. Just around the corner

collection of houses, chalets, and other unique structures, even Florida wildlife, made out of gingerbread – all totally edible.

Throughout the OMA were several incredible holiday collections shared by patrons and Council of 101 members. From the traditional Hanukah exhibit and the exquisite Judith Leiber handbags to the beautifully handmade needlepoint Christmas stockings, the Steinbach Nutcracker Collections and the extensive Department 56 Villages, there was something for everyone.

Several raffle opportunities could be found throughout the OMA. Media Trees, provided by generous radio sponsors in partnership with area businesses, gave guests a chance to win a decorated tree with a few extra surprises. The Entertaining by Design area offered an opportunity to win designer decorated table settings, gift certificates to fine dining restaurants or day spas, exquisite pieces of jewelry and other unique items. Other areas offered a beautiful collectible bear and a faux gingerbread house. There was also a Holiday Garden and a Holiday Boutique that has been a holiday shopping tradition for guests for decades. The holiday garden offered items to decorate the outside of your home as beautifully as you do the inside and daily demonstrations to help you do just that. Entertainment was provided by local area choirs, schools, dance groups, orchestras, a caroling company, a ballet company and individual performers.

Each day the Council of 101 tried to provide a unique experience for guests. They transformed the rotunda and provided the guests with the opportunity to win prizes, do crafts, sample food and meet the on-air personalities. On Monday a guest speaker, Ron Morgan, Floral Designer, gave a fabulous two hour lecture and demonstration on floral arranging, conducted a workshop for a small, intimate group and was available to



sign his four exquisitely photographed books. Tuesday was the day specially designed for

older patrons. Seniors were offered a discounted ticket, special prizes and entertainment during the day planned just for them. On Wednesday Evening was the ever popular Reindeer Romp, a fun filled holiday party for the entire family. Guests enjoyed entertainment provided by a magician, storyteller, balloon artists, face painters, licensed characters from local theme parks and of course, Santa Claus. Friday evening was Holiday Jazz Stroll. The OMA was transformed into a "Smoky Jazz Lounge" where guests enjoyed a live jazz band, individual musicians and dancers throughout the galleries.

Several special children's groups were invited to attend the Festival. They were given a guided tour, a special visit with Santa Claus and for some, transportation, refreshments and gifts provided by generous sponsors. During the evenings when there was not a special event, the OMA was rented out to area business for their holiday parties.

From the opening of the doors for the Patrons' Gala to the closing of the Festival on the second Sunday, it was non stop excitement and activity. Over one hundred and sixty Council of 101 members worked most of the year to plan, set-up, execute and take-down the *Festival of Trees 2008*. With the addition of more than three hundred sponsors and donors and the assistance of community volunteers, the Council of 101 was able to once again provide the Central Florida community with this premier holiday event – the *Festival of Trees*. ♦



from Toyland Town was Gingerbread Village. A delicious aroma greeted you first and then the stunning

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## CONFERENCE CALENDAR

**20th VCAM INTERNATIONAL TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE - OCTOBER 8-10, 2009**  
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri  
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