

Registrar's Quarterly

Summer 2013



2 Update:
Annual Western
Region Conference

Salt Lake City, Utah
October 2013

DEAR REGISTRAR & COLLECTIONS PROFESSIONALS,

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE ANNUAL WESTERN REGION CONFERENCE
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH | OCTOBER 2013

As we all know, the registrar and collections fields are continuously progressing. Collections care standards evolve, new database management and registration technologies are emerging, and the way people access an institution's information changes. With this idea of the future in mind, the Western Museum Association's (WMA) 2013 Annual Meeting Program Committee approved many collections- and registration-themed presentations within the 50 overall sessions.

The WMA has broken these sessions out into six interdisciplinary tracks including Business, Careerpath/Leadership, Visitor Experience, Community Engagement, and of particular interest to collections and registration, Collections and Technology. Much like many of the roles within your own institutions or businesses, each session incorporates multiple perspectives from across museum disciplines.

Registrars and Collections Management professions will find the following programming of particular interest:

PreConference Workshops

- CSI: Registrars
- Care of Collections: Paper

Topic Tables

- Collection Databases: Janaki Krishna, Registrar, Natural History Museum of Utah
- Collections Management/Registration: Nicole Nathan, Curator of Collections and Registrar, Museum of Contemporary Craft
- Insurance: Victoria France, Managing Director Fine Art Division, Robertson Taylor International Insurance Brokers

Lunch

- Registrar's Committee Western Region Luncheon

4 Stipend Winner Report
13 State Updates

Cover: The Des Chutes Historical Museum in Bend, Oregon is pleased to announce the opening of *Diamonds in the Desert: Baseball and Bend, 1900 to Present*.



This exhibit tells the story of baseball in Bend from its beginnings in sandlots and empty fields, to today's amateur team—the Bend Elks. Some exhibit highlights include photos and artifacts of the 1958 American Legion championship team.

Open through the end of the year.

Newsletter Design by
Allison Rogers Graphic Design

Since 1979, the RC-WR has cooperated with the RC-AAM in advocating for the profession of Registrars and Collections Managers across the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington, and promotes high standards and best practices in registration.

RCWR.org



RCWR
REGISTRARS COMMITTEE
WESTERN REGION

Annual Western Region Conference continued...

Sessions

- To Collect or To Not Collect: Considerations for Contemporary Art Curators
- Coordinated Emergency Preparedness
- Utilizing Volunteers in Museum Collections: Projects to Get, Keep, and Train Volunteers
- Driven by Photographs: A Case Study of Three Collections
- Extraordinary Spaces: Site-Specific Collections and Their Challenges
- Storage Renovations in Existing Buildings and the Impact on Collections (Double Session)
- Bridging the Divide: Collaborative Staff Development
- Collections Roundtables: The New Normal

- We're on a Mission: The Collections and Museums of the LDS Church

You can view the full Preliminary Program here:
http://www.westmuse.org/conferences/WMA_2013_Prelim_Program.pdf

Register today and save!

Early Bird Registration for the 2013 Annual Meeting ends July 31. Click here to register:

<http://www.regonline.com/WMA2013>

We are looking forward to welcoming you to Salt Lake City in October! ■

WORKSHOP | CARE OF COLLECTIONS: PAPER

Topics addressed in this informative, pre-WMA-conference workshop focus on the specific needs of paper-based collections and will include the nature of paper, environmental issues, storage and display considerations as well as the basics of remedial care. Participants will learn how to make material choices for storage housing and enclosures including understanding how these materials affect the storage microenvironment. Workshop exercises and demonstrations encompass understanding catalogue descriptions for the purchase of supplies and introductory remedial care methods.

Date: Wednesday, October 9, 2013

Time: 8:30am–4:30pm

Cost: \$35. Lunch is on your own.

Location: Salt Lake City Hilton

Instructors: Janet Ruggles, Chief

Conservator of Paper, and Stephanie Jewell,

Assistant Conservator of Paper, at

Balboa Art Conservation Center

Registration: Email RCWR Secretary Heather Bouchey rcwrsecretary@gmail.com with your name, address, phone, email, and payment method (check or card). For payment via check, please make payable to RCWR and send to:

Heather Bouchey • Portland Art Museum • 1219 SW Park Avenue • Portland, OR 97205

For online credit card payment please [click here](#), or visit the RC-WR website.

No registration will be available on site.

WORKSHOP | CSI: REGISTRARS

Each year as part of the Western Museums Association annual meeting, the Registrars Committee-Western Region holds a day of volunteerism for its members at one of the museums local to where the meeting is held. We call it CSI: Registrars!

This all-day, fun event entails professional registrars and collections managers volunteering at a small museum to help them catch up on projects such as:

accessioning • condition reporting • rehousing objects

—projects that may be benefited by help from trained professionals.

Date: Wednesday, October 9, 2013 | Free, box lunch included

Location: TBD in the Salt Lake City area but, if you're interested in helping out, please send your name, address, phone, and e-mail to RCWR Secretary Heather Bouchey at rcwrsecretary@gmail.com. RCWR will email you when a location has been finalized. Also, stay tuned to the website for additional details.

RC-WR Stipend Winner

Colleen Gotze

reports on her experience at the 2013 American Alliance of Museums Annual Meeting and Museum Expo

*Colleen Gotze, Registrar and Program Coordinator,
Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery, Reed College,
Portland, Oregon*

Big changes and some subtle ones marked the 107TH AAM conference, which was the first since the re-branding of the American Alliance of Museums this past autumn. Technology and social networking were definitely front and center in Baltimore this year, with a free smart phone app that made scheduling and finding sessions of interest easier than ever. AAM's lively Twitter feed that covered the conference currently has over 19,000 followers; and paper hand-outs were all but eliminated in favor of PDFs that were made available online after each session. A large area in the Museum Expo dedicated to crates and crating

demonstrations was an exciting new resource that the RC-AAM hopes to continue at future conferences.

There were many sessions dedicated to collections stewardship, and among the most pertinent to the field was one entitled *Out of Site, Out of Mind? Managing Off-Site Collection Facilities*, presented by Heather Kajic, Chief of Collections Management at the United States Holocaust Museum; Chris Wise of UOVO Fine Art Storage; and John Simmons, Adjunct Curator at the Earth and Mineral Science Museum & Art Gallery at Penn State University and Consultant at Museologica. Since storage space is an issue for almost all of us, the idea of moving collections off-site can be very appealing, and at times, necessary. This session offered

Stipend winner report continued...

valuable insight into the considerations of creating and operating an off-site storage facility.

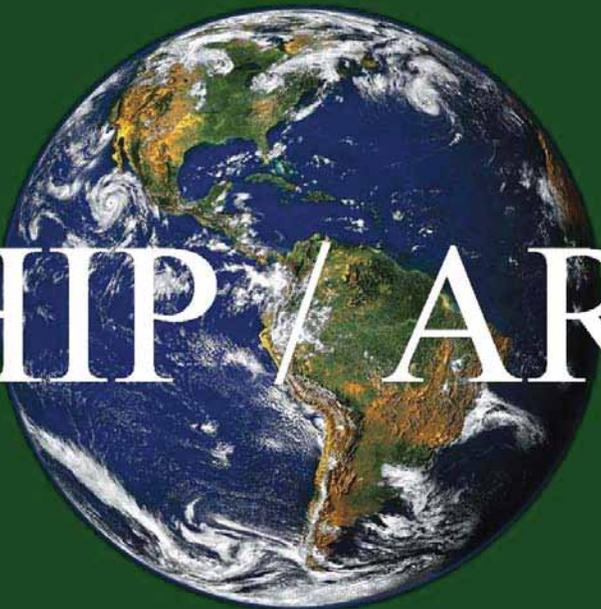
The case studies presented included the “what not to do” scenario at Penn State, and the almost opposite experience of moving a large portion of the collections of the United States Holocaust Museum. John Simmons recalled his experience of arriving at the EMS Museum after more than 22,000 rock and mineral specimens and “the country’s most extensive collection of paintings and sculpture depicting mining and related industries” had been relocated, and his dismay at the lack of planning and organization that had gone into that move. The experience he described sounds like every registrar’s nightmare: a new space on campus had not yet been identified when they cleared the collection out of the old building and scattered the works of art and geological specimens anywhere they would fit. Boxes upon boxes of unmarked and undocumented rocks and minerals, wrapped in myriad cardboard boxes and newspaper, were haphazardly transported across campus and tucked into hallways and closets in various buildings. Virtually nothing was documented, about the collection or the move. With no alternatives, staff used their private vehicles to transport works to and from the exhibition space. Years later, he said, he still occasionally gets a call to retrieve a “box of rocks” from offices of colleagues on campus. He did offer a light at the end of the tunnel, noting that with some ingenuity and grant money, they have greatly improved their collections storage and moved all of the paintings out of their cardboard and plywood sleeves and onto proper painting racks.

Heather Kajic of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., had a much different experience and presented a model to emulate. The museum’s purpose-built off-site facility is 35 miles away and houses most of the archival material, has a dedicated staff, a reading room for researchers, and photography space. The museum operates shuttles to transport works back and forth between their sites at least twice a week for curators and researchers. Full-time staff working at the location alleviates many of the concerns of storing collections

off-site, including security, climate control, and pest management. Although the Holocaust Museum’s storage facility was very well planned, the vast and growing collection of nearly 42 million pages of records is outgrowing the building. Staff members are facing another move in the future.

Chris Wise of UOVO Fine Art Storage offered insight from the perspective of a professional art storage facility, and outlined a step-by-step approach for the planning and implementation of moving collections off-site. He suggested that when planning, there are several key questions to answer before considering a collection move: What collections objects will you store off-site? How much space will you need? What activities will take place at the off-site facility (packing, unpacking, registration, photography, conservation)? What is your budget? How will you find the space that best suits your needs? And importantly, how will you manage off-site storage once it is established? This last question is the one that may get overlooked when dreaming about new painting racks and compact shelving—does your institution have someone (is it you?) who will physically be at the off-site location on a regular basis? Electronic surveillance, climate control monitors, water monitors, and other various forms of technology can help manage a space, but someone needs to be dedicated to watching those as well. Another essential consideration is transportation between the off-site facility and the museum. Of course the size of the institution and the collections will inform any decisions about whether to build, lease, or outsource off-site collection activities, but the same issues need to be addressed regardless of scope or budget. I highly recommend downloading the handout for this session at <http://handouts.aam-us.org/day21.html> if this topic is of interest to you.

On a personal note—thank you to the Registrar’s Committee Western Region and corporate sponsors for the registration stipend, and to the Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery, Reed College, that enabled me to attend this year’s AAM Annual Conference. Baltimore was a wonderful host city and I look forward to next year’s conference taking place closer to home in Seattle. ■



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- **NEW YORK SHUTTLES (NEW YORK-SAN FRANCISCO, SAN FRANCISCO-NEW YORK) TWICE A MONTH**
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WORKSHOP | CREATING AND FUNDING PRESERVATION PROJECTS TO ENHANCE COLLECTION CARE

Do you want to get a preservation grant to take care of your collections?

Many institutions have used grant-funded projects to enhance the level of care they can provide for their collections, and sometimes even to jump start their preservation programs. "Creating and Funding Preservation Projects to Enhance Collection Care" is a one-day workshop that begins with identifying and setting priorities among collection needs. With a clear sense of needs, the second part of the workshop reviews sources of grant funding available to your institution. The third part of the workshop addresses the key preservation questions asked on grant applications—participants answer the questions on behalf of their institutions, building the elements of a proposal for their own collection. The workshop emphasizes working collaboratively with colleagues to develop and receive feedback on project proposals.

By the end of the workshop day, participants will have:

- Outlined a preservation project proposal specific to their institution
- Identified possible funding sources
- Tested their ideas with other workshop participants

Who should attend: Administrators and staff responsible for care of the collection in all types of libraries, museums and archives, with an emphasis on small-to-medium sized institutions without preservation grant writing experience. By registering for the workshop, the institution commits to supporting the attendee(s) to achieve the workshop's goals to develop and submit proposals for preservation projects to enhance collection care. When possible, TWO attendees from an institution should attend so they can work together on project development.

Instructor: Barclay Ogden, Preservation Department Head, University of California, Berkeley

Date: August 1, 2013 | 9:00 am–4:00 pm

Location: Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon

Cost: No charge to the institution. Sponsored by Western States & Territories Preservation Assistance Service (WESTPAS) and the Oregon Historical Society.

WESTPAS is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Registration: Pre-registration is required. Register online at: <http://tiny.cc/ZePOL>



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PROFILE

Location

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

Artist

Walton Ford

Title

The Island, 2009

Medium

Watercolor, Gouache, Pencil, and Ink on Paper

Glazing

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ARTECH



A 38-foot-long gray whale skeleton on view at the Pratt Museum through July 21.

ALASKA The Pratt Museum in Homer was a busy place this spring as school groups from around the Kenai Peninsula and beyond came for educational programs and Museum tours. We have a new exhibit in the Contemporary Art Gallery titled *Inspired by Place*. The guest curator, Alaskan artist and Homer resident Ron Senungetuk, chose works reflecting the lifestyles of the artists—such as fishing, respect for the environment, and beauty of the local landscape. The current special exhibit, *Encounters: Whales in Our Waters*, continues to impress visitors with our 38-foot-long gray whale skeleton as its centerpiece. It will be on display through July 21. ■

ARIZONA The Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA) is borrowing a watercolor from the Phoenix Art Museum for MNA's upcoming Tony Foster exhibit June 16–October 13, 2013. MNA Fine Arts Curator Alan Petersen says, "Tony Foster's paintings are a celebration of the beauty of the natural world, and the personal and visual freedom found in remote locations." The 33 works were painted over a period of three years and explore sites in the American Southwest that have sacred associations for a broad range of cultures and faiths.

MNA is hosting two Northern Arizona University museum studies students. Alannah Debusk is interning under MNA's Registrar Kara Kelly, while Anita Felty is interning with MNA's Archivist Tricia Walker.

The National Film Preservation Foundation awarded MNA \$4,870 to create a preservation copy of the Cohonina Dig Summer 1949 film. The Cohonina Dig is the product of an archaeological field school conducted by Dr. John C. McGregor of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UI) in collaboration with MNA. McGregor was an archaeologist at MNA and Assistant Professor at Northern Arizona University (NAU, then Arizona Teacher's College) from 1931–1942. During World War II, he left MNA to become the Acting Director of the Illinois State Museum, and then worked as a Professor of Anthropology at UI until 1973. In 1949, McGregor brought a class of archaeology students from Illinois to Arizona for a summer-long field school, working with MNA staff excavating sites west of Flagstaff between Williams and the Grand Canyon. This area is home to numerous sites of the Cohonina branch of the Pueblo culture, hence the title of the film. This film is extremely rare, as very few research institutions filmed the archaeological fieldwork they undertook at that time. Female archaeologists and assistants and Native American assistants participated in the filmed excavations; their involvement adds humanistic as well as historical value to this film. The film is unique in its content, and to the best of our knowledge is the only copy in existence. ■

NEVADA The Nevada Museum of Art is enthusiastically presenting a wide range of exhibitions this summer.

Modernist Maverick, The Architecture of William L. Pereira, designed by Nik Hafermaas of UeBERSEE, will be on view from July 27 to October 13, 2013. This work surveys the architecture, urban planning, and design work of American architect William L. Pereira through images, models, drawings, and plans. The exhibition re-examines the modest spaces he created early in his career and the large-scale structures for which he is largely remembered.

The structures Pereira designed were far-flung and often large in scale, ranging

Nevada continued...

from San Francisco's iconic Transamerica Tower to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the University of California, San Diego, Geisel Library to the master plan for California's Irvine Ranch and the Los Angeles International Airport; Marineland of the Pacific to Cape Canaveral; a master plan for Doha (the capital city of Qatar) to the National Medical Center of Iran. As the first architect for the University of California system, Pereira planned and designed many of the buildings for the University of California, Irvine.

The purpose of the project is to frame Pereira's practice within the histories of architectural modernism and southern California in the mid-twentieth century. Because Pereira's career parallels the arc of modern architecture and its focus on iconic form, the evolution and trajectory of his work sheds light on the closing window of the modern movement. A catalogue and public television documentary will accompany this exhibition.

Signaling the Nevada Museum of Art's ongoing commitment to contemporary photography, *William Eggleston: Los Alamos* features seventy-five of the American artist's vivid color images taken between 1965 and 1974 in the Mississippi Delta, New Orleans, Las Vegas, Los Alamos, and Los Angeles. The exhibition is up and runs until September 19, 2013.

Eggleston's compelling photographs capture the unexpected beauty of parked cars, people, billboards, and abandoned storefronts across the American landscape. Eggleston titled the series *Los Alamos*, after the national laboratory in New Mexico where atomic weapons were developed.

Born in 1939 in Memphis, Tennessee, Eggleston is largely credited with legitimizing color photography as a fine art form. In 1976 the Museum of Modern Art in New York exhibited Eggleston's photographs in a groundbreaking solo exhibition—the first fine-art exhibition of color photography almost a century after the introduction of color film.

The museum will also be exhibiting in its Altered Landscapes Gallery, *Las Vegas Periphery, Views from the Edge: Photographs by Laurie Brown*, from August 24 to November 3, 2013 Laurie Brown's panoramic photographs of Las Vegas, Nevada, reveal lush green grass, artificial waterways, and tropical palm trees set against a stark waterless desert landscape. For Brown, who has documented suburban spaces and the altered landscape for more than forty years, these easily overlooked peripheral areas—where vulnerable wilderness meets encroaching suburban sprawl—reveal the all-too-real paradoxes of life in the desert. Brown's engaging photographs ask us to consider how far Las Vegas will go to live in a place not intended for living and whether their desires to do so are, in the end, sustainable. ■



OREGON In April, RC-WR Oregon State Representative Mike Guarino organized the first-ever co-sponsored event with the Oregon Museums Association. Held in the Portland suburb of Clackamas, the textile conservation workshop was a beaming success with the majority of participants traveling from outside the Portland Metro area. Led by Kathleen Daly of the Brigadier General James B. Thayer Oregon Military Museum, Heather Bouchey of the Portland Art Museum, and Nicole Nathan of the Museum of Contemporary Craft, the full day textile-focused workshop touched upon fiber composition and structure, proper handling techniques, preventive conservation, writing condition reports, and padded hanger and box construction.

This new partnership brought together both members and non-members from organizations around the Pacific Northwest, creating a diverse group of participants with a variety of experiences and skill sets. In fact, the workshop established six new RC-WR members!

The presenters created an ambitious agenda for the day that left the hands-on demonstrations and supplies construction tutorials a little hurried. Although successful and well

Oregon continued...

praised, the workshop will be broken into two workshops or pared down in content if offered again. Additionally, the workshop reflected the need for more basic workshops and “refreshers” for museum staff around the region. If there is a topic that you would like to see offered or would like to present, please contact the RC-WR Board to let them know! Professional development is what this organization is about. As our roles as registrars continue to change, these opportunities are imperative to our adaptation and growth in our field.

For those interested in learning more about the proper care of textiles or creating inexpensive padded hangers, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department along with Kathleen Daly published *Heritage Bulletin #20—Caring for Textiles: Cleaning and Garment Hanging*. Download a PDF of the bulletin at http://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/docs/Heritage_Bulletins/HB_20_Caring_for_Textiles.pdf.

Hope to see you at the next workshop!



Brigadier General James B. Thayer Oregon Military Museum (OMM) The 2013 All-Star Salute and Gala, benefiting the Capital Campaign for the Museum, took place on April 20, 2013 at the Governor Hotel. The sellout event honoring Korean War veterans raised more than \$400,000.

The **Columbia River Maritime Museum**, Jean-Michel Cousteau and 3D Entertainment, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), invite audiences to a stunning, immersive diving experience with *Sharks 3D*, the first-ever shark-themed 3D theater film. Join the expert international team of ocean explorers on this unique round-the-globe expedition documenting the life of the ultimate predator. *Sharks 3D* will be shown at the Columbia River Maritime Museum from March 22, 2013 through December 31, 2013.

The **Barbey Maritime Center** at the Columbia River Maritime Museum will be hosting boat building courses and many other workshops in 2013. For course descriptions and schedule, please visit <http://www.cmmm.org/barbey-maritime-center/course-descriptions.html>.

Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery, Reed College From August 27 to October 17, 2013, the Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery will host *Jamie Isenstein: Will Return*, the first retrospective of celebrated New York artist and Reed College alumna Jamie Isenstein. This event is curated by Stephanie Snyder and will hold its public reception on September 19 from 6 to 8 P.M.

The **Lane County Historical Society** was recently featured in AAA's *Via* magazine. The article is entitled “Eugene’s Counter Culture” and is available online at <http://www.viamagazine.com/destinations/eugenes-counter-culture>.

Pittock Mansion was happy to host Oregon Symphony Music Director Carlos Kalmar for a recent photo shoot in the Music Room. The gorgeous photos are featured on the cover and inside the May/June issue of the Oregon Symphony program. A copy is available for online viewing at: http://skiesamerica.com/digital-editions/Oregon_Symphony_Book_9/index.html

Immerse Yourself in Architecture and Behind-the-Scenes Tours continue through the summer.

Oregon continued...

Please call 503.823.3623 or visit www.pittockmansion.org for additional information and reservations.

On July 13, Pittock Mansion will premier a new exhibit, *Pittock Family Treasures*. This exhibit presents a rare opportunity to see artifacts from the Pittock family collection, along with the original pieces of Pittock furniture already on permanent display. Highlights include three formal gowns, personal letters written by family members, photo albums, stock certificates, ledgers, sketches, and toys. This exhibit is included with regular admission, and is free for members of Pittock Mansion. ■

WASHINGTON

Textile artisan Kakuben Jivan Ranmal at home in her village, India, 2010, from *Empowering Women: Artisan Cooperatives that Transform Communities* at the Burke Museum, Seattle. Through October 27, 2013.

Photograph courtesy of SEWA



The **Burke Museum** in Seattle presents *Empowering Women: Artisan Cooperatives that Transform Communities* from June 12–October 27, 2013. This exhibition provides an intimate view of the work of ten women-run artisan cooperatives from across the world, featuring artists' personal stories and stunning examples of the cooperatives' handmade traditional arts. Each co-op has a different motivation: preserving a weaving tradition, sustaining the environment, providing a safe haven from violence. Each object represents the power of women working together to transform lives. To learn more, visit www.burkemuseum.org/empowering.

Washington continued...

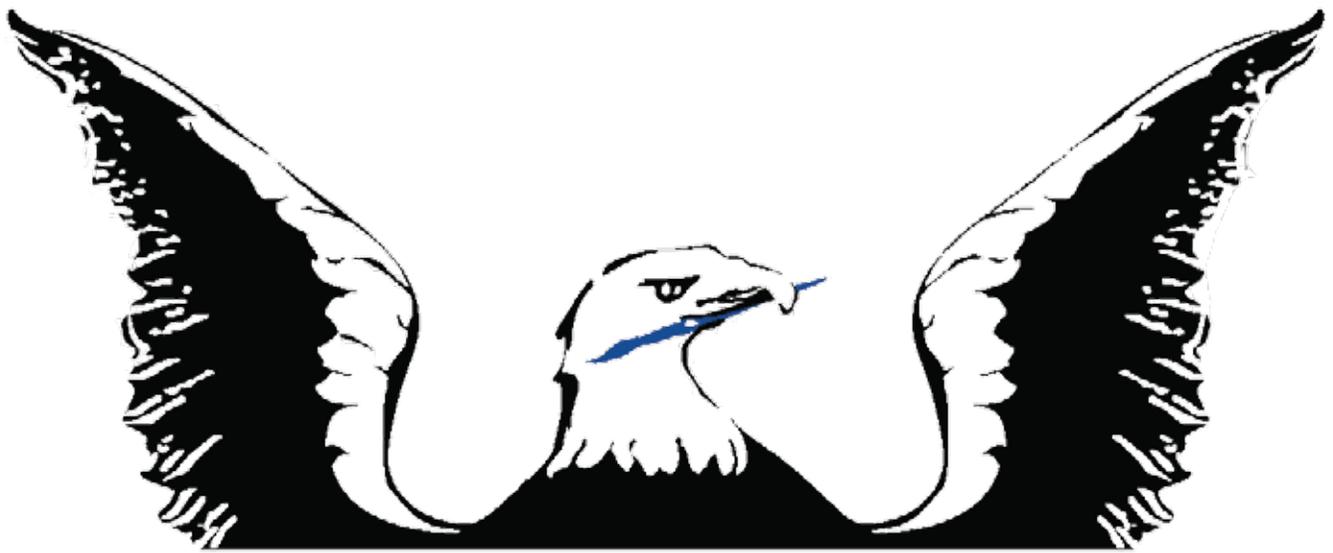
The **Frye Art Museum** is proud to present *BUSTER SIMPSON // SURVEYOR*, the first retrospective survey of work by Seattle artist Buster Simpson, a pioneer in the field of urban environmentalism and art in public spaces. Since the late 1960s, Simpson has been dedicated to working in the public realm. For more than four decades his site-specific, agitprop, and process-driven art has surveyed the problems, scrutinized the context, and presented new frames of reference to provide local solutions for global issues. At a time when Seattle is reimagining its waterfront and its identity, this retrospective reframes Buster Simpson's vision of the city and presents his groundbreaking contribution to dialogues about the health of communities and the societal obligations of the artist striving to affect real change in public life. The show runs from June 15–October 13, 2013.

The **Museum of Glass** welcomed 2013 with several new exhibitions celebrating the diversity of the medium of glass. *Northwest Artists Collect* is the result of a one-year internship program conceived by Museum of Glass and the University of Washington, Tacoma (UWT). *Mosaic Arts International 2013* presents finalists of the Society of American Mosaic Artists (SAMA) annual juried art show. *Benjamin Moore: Translucent* features the work of one of the most influential pioneers of the Studio Glass movement, and *Links: Australian Glass and the Pacific Northwest* showcases the artistic exchange between the glass communities of these regions. MOG is also excited to welcome two new staff members to their curatorial team: Lynette Martin as Exhibition Designer/Preparator and David Francis as Curator.

Washington Museum Association held its Annual Meeting in Ellensburg from June 12–14 this year with the theme “Museums at the Center of Community.” In conjunction with the meeting, the second annual **Registrars to the Rescue** event took place on June 12. A day of volunteerism was awarded to **Clymer Museum & Gallery**, which recently installed an upgraded 2-D storage rack for their paintings and

prints collection. Volunteers helped relocate the collection to its new home and helped complete condition documentation to support the ongoing stewardship of artist John Clymer's legacy.

Artech Fine Art Services in Seattle is pleased to introduce their new Registrar/Collections Manager, **Meredith Miller**, who joined Artech in April 2013, bringing a wealth of experience in storage and collections management. Meredith comes from the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center in Hutchinson, Kansas, where she was the Director of Collections. Prior to her work at the Cosmosphere, she was curator at the Rehoboth Beach Historical Society. She also held several internships, including with the National Park Service Office of the White House Liaison and the American Red Cross Museum. Meredith replaces Artech's long-time storage manager, **Dianne Dickman**, who retired after playing a significant role during the past 20 years as the company grew. Dianne will be missed but everyone wishes her well in her well-earned retirement. ■



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