

Registrar's Quarterly

Spring 2023



Collections
articles to put
a spring in
your step

RCWR
REGISTRARS COMMITTEE
WESTERN REGION

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CSI:Registrars 2023

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reviews *Museums and Wealth*

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Wait, You Collect What?!?

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Since 1979, the RC-WR has cooperated with the CS-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.



Linked in



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COVER CREDIT:

Designed by Oiva Toikka (Finnish, 1931–2019)

For Iittala (Finnish, founded 1881)

Rantakiwi (Beach Kiwi), 2022–2005

Produced in an edition of 5000

Blown glass, 7-7/8 x 6-5/16 in. (20 x 16 cm)

Collection of Museum of Glass, Tacoma, Washington

Gift of Paul Kangas (2022.15.298)

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



HAPPY SPRING, MEMBERS,

The winter is transitioning to spring in our states. I recently returned to work after an extended leave and have finally adjusted to the time change. My institution is welcoming spring break groups with a spring festival and the whole place is buzzing with activity. I hope this time of year finds you all stepping out of the winter routine into something sunny and engaging!

We have a thoughtful New Reads submitted by Nancy Arms Simon. *Reviewing Museums and Wealth: The Politics of Contemporary Art Collections*, we become aware of museums dubious non-profit status. Just the commentary of the book has me reassessing definitions and assumptions.

Dr. Mandy Tu contributes a lovely piece on Hoyt Arboretum Herbarium and herbaria collections. Dr. Tu recently participated in RC-WR's "Wait, You Collect What?!? Living Collections" If you were unable to attend, please check out the recording on the RC-WR Youtube page.

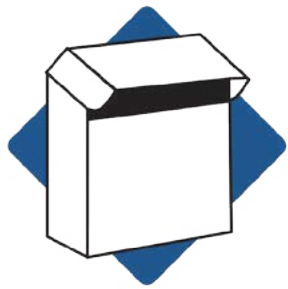
Although it feels like we are just starting to get into the rhythm of 2023, RC-WR is already planning events for the Western Museum Association conference in Pasadena, California October 5th-8th. RC-WR is looking for a site for our Collections Services Initiative. Does your institution have a project that could use professional help? Check out the details and let RC-WR leadership know!

And lastly, if you are itching to get more involved with RC-WR, please let the board know! We have state representative openings for Idaho and Southern California and board elections are coming this fall.

Thank you to our wonderful sponsors who support our events and newsletter!

Warmly,
Lindsay Palaima Hazen

RC-WR Chair | rcwrchair@gmail.com
Research Collections Registrar,
California Academy of Sciences,
San Francisco, California



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Herbarium Collections at Hoyt Arboretum

—By Mandy Tu, Ph.D.
Plant Taxonomist and
Herbarium Curator
Hoyt Arboretum
Herbarium,
Portland, Oregon



◀ Completed herbarium specimens of *Crataegus punctata* (dotted hawthorn) displaying both flowers (left) and fruits (right). Herbarium specimens are arranged in the storage cabinet (behind) by plant family, then alphabetically by genus and species.

In a recent “Wait, You Collect What?!?” online Zoom session, my colleagues Rachel Burlington from the International Rose Test Garden, Seth Menser of the Oregon Zoo, and I gave a presentation on managing living plant collections in public gardens. I was asked to provide information on the preservation and management of herbarium specimens at Hoyt Arboretum in Portland, Oregon. <https://www.hoytarboretum.org/collections/herbarium/>

To recap, an herbarium (plural: herbaria) is a museum or reference library of dead, pressed and dried plants, that is a scientific record of the existence of a plant in a particular time and location. Herbarium specimens are often examined by botanists, restoration ecologists and even farm advisors to verify the identity of a plant by visual comparison, to assess the flora (plant species) for a given area, to determine the distribution, range and phenological stages for a particular taxon, or

occasionally to obtain genetic material for further analyses. Herbaria are often associated with large botanic gardens, some land management agencies (such as Forest Service or National Park Service sites), and at some colleges or universities, especially land-grant schools. At Hoyt Arboretum Herbarium, our collections focus is the documentation and verification of the arboretum’s living trees, and we also house voucher specimens from City of Portland Heritage trees and natural areas, and regionally significant non-native plants.

Our herbarium has approximately 5,000 voucher specimens, adding about 300-500 sheets per year. We collect, verify and produce over 99% of our herbarium specimens in-house. To create our vouchers, specimen samples are collected from live plants at specific life-stages, so that distinctive morphological characteristics (often reproductive structures such as flowers or fruits) are visible. These plant parts are then pressed flat

Process for Making Herbarium Specimens

Collection & Identification

- Collect fresh specimen
- Press & dry
- Verify species identity
- Enter into database
- Print label

Mount onto archival paper with glue:

- Specimen
- Label
- Fragment pocket

Reinforce with
linen strapping
tape

Filing

Organize
Into folders

Photo/image

Freeze specimens

File into metal
cabinets



using a plant press and dried in our stand-up dryer. Plants are verified to species using regional floras or other published sources, visually compared with online herbarium specimens from other institutions, scientific names checked for synonymy, collection and identification data entered into our database (we use the commercial Iris BG program), labels printed, and then volunteer archivists mount and strap those plant specimens onto archival paper using standard herbarium protocols (FLAS 2022). After voucher specimens are completed, high-resolution photos are taken of each sheet for documentation purposes and so that images can be shared online (CPNWH 2023; Hoyt Arboretum Garden Explorer 2023), frozen for 1-2 weeks to kill insect pests, and then specimens are finally filed and stored in herbarium cabinets.

Specimens are then arranged phylogenetically by plant family, then organized alphabetically by genus and species.

Hoyt Arboretum Herbarium is a relatively small herbarium that operates as part of the arboretum and bolsters the scientific value of our living collections. The herbarium has one part-time staff person (City of Portland parks employee) dedicated to the herbarium collections, has a modest but adequate annual stipend for supplies, and has enthusiastic institutional support from our associated non-profit Hoyt Arboretum Friends group. Our main challenges are the lack of physical space and the ongoing prevention of insect pests. The herbarium is housed in a shared multi-purpose room that is also the arboretum library, classroom and meeting room. We currently have five herbarium

cabinets, each storing roughly 1,000 specimens, and they are all at or near capacity. We additionally use plastic storage containers to hold in-process specimens and most of our bulky conifer collection.

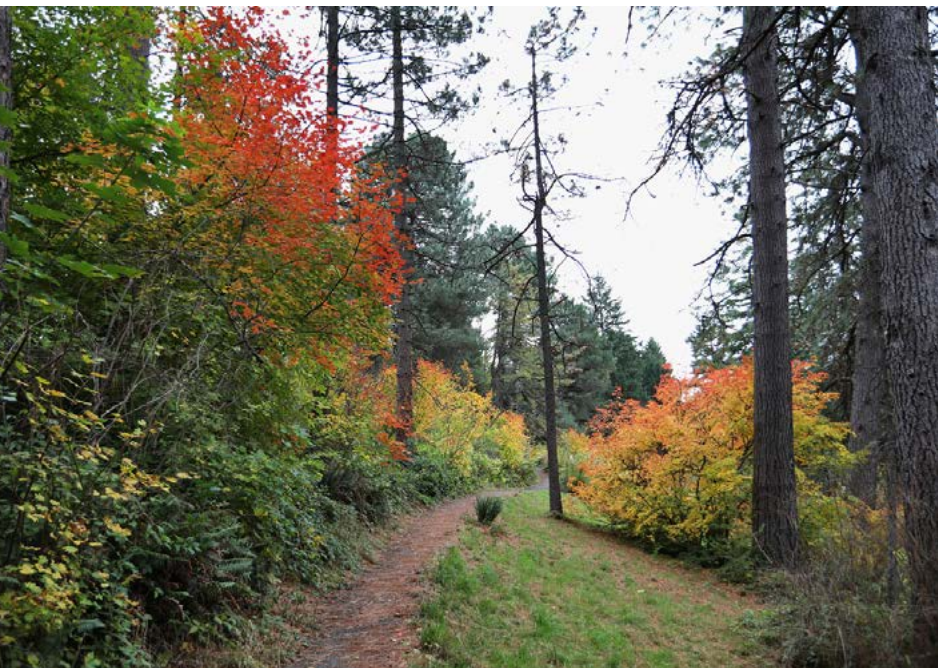
Our other ongoing challenge is the prevention of insect pests, which can eat and damage the mounting glue, archival paper or the plant speci-

mens themselves. We have the typical herbarium pests: book lice, cigarette beetles and the occasional silverfish. Other herbaria have previously used mothballs or other chemical treatments, sticky traps, pheromone traps, or room temperature control to manage insect pests. Since we are a small herbarium, we simply batch freeze all of our specimens twice per year. We have not noticed any negative impacts of repeated freezing on our specimens or mounting glue, and freezing alone appears to adequately control our insect pests.

Hoyt Arboretum is free to the public and many people enjoy walking on our beautiful trails and seeing the living tree collection. The Hoyt Arboretum Herbarium is open by appointment only, due to the fragile nature of specimens and trying to keep the collection clean of insect pests. We welcome any registrars (or other museum professionals and enthusiasts) to come visit our collections the next time you are in the Portland, Oregon area!



▲ Our crowded herbarium with inadequate storage space. This room also functions as the arboretum's sole classroom, meeting room and book library.



▲ Come visit the walking trails and see the trees at Hoyt Arboretum!

References Cited:

CPNWH. 2023. Consortium of Pacific Northwest Herbaria, website. Available at <https://www.pnwherbaria.org/>. Accessed 20 March 2023.

FLAS. 2022. Webpage: Preparation of plant specimens for deposit as herbarium vouchers. University of Florida Herbarium (FLAS). Accessed on 13 March 2023. Available at <https://www.floridamuseum.ufl.edu/herbarium/methods/vouchers/>

Hoyt Arboretum Garden Explorer. 2023. Website. Available at <https://hoystarboretum.gardenexplorer.org/>. Accessed 20 March 2023.

If you missed the "Wait, You Collect What?!?" check it out here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1z1kPL58tcg.&feature=youtu.beWait, You Collect What?!? Living Collections>



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▲ 2022 RC-WR members and sponsors rehoused over 250 objects at the Five Oaks Museum.



▲ 2022 members and sponsors digitized and rehoused over 200 negatives from the Clackamas County Historical Society's collection of negatives from the Enterprise Courier Newspaper.

2023 CSI:Registrars

I'm certain it was just October, and we were getting together in Portland, Oregon, at the Clackamas County Historical Society and the Five Oaks Museum to support one another within our museum community. We made incredible headway on digitization and rehousing projects, and had a great time doing it. Somehow it seems that we are already halfway to CSI:Registrars 2023, and we need a great project for our amazing community to support in Pasadena, California. So...

CALLING ALL PASADENA AREA MUSEUMS!

Did you join us in Portland in 2022 for our amazing double CSI (Collections Services Initiative)? What about for our virtual CSI: Registrars events the prior two years? Digitization, rehousing, condition reporting, and describing, our members have made huge impacts on the organizations we have volunteered at, and we can't wait to do it again.

We are excited to be heading to Pasadena this fall for Western Museums Association Annual Conference, and we hope you can help us find a great project to work on as a pre-conference workshop. If your museum has a project that would benefit from the help of experienced museum professionals as volunteers, **we want to hear from you!**

In order for your museum to qualify for this service initiative, you must:

1

Be an RC-WR Member ([you can even sign up now!](#))

2

Your institution must be located within commuting distance of Pasadena.

3

You and your team should be available to host this event on Thursday, October 5th from 9am–3pm.

Funding is available to support this event. If you'd like to express interest in this project, even if you don't have all the details yet, PLEASE EMAIL RCWRViceChair@gmail.com!!

Deadline to express interest in this initiative for your museum is Friday, June 2nd, 2023! ●

9



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Museums and
Wealth ———
The Politics of
Contemporary
Art Collections
Nizan Shaked



BLOOMSBURY

New Reads

Review by Nancy Arms Simon



Museums and Wealth: The Politics of Contemporary Art Collections

Bloomsbury Academic
Great Britain, 2022

Museums and Wealth: The Politics of Contemporary Art Collections

Nizan Shaked

Bloomsbury Academic, Great Britain, 2022

The Art Market is a Scam (And Rich People Run It)

Sam Denby and Tristan Purdy

Wendover Productions

<https://youtu.be/ZZ3F3zWiEmc>

“I was a Black Lives Matter Hire”

Lise Ragbir

Hyperallergic, March 2, 2023

<https://hyperallergic.com/804872/i-was-a-museums-black-lives-matter-hire-eunice-belidor/>

Nizan Shaked’s leaves no stone unturned in *Museums and Wealth: The Politics of Contemporary Art Collections*. She cites over 400 sources that she uses to prove her thesis: that art museums justify their tax exempt status and use of public funds because they claim to serve an educational function for the public good.¹ But in reality, they serve private wealth to the detriment of collection quality and diversity while directly reinforcing white supremacy in museums. What I appreciate so much about Shaked’s research is that she does not assume anything. She tasks herself first with proving every premise so that she has you squarely on board as she shares her points. This includes the basic assumption of art as a necessity, not a luxury, and how an egalitarian system for art can improve our lives, and how art museum programs and exhibitions influence the public’s understanding of and accessibility to artwork. Honestly, it was hard to get through this book. As a person who loves art and education in an almost spiritual way, it is a depressing read. It is also incredibly well-researched, unapologetic, brilliantly written, clearly presented and single-

¹ Indeed, if you are currently working in a museum and part of the Public Student Loan Forgiveness Program, it is the status as an educational institution that grants you entry to the program.

mindful in its argument. So even though by page three I knew this was not going to make me feel great about my job, I also could not put it down. In the introduction she not only outlines the content of all four chapters, but also what type of argument she will use to prove her point.

Chapter One, “Art and imperialism: the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Economic Inequality” looks at the SFMOMA and the acquisition of the private Fisher collection, questioning the ability of the museum to serve the public interest in an equitable way. Shaked presents a strong, if at this point a little dated, argument, about the Fisher contract (more recently the SFMOMA has acquired another large private collection from the Stones), but research of this caliber takes time. One cannot fault the author for taking years to construct her argument. Of particular interest is the chart on page 44 by James Soby, Head of the SFMOMA’s Painting and Sculpture Department from 1943-1944 where he contrasts the type of collecting done by Collectors vs. Museum Curators as the reason he strongly advised against acquisition of entire private collections.

Chapter Two, “The Substance of Symbolic Value: Museums and Private Collecting” shows the conflict of interest inherent in having collector-donors on the board of museums. Museums administer collections on behalf of the public. Art gains symbolic value through its collective status, and increases in financial value due to public display. Therefore, the public should receive that income. Instead, the honor, authority, control and financial gain lead to continued dominance by the wealthy. In fact, in the current system, employees (working people) are under more scrutiny of conflict of interest than donors. AAM and AAMD have only limited power for conflicts of interest. They instruct museums to write guidelines, but even the accreditation of those esteemed organizations is not a condition for tax exempt status. Only the District Attorney can sue an institution for illegal behavior and that only happens in cases of gross viola-

tion. Meanwhile, museums do not want to alienate patrons. Directors’ high salaries are subsidized and endowed by patrons they are supposed to regulate. I deeply appreciated Shaked’s point on page 67 about the closing of the commons as the foundation for contemporary capitalism because we do not talk about this historical landmark nearly enough. Indeed, we barely acknowledge that private ownership was not always an agreed-upon reality. The move from feudal to market society shifted our perception of entitlement. Shaked calls our changing view of business decisions to be neutral and non-political as “utterly false”. Another point in Chapter Two shook me but should have been more obvious. When museums increase the value of privately owned work, they eventually price themselves out of the market, then have to court donors for donations. When a system allows flexibility and autonomy for the ruling class, while keeping some of its most consequential processes shrouded in secrecy, the process avoids direct scrutiny and accountability.

Chapter Three, “From Medici to MOMA: Collections, Sovereignty, and the Private/Public Distinction” starts by outlining two audiences: the wealthy patrons and the rest of us. Rather than beginning her art history in the typical 18th or 19th century, Shaked gets her running start in the late 16th century when the Uffizi Gallery in Florence was used by the Medicis to display private art collections to the public in an effort to justify merchant wealth. Ironically, but intentionally, of the valuables owned by the Medicis, art was the least valuable compared, for example, to functional artisan objects or durable goods. Likewise, art museums have become a place to showcase class and performative generosity of the super wealthy. Nonprofits in the United States have always assisted in communities since the time pioneers carved out a new life here but have replaced the welfare state in contemporary society, stepping in for infrastructural state functions. Social responsibilities have transferred from the state to the voluntary sector. Semi-privatized, Shaked argues, non-profits fail

the test of social good. For every argument that the system is working, Shaked digs down and proves it wrong, rooting out the fallacies in every argument that the system is working. On page 97 she lays out for the reader how private collections benefit from the display of art, which is also the starting point for the video *The Art Market is a Scam (And Rich People Run It)* by Denby and Purdy.

Chapter Four, “Blueprints for the Future: Demographic and Economic Change”, offers some solutions, some “what ifs” for the future, and a bit of respite from the overwhelming feeling that we are so deep into our current systems that we are doomed. However, not without first pointing out that “discrimination is necessary to sustain wealth”. Shaked goes on to say that to fundamentally change museums in the short and long terms we must change culture and our economic dependency on the ruling class. Shaked calls on WEB DuBois’s concept of Racial Capitalism to further point out why undoing our current system is crucial. Collections and classifications are built on racism. Racism was used to fragment the working class into subclasses and capitalism relies on extreme social stratification to push wages down as seen in museum hierarchies. “Museums cannot take their dictates from the very system whose profit is based on the hierarchy *it claims* it wants to undo” (my italics)* page 164. The mythology of the singular genius artist has created a system in the art history canon that value lies in one person, alone in the studio, generally a white man who mostly closely resembles the white males who make up the 1%. The 1% running museum donations homogenize the art we see and rewards only a select few artists.

The new, creative ideas start with Porchia Moore’s ideas of socializing funding and try to imagine new social structures to support the arts. Shaked points out who to look to by listing some of the people who have spoken out and joined in the call to change. The simple act of taxing the secondary art market, while not a new idea, would rest

more of the economic burden on the shoulders of those who currently profit the most. At the same time, Shaked argues, we must sever the “connection between the public significance of art and art’s price” (p. 183)

Museums and Wealth is one hundred and eighty seven pages of densely packed research that is not to be trifled with, followed by Notes, an expansive Bibliography and Index. I probably could not explain the multiple layers she uses to build her argument without using one hundred and eighty seven pages myself. The writing is academic and not light reading, and it is tempting to skip to the last chapter where Shaked offers models and ideas for change. But I recommend reading it from the beginning because by the time you get to the end, there will be no doubt in your mind that the current system is neither fair, nor sustainable. I recommend this book for anyone working in art collections or museums because the needs of the ultra-wealthy always trickle down into our day to day work and it is important to know why. I would not say read this book to avoid going into museum work or to encourage you to leave the work you may be doing now. I would say read it so your eyes are open and so you can help with the change from within.

*Lise Ragbir, “I was a Black Lives Matter Hire”, in the March 2, 2023 issue of *Hyperallergic* was an incredible read that really resonated with me. I liked that the article surprised me and that she points out the mental and physical toll it takes to have your work devalued. Ragbir insists that money and power are what matter to institutions. “Institutions don’t want to make changes. They want to look like they’re making changes.” I especially loved her garden analogy and was excited by the idea of correspondence as a place where things are happening. 1 Indeed, if you are currently working in a museum and part of the Public Student Loan Forgiveness Program, it is the status as an educational institution that grants you entry to the program. ●



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WAIT, YOU COLLECT WHAT?!?

MAY 4TH, 2023

Did you not anticipate that explosive safety would be part of your collections management job? Well get ready to learn more about the unique challenges of collecting everything from bullets to ballistic missiles with Beth Sanders of the U.S. Naval Undersea Museum (and Vice Chair of RC-WR!) and Kathleen Sligar of the Oregon Military Museum. Part of our 2023 virtual series, WAIT, You Collect What?!?

Things That Go Boom will dive into a specialty collection with some critical safety considerations on:

May 4th, 2023 at 11am Pacific.

Register at:

<https://tinyurl.com/go-boom>

Next up, we'll be joined by Melanie Tran of the California State Railroad Museum because most of us don't have visitors riding our artifacts, and haven't needed to consider how to lend out an actual train. So, ALL ABOARD, and mark your calendars for June 15, 2023!



Top: It takes more than documentation to collect former ordnance, museums with these types of artifacts bear the responsibility of keeping their staff and visitors safe—not to mention the collection itself!

Bottom: Custom, compact torpedo storage at the U.S. Naval Undersea Museum makes it possible to store their collection of over one hundred torpedoes, ranging from 19th century prototypes to modern examples.

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THE WINNER WILL BE DRAWN ON MAY 1ST!

ALASKA

—Amanda Lancaster

The **Smithsonian American Art Museum** (Washington D.C.) will feature three Alaska Native artists. *Sharing Honors and Burdens: Renwick Invitational 2023* includes artists Joe Feddersen (Arrow Lakes/Okanagan), Lily Hope (Tlingit), Ursala Hudson (Tlingit), Erica Lord (Athabaskan/Iñupiat), Geo Neptune (Passamaquoddy), and Maggie Thompson (Fond du Lac Ojibwe). Together, these artists present a fresh and nuanced vision of Native American art. The artists were selected for their work that expresses the honors and burdens that Native artists balance as they carry forward their cultural traditions. These artists highlight principles of respect, reciprocity, and responsibility through their work that addresses themes of environmentalism, displacement, and cultural connectedness.

See more information here:

<https://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/invitational-2023>

The Presidents and Fellows of Harvard College have transferred ownership of an Alutiiq/Sugpiaq kayak to the **Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository**, a tribal repository and cultural center in Kodiak, Alaska. Made in the mid-19th century, the 14-and-a-half foot, skin-covered boat is a rare example of a complete ancestral kayak. This vessel has been at the center of a long-term collaboration between the institutions and is currently on display at the Alutiiq Museum. The transfer allows the Alutiiq community to assume care of the kayak, a culturally sensitive object embellished with human hair.

The boat will continue to be a focal point in the museum's gallery. "The Alutiiq Museum is renovating its facilities, a project that includes installing a new set of gallery displays," said Counciller. "The kayak is one of our visitor's favorite objects, and we plan to install it on a display about spring hunting. The boat will also be a long-term resource on kayak building. Preserved in its wooden frame, lashings, and skin cover are construction techniques used by a skilled ancestral boat builder that can help us continue to learn while we honor the ancestors whose skill and essence are preserved in the vessel."

See more information here:

<https://alutiiqmuseum.org/press-releases/1844-harvard-university-transfers-historic-kayak-to-alutiiq-museum-january-24-2023>

◀ Historic kayak on display at the Alutiiq Museum, AM795. Courtesy of the Alutiiq Museum

ARIZONA

—Lindsey Vogel-Teeter



◀ Hanna Person was hired as the new Registrar at the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff in 2022. Hanna previously worked in the same position at a regional museum in upstate New York. Hanna has a strong love of the outdoors and enjoys activities such as hiking and snowshoeing. She also enjoys tabletop board games and

reading. She can be contacted at hperson@musnaz.org



▲ **Pueblo Grande Museum** is in the process of changing its name to **S'edav Va'aki Museum**. The change was approved during a City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Board Meeting on Thursday, March 23, 2023.

The name S'edav Va'aki (Salt River Pima – Maricopa Indian Community spelling) or Central Vahki (English spelling) is an O'odham name that reflects the connection the site has with the local O'odham and Piipaash communities. S'edav Va'aki refers to the large platform mound (Va'aki) that is preserved at the site, and the central location of this ancestral village within the Salt River Valley and to the extensive canal system created by these exceptional engineers before Euro-Americans moved into the region.

The previous name, Pueblo Grande, is defined in the Spanish language and denotes the site as a “pueblo,” which is not how the O'odham would describe their villages or habitation sites.

Being located on a site with one of the few remaining platform mounds (Va'aki) differentiates the museum from other museums in Phoenix. The museum exists to preserve and help interpret the site, the ancestral occupation, and to bring attention to living indigenous communities. Rebranding the museum with an appropriate O'odham name will better serve museum audiences and the diverse community of Phoenix.

Throughout summer and fall of 2023, the Museum will gradually begin transitioning signage throughout the museum and on the website. In fall of 2023, the new S'edav Va'aki Museum will unveil its new logo during a “reopening” event.



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

—Carrie Cohen



▲ The **Oakland Museum of California** is offering Friday Nights Off the Grid. As the weather begins to warm, settle in for a night of art and picnicking. This free event provides a gathering place for the community every Friday, including live music, hands-on activities, food trucks, and

late-night access to their galleries and special exhibits. Visit <https://museumca.org/about-friday-nights-at-om-ca-with-off-the-grid/> for more details.

The **Crocker Art Museum** in Sacramento is hosting a live art auction. Those interested in expanding their art collection and supporting local artists can join the Preview Party on May 18, with a live auction on June 3. Visit <https://www.crockerart.org/page/art-auction-season> for details.

The Tech Interactive in San Jose has unveiled the Solve for Earth exhibit, which “creates a space where we can discuss as a community how to live sustainably and reduce the impacts of climate change. Solve for Earth looks at the whole picture: where we live, what we eat, how we move and more.” Visit <https://www.thetech.org/solveforearth> for more information.

OREGON

—Meg Glazier-Anderson

In March, the **Lincoln County Historical Society**, in Newport, opened a new exhibit, *Lincoln County 400'* which is focused on contemporary drone photography juxtaposed with historical aerial images from the collection. The invitational exhibition features the work of drone photographers who fly under 400 feet while documenting the landscape of Lincoln County, Oregon.

The **Gresham Historical Society** in Gresham, will be getting support from the Oregon Heritage Commission to take on a digitization project. The purpose of the project is to establish a pathway for other small museums to get their collections digitized and made public on Northwest Digital Heritage.

Philip Cash Cash, Ph.D. (Wey̓i̓letpuu/Cayuse, Ni̓m̓i̓puu/Nez Perce) played his Plateau flute before the object became part of the *Creations of Spirit* exhibition at the **High Desert Museum**, near Bend. Cash Cash and Professor Michael Holloman (Colville Confederated Tribes) spoke at the Museum in March about the ongoing connection of objects in museums

and contemporary communities. The exhibition is open through September 2023.

▼ Philip Cash Cash with his Plateau flute.



UTAH

—Hannah Barrett

The **Utah Division of Arts & Museums** has partnered with Utah Humanities, with support from the National Endowment of the Humanities, to provide collections care training sessions for museums professionals in Utah. These sessions focus on accessible, practical, hands-on training to give collections stewards knowledge and tools to preserve their treasured local collections.



▲ On January 5th, the field services team gathered with 24 collections stewards from across the state for the first in-person workshop of 2023. They focused on the basics of collections preservation and significance and learned about the incredible collection of the hosting institution,

the **Edge of the Cedars State Park Museum** in Blanding. A month later, on February 2, 2023 at the **Grand County Library** in Moab, the team introduced content on artifact deterioration and preventative preservation, labeled objects, and trained on artifact handling practices.

At the **Utah Museum of Fine Arts** (UMFA), they have a new work on view in the Art of Japan gallery: a 17th century scroll painted by Kiyohara Yukinobu, a female Edo period artist. This recent acquisition depicts the 9th century female Japanese poet Lady Ono no Komachi, and includes one of her poems. Also newly opened: *The Unique Perspective of Abelardo Morell* on exhibit from February 28-August 27, 2023; featuring 14 Morell photographs from the permanent collection.

The UMFA collections team recently completed a large-scale inventory of over 11,000 objects encompassing their works on paper and photograph collections.

► *Court Lady Ono no Komachi* by Kiyohara Yukinobu. Utah Museum of Fine Arts Permanent Collection, purchased with funds from the John Preston Creer and Mary Elizabeth Brockbank Creer Memorial Fund. Photo by Adelaide Ryder.



WASHINGTON

—*Nives Mestrovic*

Bellevue Arts Museum (BAM) in Bellevue, hired a new registrar, Zulma Brennan. Before coming to the BAM, Zulma was the collections manager at The Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands in Rancho Mirage, California. She will support the traveling, solo, and collective exhibitions in her new role.

In February 2023, BAM opened the exhibition *Abstract Truth*, featuring works from the Cornish College of the Arts professor and artist Preston Wadley. The exhibition features art books and photographs by Preston Wadley, focusing on the themes of race, identity, local history, and the history of photography; it is on view until October 8, 2023.

The **Museum of Glass**, Tacoma, staff has been busy inside and outside their walls. February marked the transition from their exhibition partnership with Pilchuck Glass School, *What Are You Looking At? An Eccentric Chorus of Artists Working in Glass* to one with She Bends—an organization dedicated to building a more equitable future for neon as an art form through public education, curatorial projects, and artist programs fostering diversity and sustainability.

In March, their traveling exhibition program included the opening of *Preston Singletary: Raven and the Box of Daylight* at the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk, Virginia, and in April, the opening of *Art Deco Glass from the David Huchthausen Collection* at its fifth venue of Fort Wayne Museum of Art, Indiana.

The year 2022 was quite a windfall for the Museum of Glass collections. It became the permanent home to nearly 500 glass birds designed by Oiva Toikka for the Finnish company Iittala when their promised gift by collector Paul Kangas became a reality.

(See photograph of Rantakiwi (Beach Kiwi) by Oiva Toikka on the cover of this newsletter.)

Seattle's **Museum of History & Industry** is pleased to host the exhibit *Celebrating Pacific Northwest Artists: 25 Years of the Neddy Awards* from June 4 to September 5, 2023. Presented by the Behnke Foundation and Cornish College of the Arts, the exhibit is curated by Negarra A. Kudumu and features past Neddy grand prize award recipients, some of the most significant Northwest visual artists of the last quarter century. Created twenty-five years ago to honor Seattle artist and teacher Ned Behnke (1948-1989), the Neddy Artist Award recognizes innovative visual artists across media.

On another note, Betsy Bruemmer, our Collections Manager and Specialist for 17 years, is retiring this May after nearly 30 years working in the museum field. We will miss her and wish her all the best on her next adventure!

The **Frye Art Museum** in Seattle, exhibition *Marsden Hartley: An American Nature* is on view until May 21, 2023. The show offers a snapshot of Hartley's vast oeuvre, highlighting a shift in the artist's approach. While his earlier works portray a pristine wilderness devoid of human presence, his later paintings reveal an understanding of a complex natural world impacted by humankind.

The **Museum of Flight** (MoF) in Seattle, is in the midst of several major facility upgrades to its main Collections Storage building. Originally built in the 1990's by Boeing for use as a hazmat/chemical storage facility, it has a lot of quirks that make it less than desirable for collections storage use. These building updates have been long overdue and will help them ensure the long-term care of their collection. The building envelope is being sealed, and new humidification units are being installed throughout the building. The estimated completion date for this work is May 2023. At the same time, MoF is replacing all of their existing collections shelving throughout the building in 24 individual storage bays. The estimated completion date for this portion of the project is June 2023, and they anticipate this project will more than double the storage space.



▲ Collections materials
palletized for insulation work

► Wall insulation in progress

The MoF is also excited to have added a new full-time position to the Collections Department. Courtney Sprague joined the museum in June 2022 as a temporary Collections Technician to assist us with assessing and re-housing materials impacted by our February 2022 flood. Her position was made permanent in January 2023, and they are so glad to have her on their team!



Plans are underway to schedule the 10th Registrars to the Rescue (R2R) event. In a partnership with Art Work Fine Art Services, trained museum professionals are invited to volunteer on a special collections project in a Washington museum. If you are interested in volunteering your services on June 20, 2023, please get in touch with Rebecca Engelhardt at reengelhardt@museumofglass.org