

MARC *Courier*

The Newsletter of the Midwest Registrars Committee

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 2

Summer 2013

REFLECTIONS FROM AMM



Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection at the School of Human Ecology, UW-Madison and curator Liese Pfeifer, providing several hours of object specific mountmaking services to nearly fifteen pieces of the beaded bag collection.

MRC was also fortunate to be able to provide four travel stipends for members. Christa Barleben and Amy Heggemeyer have featured articles in this issue, while Mary Parks and Terry Segal will reflect on

In what may have been the few short days of summer that occurred in southern Wisconsin this summer, museum professionals from across the Midwest gathered in downtown Madison for three days of connecting, conversing and collaboration at the Association of Midwest Museums Annual Conference *Locally Grown, Community Created*.

The Midwest Registrars Committee was well represented among attendees, presenters and hosting institutions during the conference. MRC members had a chance to attend a fabulous evening social, the MRC Luncheon and numerous other behind-the-scenes events. The Mighty Rescue Crew was hosted by the



Scenes from the MRC Social

their AMM Conference experience in the Fall issue of the *Courier*. Many thanks to the sponsors of the MRC events and stipends: Gaylord, Huntington T. Block, Masterpiece International, Specie, Staba Arte, Terry Dowd, Inc., and US Art.

As Jane Weinke posted on MRC's Facebook page—
“A good time was had by all!”



FROM THE CHAIR

Happy Autumnal Equinox! As I work at a Big 10 University, I could tell that fall was in the air the minute I saw the football team back at practice and could hear the marching band practicing. Also, when 50,000 additional people came back to campus in late August!

I know many of you could not attend the Midwest Museum meeting in July, but this issue will detail some of the interesting information presented at the collections sessions. There were a wide range of sessions, including nomenclature, selecting the collections management system that would best suit your needs, disaster response plans (did you know there is an app for this?!), shared collection databases, metadata standards and several local collections collaborating to tell their story of the Civil War.

We had a wonderful MRC business lunch meeting at Johnny Delmonico's, generously sponsored by Huntington T. Block. At the meeting, we discussed updates from the state representatives, and introduced the winners of the travel stipends awarded for the annual meeting: Christa Barleben, sponsored by U.S. Art; Terry Segal, sponsored by Masterpiece International; Amy Heggemeyer, sponsored by StabaArte and Mary Parks, sponsored by Terry Dowd.

Craig Hadley submitted his membership report; Jennifer Noffze submitted the treasurer's report and Tamara Lange gave everyone an update on the *Courier* newsletter. Elizabeth Frozena organized a great Mighty Rescue Crew to work on a project with the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection at the School of Human Ecology at the University of Wisconsin. Gaylord and Terry Dowd sponsored the purchase of supplies for the project. We had a wonderful MRC Social at Cooper's Tavern, sponsored by Willis Fine Art, Jewelry and Specie. All the Madison locals filled us in on the best beers to order, and there were tons of door prizes given out!

For the upcoming year, we are going to focus on starting our own website for the Midwest Registrars Committee. Right now we just have a page on the AMM's website – and we'd like to have something that is easier for us to control and maintain, and that everyone can participate in (vs. a static page filled with one way information). Devon Pyle-Vowles, our Vice-Chair, has done a lot of ground work on this

project.

I'd like to thank Ann Sinfield and Jane Weinke for all of the hard work they did in Madison: organizing the sessions and social events for the meeting. I'm still GREEN with envy after taking the tour Ann offered of the expanded facilities (woodshop, packing and crate storage, art storage, gallery space) she has at her disposal at the Chazen - an addition that truly took into consideration the needs of the collection and the museum staff.

After 25 years in the business, I always go to these conferences with a little voice in my head telling me that I already know about most of the issues being presented at the sessions, and that the conference will just be about networking and meeting people that I know only through e-mail and the telephone. And EACH time, I am amazed at how many notes I take, and how many links and references to books and articles I write down. By now I should know that there is always something new happening, and I always come back from the meetings INSPIRED to (take your pick!): update our disaster plan; check that our inventory system is as efficient and streamlined as it should be; update our choice lists in the database; think about bar-coding our collection; changing the way we number objects and on and on!!

For those of you who couldn't attend the meeting, I hope you can take some inspiration from the articles featured in this issue of the newsletter.



FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of the *Courier* was in many ways an Editor's dream. There were tons of content options, between the activities of the AMM meeting, Travel Stipend articles, and write-ups from members on the projects/workshops/activities that have been keeping them busy these last few months. While some issues it is a struggle to find a lead story, this month it was difficult to decide where to fit everything in! I hope everyone will understand!

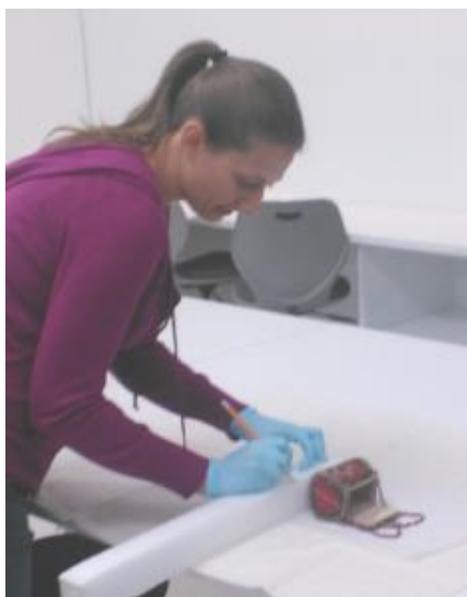
I love to see the variety of exhibitions and news announcements that we often feature and I know these are often the "public face" of our work. But the behind-the-scenes stories of installations, inventories,

and implementations always make me smile, and they truly get my brain percolating away. Not to mention the fact that I now know who is going to get a call asking for advice when we launch our next inventory initiative!

Don't forget that the *MRC Courier* is a place to celebrate both our public and our behind the scenes work, connect with colleagues and even seek advice or inspiration. This is a chance to shine; a spotlight on a fantastic accomplishment or a flashlight in a dim corner needing some further inspection.

Thanks to all who willingly contributed content for this issue and the many issues of the past. Do not be afraid to share what is going well or what needs a little helping hand. Our greatest resource is each other!

SCENES FROM THE MIGHTY RESCUE CREW



MOBILE ART

Artlens App from the Cleveland Museum of Art

Submitted by Christa Barleben, Registrar

Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, Indianapolis, Indiana

This July I was fortunate to attend the Association of Midwest Museum Annual Conference in Madison, Wisconsin. This conference was especially significant to me because I received the Midwest Registrars Committee travel stipend, which allowed me to attend the conference. As an emerging professional, I was excited to connect with friends and create new connections in the Midwest museum community. I am truly thankful to the committee members and sponsors for providing this opportunity to attend the 2013 conference.

This year's conference was titled *Locally Grown, Community Created*, and as the Registrar of the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, we are always striving to work with our local and Native communities when it comes to our collection and interpretation. Also, as the new owner of a smart phone, I have been truly intrigued by how social content and mobile applications have been integrated into how we learn, communicate with others, and how smart devices have become an extension of ourselves.

That theme could be seen in the conference sessions as well, as many sessions dealt with apps and trending technology. The Cleveland Museum of Art presented a session titled *Locally Grown, Internationally Known: Showcasing Community Voices in Mobile Content*, presented by staff members Jennifer Foley and Seema Rao. The Cleveland Museum of Art launched two major digital interpretative initiatives in 2013. The Artlens app, one of the initiatives, allows the visitor to personalize their museum experience with the collection while at the museum by offering extended object interpretation through a smart device application.

Before launching the app, the museum researched who was visiting the museum and found out they have two different types of visitors. The first and smaller group was the structured visitor. They want to know the 10 objects you need to see, why you need to



see them, and why you should care. They are also often the visitors who took tours while at the museum. The larger group was made up of the browsing visitor. They are the visitor who walked past interpretive panels and only looked at the objects that truly interest them while browsing the rest of the gallery. The Cleveland Museum of Art's Artlens app accommodates both types of visitors. It consists of tours for the visitors who want structure and the "Near You Now" feature for the browsing visitor.

The "Near You Now" feature uses GPS to locate visitors in the gallery and informs the visitor of objects near them that have extended interpretation, which can be accessed through the app. The extended interpretation consists mostly of video interviews with staff, community members and artists. What is unique about these videos are they are not narrated. They are unstructured interviews with individuals with different points of view, consisting of conversations which allow the visitor to engage with the interviewee.

Interviews with the local communities are a highlight of this app. Their interviews allow visitors to connect with art on a personal level and to see the object's design not just as art, but as a cultural piece within a community. The community voices allow the visitor to connect the art within its cultural or religious context. They can see how the objects are still being used

by the communities today and how the objects are being made by contemporary artists. For objects that are not well known or not European in origin, it is important to connect the piece to the culture that created it and use it to help the visitor better understand the piece within its context.

The Artlens app also allows the visitor to be part of the interpretation. The app has museum and visitor generated tours that visitors can follow for a more structured visit. Visitors also have the ability to create their own tours by tagging objects in the app and creating a playlist. The playlist is then shared with other visitors through the Artlens app.

Artlens is a relatively new app for the Cleveland Museum of Art and they are just beginning to review the analytics of how the app is used by visitors. An interesting revelation is that about half the users are offsite

users, not visitors in the museum. The app has been downloaded in countries like Germany and Japan. These people will probably never be in the museum., so the staff has updated the app to accommodate the offsite users. For example, the app now has object label copy attached to each image to help give the offsite user a brief description of the object. Users can also now zoom in on the image of an object using the app, allowing offsite visitors to see close details.

Overall, visitors are starting to look for more digital content to enhance their museum experience. The Artlens app caters not only to the physical museum visitor, but the virtual visitor as well. This app can be downloaded for free in the iTunes store and you can visit the Cleveland Art Museum website, <http://www.clevelandart.org/gallery-one/Artlens> for more information.

AN OVATIONS ROOM HIGHLIGHT: Reap Benefits: Grow Community Interaction through Shared Collection Databases

*Submitted by Amy Heggemeyer, Assistant Registrar
Spurlock Museum, University of Illinois Urbana-
Champaign, Urbana, Illinois*

Thank you to MRC and Staba Arte for making it possible to attend my first AMM Conference. With a great slate of topics on hand and an opportunity to check one more 'must-see' city off my list, I arrived in Madison eager to experience this great event. After a few false starts, I found the Ovarations Room, otherwise known as Collections Management Central, given the number of collections sessions presented here. There were so many informative sessions, but one that really got me thinking about the whats, whys, and hows of the Spurlock Museum's treatment of data was *Reap Benefits: Grow Community Interaction through Shared Collection Databases*.

Grow Community Interaction began with Marian Rengel of the Minnesota Digital Library elaborating on the deep collaboration that occurred and continues to occur throughout the lifetime of the Minnesota Reflections project. This content-rich website includes materials from over 150 Minnesota cultural institutions and operates on ContentDM. Recent changes in

funding, leadership, and staffing have impacted participation, but the accessibility via word searchable entries and free digitization still renders this project advantageous for participants.

Next was Nicolette Meister of the Logan Museum of Anthropology, Beloit College. She described how their primary audience was considered to be the college faculty and students, with a desire to extend usage beyond the Anthropology Department. Through a 2008 IMLS grant they were able to customize their collections database through re:discovery Proficio and upload to ContentDM for online accessibility through the Beloit College Digital Collection, which is organized by Beloit's Digital Resource Librarian. Nicolette's presentation revealed how sometimes the anticipated user is not the actual user. There has since been a discovery, through Google Analytics, that the majority use of the website comes from external, non-Beloit users.

Sheila McGuire then spoke on ArtsConnectEd.org, a joint project of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the Walker Art Center. Ms. McGuire added another dimension to the discussion, that of how the creator

encourages active and repeat usage by the anticipated audience. ArtsConnectEd is viewed as an educational tool, and a newsletter is sent to teachers encouraging site usage and giving them a reason to visit multiple times. One encouragement is an occasional challenge to develop an online collection based around an idea or topic, with the prize of an iPad going to the best submission.

The final speaker was Lin Nelson-Mayson of the Goldstein Museum of Design at the University of Minnesota. Her description of a photography project for clothing and shoes, a detailed process that included the development of a 'puppetry' style of mounting shoes to show them in action, highlighted the importance of quality images for an online database.

In all, this session reinforced the need to consider

who is your key audience and who is your actual online audience, the importance of strategic planning for the long-term health of a project, the value of collaboration from both a financial and strategic standpoint and the importance of developing methods to encourage repeat usage.

My time in Madison ended with the Mighty Rescue Crew at the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection at the University of Wisconsin. What a chance to flex some old muscles, learn from the expertise of colleagues, and revisit how to build a mount! It was a pleasure to view their recent improvements to storage and do our part to help with the care of this collection. Overall, this was a wonderful experience and I look forward to joining everyone next year!



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NEWS FROM ALL OVER

Illinois

▪ *Submitted by Amy Heggemeyer* ▪

Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago
News:

At the end of April, Angie Morrow invited Illinois MRC members to the Art Institute of Chicago for a tour of the recently renovated Mary and Michael Jaharis Galleries of Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Art. It was a small group, but we greatly enjoyed the tour of the new gallery layout, storage, and a demonstration of the amazing cases created by Goppion, which is based in Milan, Italy.

Also at the end of April, Devon Pyle-Vowles started at the Art Institute of Chicago as the new Collection Manager for Comprehensive Inventory for the European Decorative Arts Department. With the curator of the department, she will inventory the European Dec-

orative Arts collection at the same time as coordinating rapid imaging of the collection. This inventory includes updating the documentation of the collection in both the paper files and the main database of the Art Institute. Devon looks forward to the challenges that lie ahead.

Do you have exhibitions, events, acquisitions, or other news to share? Please let your State Representative or Tamara know! See the listing of MRC Board Members and State Representatives for contact information.

Indiana

▪ *Submitted by Lana Newhart-Kellen* ▪

The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Indianapolis
News:

Over the past two years, Registrar/Archivist Jennifer Noffze of The Children's Museum of Indianapolis has worked with members of the museum's Marketing and IT departments along, with a contract writer, to conduct research, provide images and videos, and write articles for the Museum's new interactive online history. TCM is one of the few museums in the country to journey through its history in an interactive and compelling way with an extremely visual online history site.

An easy to navigate timeline illustrates who was instrumental in each phase of the museum's growth along with photographs, illustrations, and video clips. While other historical efforts contain huge blocks of text, this one guides visitors to easily digestible material and quotes from the people who helped mold the museum into what it is today through the perspective of eight-plus decades.

It does not stop there. History continues to evolve

and the museum will update the new online history site to reflect what is happening now so the evolution of the museum is up-to-date and not obsolete. You may explore the site at:

<http://thehistory.childrensmuseum.org/>

Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington
Event:

The Indiana University Art Museum hosted "Travelling the Silk Road" on Thursday, September 5. This open sketch night from 8:00–10:00 p.m. at the Thomas T. Solley Atrium was an interactive program that explored artifacts that could have been found along the Silk Road. Participants could try out Chinese calligraphy or henna designs while enjoying live music and refreshments. Co-sponsored by the IU Chinese Calligraphy Club and Art Museum Student Organization (AMSO)

Red Skelton Museum of American Comedy, Vincennes
Event:

On July 18, the Red Skelton Museum of American Comedy held its grand opening, which coincided with the comedian/actor's birth. Those in attendance came from across the US and included Red's widow, Lothian, who donated over \$4 million in memorabilia.

Skelton's friend, actor Jamie Farr of the TV show "M*A*S*H," also attended.

In the first three weeks the museum was open, over 1,000 people visited. The museum is located on the University of Vincennes' campus and is within sight of Skelton's childhood home. You can visit the museum at <http://www.redskeltonmuseum.org/>.

Iowa

▪ Submitted by Teri Van Dorston ▪

National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium, Dubuque

Project:

Even Collections Projects Can Foster Community Connections by Tish Boyer and Cristin Waterbury

For almost two years, the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium/ Dubuque County Historical Society has been working through a complete inventory of our historical collection. The inventory will ultimately include collections stored at all three of our museums (National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium, Ham House Historic Site, Old Jail Museum), and an offsite warehouse.

Last year we were contacted by a Victorian literature professor at a local college who expressed interest in doing a service project with 12 of her students at the Ham House, which dates to the Victorian period. Though much of the collections located at the Ham House are on display, some were stored in a space shared by both collections and special events/ education staff.



The shared space featured natural history specimens stored in regular cardboard boxes, alongside fluorescent light bulbs as well as hula hoops used by the education staff.

White County Historical Society, Monticello Event:

The White County Historical Society will hold its 3rd Annual Movable Feast on Sunday, October 20 from 1:00- 4:00. This is a progressive dinner to four barns in White County.



Students hard at work.

Clearly, this space was in need of some attention. Fortunately, we had a plan, and the college students could help us implement it. The first step was to re-house the material into acid free boxes, inventory the contents, and then transfer the boxes from the basement room to another room on an upper floor, where more of the collection was already stored.

We estimated that there were roughly 198 boxes full of natural history material, primarily shells, preserved plants and mineral samples. This material is part of a larger collection given to us by the family of a man who lived in Dubuque during the Victorian era. He was your classic Victorian "cabinet of curiosities" collector and had a museum in his home. Eternal optimists that we are, we thought this project would be no problem with the help of 12 student helpers and easy to finish before the museum opened for the season in the spring.

Staff got straight to work, setup a work space, and opened the first box. It was then we discovered that none of the material had numbers and we found ourselves thankful that we at least knew who the donor was, if nothing else. So, we already had to regroup. Due to time constraints, we decided to assign each box a "found in collection" number and took a count of the items in each box. Students were set up at three



*Before
and
After*



stations: one unpacked the box, one took photographs and took a count while staff created records and input data in PastPerfect, and one re-housed the materials. Each student was required to give 10 hours of volunteer time throughout the semester. For about five weeks, we devoted most of our time to this part of our inventory project.

From the outset, we knew that most of the students we were working with were literature majors. There wasn't a history major among them, and none had any interest in museums or the museum profession. But all of the students completed the requisite time and not only did good work, but also learned to enjoy what we were doing. One of them even continued to volunteer for our department after the project. In the end, we inventoried, re-housed and moved about 95 boxes. The project allowed us to tackle a project that needed attention, connect with our local community, and hopefully inspire and enlighten a group of students about museums and museum work.



UI Student Mia Siebrasse



Collection storage at the Ham House following the inventory and rehousing project.

University of Iowa Museum of Natural History, Project:

Rediscovering the Insect Collections at the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History by Cindy Opitz and Trina E. Roberts

A comprehensive inventory begun in 2008 revealed over 26,000 insect specimens at the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History (UIMNH). The insects had remained tucked away in the attic for nearly 100 years. A group of students in a conservation class researched the materials that would be required to rehouse the collection in accordance with modern standards. Another student received funding from the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates to spend a summer researching the insect collections and the collectors who assembled them, who included H. F. Wickham, D. Stoner, and J. F. Abbott.

A graduate ceramics student in the conservation class “got the bug” and asked if he could start digitizing the insect collections. He used a Canon EOS 7D, Visionary Digital BK Lab digital imaging system and Zerene photo-stacking software to produce high-resolution images of 26 insects, including four type specimens. His project led to a public exhibition at

the Old Capitol Museum in 2012, called “Insects: A Collection in Multiple Dimensions.” Area children painted foot-long insect casts for the exhibit during an educational program, which were featured in the display, along with poster-sized, high-resolution photographs of insect specimens and insect-themed ceramic pieces by the artist, and specimens from the UIMNH collection. The exhibit was seen by several thousand visitors of all ages and brought the UIMNH insect collection into the public eye.

Armed with information on the scope and significance of the collections, UIMNH staff secured funding from the State Historical Society of Iowa’s Historical Resource Development Program (HRDP) to rehouse the insect collections in modern entomology cabinets, drawers, and unit trays. During the first year of the project, six volunteers donated nearly 800 hours to catalog and rehouse over 9000 specimens. Our insect posse continues to grow and includes undergraduate Museum Studies interns, recent graduates, biology grad students, a 13-year-old homeschooler, and a retired biology instructor.

Because of these efforts, UIMNH collections garnered the attention of university administrators and facilities personnel, who provided an HVAC system in a (non-attic!) museum storage area. Building on the HRDP project and increased institutional support, the authors have received NSF ADBC (Advancing Digitization of Biological Collections) funding to digitize the museum’s insect and crayfish collections, incorporate them in the InvertNet online portal, redo an arthropod exhibit, and create a traveling insect exhibit and educational trunk. In July 2013, UIMNH joined the entomology Thematic Collections Network and will share



UI Posse member Tricia Schwering

digitization equipment and expertise with regional partners.

Soon the world will join us in rediscovering the UIMNH insect collections, which seemed impossible in 2008. But as resources and interests aligned, a series of initially small steps has propelled us forward toward our goal of collections digitization and online access.

Michigan

▪ *Submitted by Robin Goodman* ▪

Colonial Michilmackinac, Mackinac Island Event and News:

On June 2, 2013, Mackinac State Historic Parks proudly opened the reconstructed South Southwest Rowhouse inside Colonial Michilimackinac. The event was attended by well over two hundred guests with Director Phil Porter, Deputy Director Steven Brisson and Mackinac Island State Park Commissioner William Marvin addressing the crowd.

The building contains exhibits on French culture,



South Southwest Rowhouse



One of the new exhibits in the South Southwest Rowhouse

hands on audio visual programs and the remains of a French chimney. A new movie entitled *Attack at Michilimackinac!* is shown in the theater throughout the day presenting the story of the June 2, 1763 attack by Ojibwe and Sauk warriors. The reconstruction is the first new building inside the palisade fort since 1989.

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo Project:

In early August, the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts launched a brand new online catalogue, giving online access to its entire collection of more than 4,200 works of art. Computer users worldwide can now search the database at collection.kiarts.org to find pertinent information about the art and view images of most works.

In the early stages of the project, the KIA partnered

with Western Michigan University Libraries' Digitization Center to calibrate equipment and set standards for cataloguing objects. The process of making digital photographs of the collection objects, updating the database, and developing the online catalogue was made possible by two federal grants from IMLS.

The KIA's art collection, originally developed in the 1960s to complement the KIA's art classes, focuses on American painting, sculpture and ceramics; American and European works on paper (16th century and later); and photography. It includes significant works by artists such as Alexander Calder, Dale Chihuly, Richard Diebenkorn, Deborah Butterfield, and Andy Warhol. In recent years, the KIA's collection has been expanded to include Oceanic objects, Pre-Columbian gold and ceramics, African art, and East Asian art.

Wayne State University Mortuary Science Program, Detroit

*Submitted by Terry Segal, Associate Registrar
Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan*

Many of you will remember our lead article from the Spring 2013 issue highlighting the historic collection held by the Wayne State University Mortuary Science Program. As part of the consultation, I encouraged the program to seek funding from their association or some of their funerary service vendors to support their efforts.

Jill Askin sent the following news in mid-May:

We proposed \$2370 to cover the cost of the PastPerfect software, \$500 for continuing education (the MMA's ABC's workshop), \$500 for acid free storage containers, and \$500 for start up cash. Half is from the Michigan Mortuary Science Foundation and the other half from the MFDA Services Corp. And your article was part of our packet and was/is a high point to our proposal!

Thank you so much for your help and being a great ally to us. We're going to need it now more than before!

Congratulations from all of us with the Midwest Registrars Committee!



Missouri

▪ Submitted by Stacie Petersen ▪

National World War I Museum, Kansas City Project:

Collection database is now online. Currently there are 16,000 records available to search comprised mainly of records from the Museum's photograph collection with new records added monthly.



Ohio

▪ Submitted by Anna Cannizzo ▪

Workshop:

My Kind of Boot Camp by Anna Cannizzo

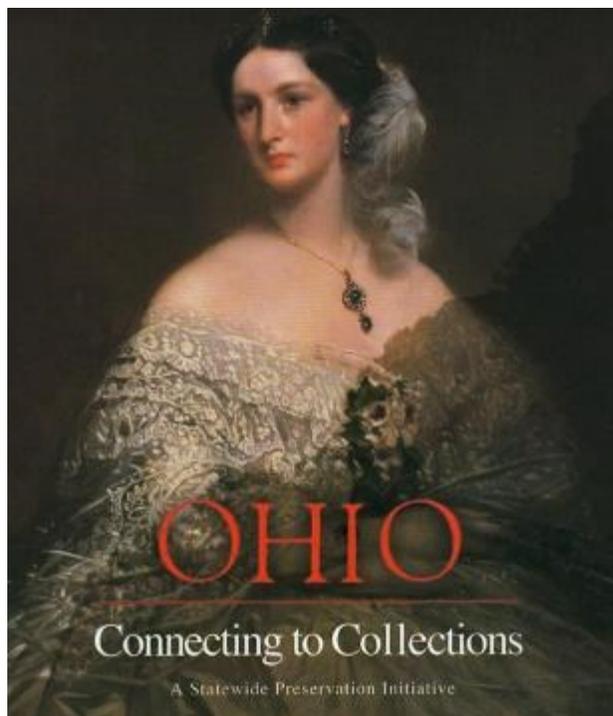
I have long flirted with the idea of attending a boot camp. You see them on various television shows with their stern intent on empowering individuals. I see myself showing up in fatigues, in need of help igniting some passionate flame inside of me that will propel me forward to do something amazing. Truth is, to many of you that know me especially in this profession, I am already really passionate. I often say that complacency is my enemy and I plan on waging a life-long war on that front. So, cue the dramatic music as I put my game face on for boot camp. Preservation Boot Camp that is.

Preservation Boot Camp was a two day workshop event held near Columbus, Ohio in late July and is part of the larger Ohio Connecting to Collections initiative. In February 2009, the State Library of Ohio, in partnership with the Ohio Historical Society, was awarded an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Connecting to Collections Planning Grant. Entitled *Ohio Heritage Partnership: A Statewide Initiative*, this project begins to address the lack of care and preservation of Ohio's cultural heritage, which has reached a crisis point and must be addressed if our heritage is to be saved. The grant program grew out of the 2005 publication *A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index (HHI) Report on the State of America's Collections*, a joint project of Heritage Preservation and IMLS. The HHI Report concluded that our nations' collections of objects and documents are imperiled and in need of swift action. The report recommendations included:

- Provision of safe conditions for the collections
- Development of emergency plans
- Assignment of responsibility for caring for collections to institutional staff
- Broad public/private support for collection stewardship

The Connecting to Collections planning grant resulted in the Ohio Heritage Partnership: Strategic Initiatives Report. In 2012, the State Library of Ohio and its partners were awarded an Implementation Grant. The primary focus of the grant project was a two-day Preservation Boot Camp for teams of library and museum staff designed to assist them in addressing the recommendations of the HHI.

The boot camp proved to be a practical and tactical educational event that brought together practitioners in the state to showcase Ohio best practices. Sessions addressed key preservation issues, including environ-



mental controls, disaster recovery, collections care, and digital collection basics. Sessions included *How to Build Your Preservation Program* conducted by Wes Boomgaarden, Head of the Preservation & Reformatting Department at The Ohio State University Libraries and Laura Hartz Stanton, Director of Preservation Services, Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts and *Preservation Program Basics* with panelists Holly Prochaska, Head of Preservation Services and Lab, University of Cincinnati Libraries, Kathy Lechuga, Conservator, University of Cincinnati Libraries, Jennifer Souers Chevraux, Education Outreach Officer, Intermuseum Conservation Association, and Christine Shearer, Development Director, Canton Art Museum. Breakout sessions included *Collections Care* with Alexandra Nicolis Coon, Executive Director, Massillon Museum of Art and Jun Francisco, Director of Collections, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, and *Digitization/Digital*

Preservation Basics with Janet Carleton, Digital Initiatives Coordinator, Ohio University Libraries, Laurie Gemmill Arp, Mass Digitization Program Manager, LYRASIS, and Jillian Carney, Manager, Digital Services, Ohio Historical Society.

The event successfully brought together teams comprised of museum/history staff and library staff as a means of encouraging collaboration and shared problem-solving. Overall, the event was very rewarding. It provided a great platform to share ideas, problem solve, encourage collaboration, meet collections care professionals, and learn about local projects that served as examples during the sessions. One such project was the Immel Circus at the Massillon Museum of Art. I plan to feature this inspiring project in the next issue of Courier. Yes, a circus; a miniature one in fact. It is an amazing story, so just trust me on this one. Sorry for the repeat sign off but, stay tuned...

Wisconsin

▪ Submitted by Elizabeth Frozena ▪

Chazen Museum of Art, Madison
Exhibition:

Meeting the artist and working on the exhibition, Michael Lucero Installation by Ann Sinfield

It is a rare thing, living in Wisconsin, to encounter another alum from Humboldt State University, a small school in northern California. But one week this May was different. My work as a registrar at the Chazen Museum of Art on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison actually brought a fellow HSU Lumberjack into town.

Michael Lucero currently lives in the Tennessee mountains. His art-making has taken him from undergraduate studies at Humboldt to an MFA at the University of Washington, onto living in New York and Italy. He has taught as a visiting professor throughout the United States, including a 1989 summer arts program at HSU. His ceramic work was featured in a 1996 retrospective exhibition organized by the Mint Museum of Art that traveled to four venues, including the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art.

Michael was in Madison to install an exhibition of his early work in the Chazen's 5,000 square foot Rowland Galleries. During the installation we had a



chance to talk about Humboldt and studying art. Michael has many stories about his experiences in the galleries of New York City and his friendships with many well-known artists, teachers, and gallery owners. He remembered people I studied with at HSU, and even taught there at the summer arts program one year after I attended the same classes.

For the exhibition in Madison, I worked with three Chazen preparators, using the lift to install 17 wire

and wood figures. Made in 1978-79 after he first moved to New York, the works are on loan from a private collector and two museums: New Jersey's Montclair Art Museum, and the Portland Museum of Art in Maine. Reaching from eight to thirteen feet in height, the figures are simultaneously fragile and imposing. They hang from the ceiling, hovering just a few inches from the floor. Quite still when the gallery is empty, they move gently, responding to subtle air movement, when anyone enters the room. They tower over whoever stands near, yet provide a chance for close investigation of their component parts: broken wood, crayon and paint, wire, mop handles, and broken furniture scavenged from the streets of the city.

The artist created new drawings for the exhibition, using sponges, fly swatters, shoes, toilet paper rolls, and foam noodles to stamp images onto cardboard, making bold, weighty figures that reference the hanging sculptures. He was also inspired by the gallery space, at the last minute adding a new work to

the exhibition: two monumental figures stamped directly onto a large gallery door that had been painted to mimic the cardboard of the drawings. At first seeming so large, the images on cardboard are dwarfed by the newly painted wall figures yet their textured surfaces demand close looking. This is an exhibition both overwhelming and intimate, it plays with scale: so much to look at, such subtle movement, shifting light, and spatial displacement to experience.

Are the redwood forests of Humboldt county evident in this exhibition, or is it all New York City? In the re-purposed wood and furniture fragments, in the drawings made from available materials, in the towering figures with their slight movements so that walking among them, all that is missing is the sound of water dripping from branches of the gigantic trees? Maybe not, but it was fun to connect with another far-flung Californian, participate in the installation of such delicate yet commanding work, and swap art world stories.



MIDWEST REGISTRARS COMMITTEE

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Broad Art Museum
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48824
517-884-0651, vargas@msu.edu

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314 Hawthorn, B
Glencoe, Illinois 60022
847-242-0495 or 847-903-7940
dpvowles@comcast.net

SECRETARY

Craig Hadley, Curator
DePauw University
10 W. Hanna
Greencastle, Indiana 46135
765-658-6556, craighadley@depauw.edu

TREASURER

Jennifer Noffze, Registrar/ Archivist
The Children's Museum of Indianapolis
PO Box 3000
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206
317-334-3722, jenn@childrensmuseum.org

ARCHIVES

Lauren Hancock, Assistant Registrar
Cincinnati Museum Center
1301 Western Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45203
lhancock1030@yahoo.com

NOMINATIONS

Cristin Waterbury, Curator
National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium
350 East Third Street
Dubuque, Iowa 52001
563-557-9545, cwaterbury@rivermuseum.com

NEWSLETTER

Tamara R. Lange, Collection Coordinator/Registrar
Sheboygan County Historical Society & Museum
3110 Erie Avenue
Sheboygan, Wisconsin 53081
920-458-1103, tamara.lange@sheboygancounty.com

ILLINOIS

Amy P. Heggemeyer, Asst. Registrar for Acquisitions
The Spurlock Museum
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Urbana, Illinois 61801
217-265-0472, heggemey@illinois.edu

INDIANA

Lana Newhart-Kellen, Registrar
Conner Prairie
13400 Allisonville Road
Fishers, Indiana 46038-4499
317-776-6000, newhart@connerprairie.org

IOWA

Teri Van Dorston, Assistant Director
Veterans Memorial Commission
50 2nd Avenue Bridge
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401
319-286-5038, T.VanDorston@cedar-rapids.org

MICHIGAN

Robin Goodman, Registrar
Kalamazoo Institute of Arts
314 South Park Street
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007
269-585-9271, robing@kiarts.org

MINNESOTA

Jackie Hoff, Director, Collection Services
Science Museum of Minnesota
120 West Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
651-221-9435, jhoff@smm.org

MISSOURI

Stacie Petersen, Registrar
National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial
100 W 26th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64108
816-888-8119, Stacie.Petersen@theworldwar.org

OHIO

Anna Cannizzo, Curator of Collections
Denison Museum
P.O. Box 810
Granville, Ohio 43023
740-587-6554, cannizzo@denison.edu

WISCONSIN

Elizabeth Frozena, Registrar
Racine Art Museum
441 Main Street
Racine, WI 53401-0187
262-638-8300, x113, efrozena@ramart.org
