



CURCOM

UPDATE

Greetings from your Chairperson!

The ways in which curators carry out their work often adapts and changes because of external influences. Nowhere is this more dramatically portrayed than in the movie, and Robert Edsel's book, *The Monuments Men*. As most of us know, it is the true World War II story of art historians, architects, volunteers and other scholars who stepped into the danger of battle because they understood that winning the military conflict alone was not enough. This small group of people made their case to supporters and skeptics. Their work was neither frivolous nor self-serving. Rather, it epitomized the inextricable connection between human dignity and cultural heritage as fundamental necessities of the human experience. Without one, the other lacks meaning. Both were horrifically abused in the caldron of world conflict. The monuments men and women, some of whom survived years of occupation, did nothing short of extreme reality curation.

Sadly, cultural destruction continues around the globe today, attempting in part to undermine the worth of people and their beliefs. Systematic efforts, and the actions of often unsung individuals, to counteract that destruction through international responses and object care efforts allows me to think that the human experience will continue to thrive despite what seem like insurmountable odds.

Recognizing that life is a matter of degrees, I draw a humble parallel with curators in the U.S. and other seemingly conflict-free countries who also make sacrifices on behalf of the public good in all of its kaleidoscopic complexity. We would all do well to learn from those curators of all disciplines who have learned how to negotiate relationships with governing bodies, who incorporate different opinions in their public outcomes, who work with colleagues to encompass various learning styles, who embrace ideas from others, who seek creativity, who take risks, who do what it takes to keep their organizations afloat, who survive budget cuts or reduction in salaries, or who stand firm against unethical choices. Many of us know curators who do some or all of the above because, whether a specialist or generalist with a small or large budget, they are passionate about what they do. We all benefit.

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Are you among those curators who are learning the profession or discovering the complexities of curatorial work? Are you a seasoned professional who can share your wisdom? The Curators Committee of AAM continues to create opportunities for curators to grow in professional excellence. We thank you for participating in the CurCom survey and look forward to developing more educational opportunities throughout the year.

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CURATORS' STANDING PROFESSIONAL COMMITTEE OF AAM

Chair	Ellen Endslo (2015) Chester County Historical Society eesdslow@chestercohistorical.org
Vice Chair	James Burns (2015) Desert Caballeros Western Museum wjburns@westernmuseum.org
Immediate Past Chair	Linda Eppich laeppich@verizon.net
Secretary	Elisa Phelps (2015) History Colorado elisa.phelps@state.co.us
Treasurer	Cindy Olsen (2015) Curatorial Consultant cmolsen@gmail.com
Board Members-at-large	Stephanie Gaub Antequino SAntequino@PLANETHOLLYWOODINTL.COM David Kennedy Cherokee Strip Regional Heritage Center dkennedy@OKhistory.org Ron M. Potvin John Nicholas Brown Center Ronald_Potvin@brown.edu Stacey Swigart Please Touch Museum sswigart@pleasetouchmuseum.org

Regional Representatives

AMM Curators (Mid-West Curators)	Angela Goebel-Bain Illinois State Museum agb@museum.state.il.us Cindy Olsen (<i>see other listing</i>)
MAAM Curators (Mid-Atlantic Curators)	Nicole Belolan University of Delaware nbelolan@gmail.com Sheila K. Hoffman Université du Québec à Montréal sheila.hoffman@gmail.com
MPMA Curators (Mountain-Plains)	Elisa Phelps (<i>see other listing</i>) David Kennedy (<i>see other listing</i>)
NEMA Curators (New England Curators)	Darren Brown Beverly Historical Society & Museum dbrown@beverlyhistory.org Heather Leavell Peabody Historical Society & Museum heather.leavell@peabodyhistorical.org Bonnie Stacy Martha's Vineyard Museum bstacy@mvmuseum.org
SEMC Curators (South-eastern Curators)	Stephanie Gaub Antequino (<i>see other listing</i>) Nathan Jones General George Patton Museum of Leadership Nathan.c.jones.civ@mail.mil
WMA Curators (Western Curators)	Redmond J. Barnett Washington State Historical Society rbarnett@wshs.wa.gov Amy Scott Autry National Center ascott@theautry.org

Appointments & Committee Chairpersons

2013/14 Exhibition Coordinator	Stacey Swigart (<i>see other listing</i>)
2013 Exhibition Competition Judge	David Kennedy (<i>see other listing</i>)
2014 Fellowship Chair	Open
2014 Nominating Committee Chair	James A. Hoobler Tennessee State Museum Jim.Hoobler@state.tn.us
2014 Program Co-Chairs	Ron M. Potvin (<i>see other listing</i>) Elisa Phelps (<i>see other listing</i>)
2014 Ethics Committee	Sheila Hoffman (Chair; <i>other listing</i>) Nathan Jones (<i>see other listing</i>) Brian Peterson brianhpeterson@me.com
2013/14 Label Writing Competition	John Russick (2013) Chicago History Museum russick@chicagohistory.org
National Program Committee representative Atlanta 2015	Nathan Jones (<i>see other listing</i>)
Newsletter Editor	Rob DeHart Tennessee State Museum robert.dehart@tn.gov
Web Site Administrator	Allison Cywin College of Visual and Performing Arts University of Massachusetts allison.j.cywin@umassd.edu
eBlast Editor	Open
Membership Committee	Stephanie Gaub Antequino (<i>see other listing</i>)
Archivist	Open
AAM Liaison	Eileen Goldspiel Director of Member Engagement, AAM egoldspiel@aam-us.org

Editing and layout Rob DeHart

Thanks to all our contributors and writers for this issue of *Update*.

Chairperson's column continued from page 1

In the meantime, we hope to see you in Seattle for the annual meeting in May 2014. Share your experiences and learn from other curators at networking opportunities:

**CurCom, L&M and COMPT Professional Network
Reception, Sunday, May 18 (supported by Delta
Designs Ltd.)**

CurCom Business Lunch, Tuesday, May 20

Ellen Endslo (Chester County Historical Society)
CurCom Chairperson

Future AAM Annual Meetings

Seattle, WA
May 18-21, 2014

Atlanta, GA
April 26-29, 2015

Washington, DC
May 26-29, 2016

SUBSCRIPTION AND MEMBERSHIP

Update is the periodic newsletter distributed to members of CurCom. It is also available on-line at <http://www.curcom.org>

CurCom (Curators' Committee) is a Professional Network (PN) committee of the American Alliance of Museums. All SPC members must join the AAM. Dues for CurCom (\$20.00 / \$10.00 for students) are payable in addition to AAM dues.

Membership is obtained through:

Membership Department
American Alliance of Museums
1575 Eye St. N.W., Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005

Phone (202) 289 9132; fax (202) 289 6578;
email membership@aam-us.org

Curatorial Research Paper Presentation at SEMC 2014 Annual Meeting



Southeastern Museum Conference CurCom is sponsoring the curatorial research paper presentation session this year in Knoxville, TN during the 2014 Annual Meeting, October 20-22. Curators chosen to present object or exhibit research represent excellence within the curatorial profession. Exemplifying the high professional standards of objectivity, scholarship and originality upheld by CurCom, three curators from the Southeast will be chosen to present their research during this session. If you are interested in participating, please send an abstract of your topic (no more than one page please) by **July 15, 2014** to nathan.c.jones.civ@mail.mil.



Registration now open for Seattle 2014!



Advanced registration deadline April 25
<http://www.aam-us.org/events/annual-meeting>

Champion Museums. Nurture Excellence.



Brian Peterson – An Appreciation

By John Mayer

Museum Curator, Maine Historical Society and
Former chair, CURCOM Ethics Committee Workshop

On December 31, 2013, our colleague Brian H. Peterson retired from his position as Chief Curator at the James A. Michener Art Museum in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Brian worked at the Michener for twenty four years and played a huge role in the evolution of the museum. Over that period he mounted literally hundreds of exhibits, directly influenced the building of the institution's collection, and much more. As a scholar and researcher he wrote exhibition catalogs and books, and developed an expertise on Impressionist painters from Pennsylvania. His 2009 book *The Smile at the Heart of Things* is a beautiful and delightful memoir of his travels and explorations as an artist, curator, and lover of life.

Brian gave a lot to our profession. He collaborated on photography projects in Philadelphia in the 80's, served on grant panels and committees, and contributed important work to CURCOM. He spearheaded the *Excellence in Exhibit Label Writing* program – and was a part of the workgroup that revised the *Curator's Code of Ethics*. In these different ways, his good mind and creative efforts have benefited all of us who work in the museum field.

Now he is moving on to other projects – making his art, thinking big thoughts, and just being Brian.

I learned from working with Brian on the ethics workgroup – and here's the point of this appreciation. You can be like Brian too. Think about the opportunities our work provides. Take the time to look deeply, think about what you do, find the meaning and beauty in the things we care for, and learn, share, study, ponder, and explore. But most importantly - stick by your principles and the ethics of our work – and more than anything, be excellent. Dude!



Brian H. Peterson (b. 1953)
Self-portrait, office window, 2006
archival pigment print
Courtesy of Santa Bannon/Fine Art, Bethlehem, PA

PROFILES: CHESTER COUNTY CLOTHING OF THE 1800s

Open through August 30

Chester County Historical Society (West Chester, PA) This exhibit includes 40+ fine and ordinary examples of outerwear worn by women, men and children that show the evolution of clothing profiles in the 1800s. It includes Empire style gowns of the early 1800s, children's Turkey red print dresses dating from about the 1840s, elaborate men's vests from numerous decades, and highly detailed fashionable dresses of the Victorian era. Important to Chester County, and an installation highlight, is the contrast between Quaker plain dress and fashionable wear that clearly distinguished a person's identity within the community. Other topics include fabric choices that embody the advancement of chemical dyes and styles of clothing that played a significant role in women's health.

The accompanying symposium, *Elegant and Everyday: Clothing from the Collection* is April 12. Nationally recognized scholars will share research that focused on the CCHS clothing collection. Behind-the-scenes tours are included. For more information about the exhibit or to register for the symposium <http://www.chestercohistorical.org/exhibit/profiles-chester-county-clothing-1800s>



Gown (Wrapper), 1875-1877 (left)
Navy, red, purple printed striped wool
Dressing Gown (Wrapper), 1860-1870 (right)
Red and green printed paisley wool, linen lining

New Technology Uncovers Clues about the Past



In early January, University of Tennessee archaeologists Dr. Jan Simek and Sierra Bow were at the Tennessee State Museum to run tests on one of the museum's Mississippian Era (800-1500 CE) Native American stone statues. They used an x-ray fluorescence spectrometer to measure elemental composition on the surface of the stone. The university is conducting tests on similar statues collected in Middle Tennessee that are currently scattered in collections across the country. The goal of the project is to determine the regional origins of the statues and to detect traces of ancient paint. The museum is planning an exhibition that will reunite many of these stone statues.

Conferences, Meetings and Workshops

Appalachian Renaissance: Renewing Traditions, Rethinking Approaches

Southeastern Museum Conference

Knoxville, TN

October 20-22, 2014

<http://www.semcdirect.net/conference>

Experience an intoxicating mix of authentic Appalachian culture, a wealth of historic properties, rich Civil War heritage, and edgy new art in a bustling urban setting with easy access to the great outdoor - all at **SEMC 2014 Annual Meeting** in Knoxville!

AASLH Annual Meeting

St. Paul, MN

September 17-20, 2014

<http://about.aaslh.org/conference/>

Nothing can replace the opportunities that arise when you intersect with people who come together around common goals and interests – good history and good times. In 2014, the American Association of State and Local History Annual Meeting in St. Paul enables us to explore ways to be “greater than the sum of our parts.”

AAMC Conference

Detroit, MI

May 4-6, 2014

<http://www.artcurators.org/>

The Association of Art Museum Curators moves its annual conference to Detroit this year, which will include a visit to the Detroit Institute of Arts.

InterActivity 2014 Annual Conference of the Association of Children's Museums

Phoenix, AZ

May 14-16, 2014

<http://www.childrensmuseums.org/>

Hosted by Children's Museum of Phoenix and Arizona Museum for Youth (Mesa). This year's theme is "Are We There Yet?"

Western Museums Association Annual Meeting

Las Vegas, NV

October 5-8, 2014

email wma@westmuse.org

The WMA Annual Meeting provides museum professionals an opportunity to exchange ideas and best practices, network with colleagues, and learn from each other by attending valuable sessions. Diverse presentations are key component to the success of the Annual Meeting, and are important in creating a meaningful and content-rich experience for all of the museum professionals who attend.

Call for Papers

Seventh International Conference on the Inclusive Museum

The Autry Center

Los Angeles, CA

August 4-6, 2014

Call for Papers deadline March 13, 2014

<http://onmuseums.com/the-conference/call-for-papers>

Special focus- Shared Visions and Shared Histories.

American Alliance of Museums
1575 Eye St. N.W., Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005

March 2014



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