

Volunteers In Art Newsletter

Save the Date!

The 29th Annual Arts & Flowers Luncheon New Venue, New Artists!

The Volunteers in Art will be hosting the 29th Annual Arts and Flowers Luncheon on Thursday, November 11 at our new venue, Atlantis Casino Resort Spa from 10:30 to 2 p.m. (lunch served at 12:15 p.m.). This is your opportunity to shop the artisan mall for distinctive, original, handcrafted holiday gifts. Your favorites, like the Santa lady and silver works by Shirley Bryant will be there, as well as 10 new vendors -- in all 25 vendors to choose from. Among the new items are mosaic mirrors; whimsical garden art; wooden salt-pepper shakers and bowls; several new jewelers; holiday table linens and mini lighted Christmas trees. Come early, shop and relax in our beautiful new venue.



In addition to the artisan's mall, guests can bid on several high-value silent auction donations. In the past, items have included flight vouchers and mall gift certificates. Guests also can purchase raffle tickets for one of the specially prepared raffle baskets with values ranging from \$200 to \$1,000. Back by popular demand, buyers can choose which raffle basket they want to win. For each \$20 of tickets, the buyer will receive one ticket for the GRAND prize basket.

Profits from Arts & Flowers are the only source of funds for the museum volunteer organization. These funds are used for special staff requests, art for the museum permanent collection, exhibition sponsorships, and to fund volunteer events. Special staff requests in the past have included interactive technology for the education department and cost saving tools for the curatorial department. Proceeds from the 2009 luncheon allowed VIA

to be the major sponsor of the *Gee's Bend* exhibition. The annual Volunteer Recognition Day and Holiday parties, the volunteer newsletter and all general volunteer support are also funded by Arts & Flowers.

There are several ways you can help make the event a success.

- We welcome your help in obtaining donations for the raffle or silent auction. If you know someone who may be willing to make a donation contact Lucy Walker, artsandflowersnma@gmail.com. Lucy can make sure we haven't already contacted your donor and can help you contact them if needed
- We always need interesting items for the raffle or silent auction; art work, something from one of your travel locations, unusual gifts. If you have an interesting item you would like to donate, contact Lucy Walker at artsandflowersnma@gmail.com.
- We also always need volunteers the day of the

event, selling raffle tickets, helping the artisans or helping set up for the event. If you would like to help, contact Rosalind Bedell at the NMA, 329-3333, ext. 252

Finally, come out and enjoy the event. Put together a table of ten friends or just make a reservation for yourself. Be sure to reserve the date, November 11, come to lunch and buy all your holiday gifts at the artisan mall. Reservations are being taken now.

This event will sell out. All proceeds will benefit the exhibition and education programs of the Nevada Museum of Art. Tickets are \$45 per person or \$450 for a table of 10. Purchase tickets online at www.nevadaart.org/ticket or visit the front desk at the Museum. Prepaid reservations are required and are limited to the first 500 guests. The tax-deductible portion of each reservation is \$15. All tickets/tables must be paid in full at the time of the reservation.

Lucy Walker



Ben Hoffman Mathematics As A Medium

Who knew that those mysterious combinations of letters and numbers and peculiar symbols I call algebraic equations can be used to express beautiful images? Not I. My grasp of things mathematical is so tenuous that even balancing my checkbook is a project in guesswork and witchcraft.

So though I have chosen Ben Hoffman's exhibit, "*The Cartesian Medium*," as my current favorite to write about for our newsletter, I will not presume to explain how these elegant images are created beyond the most basic and vague description. I will, instead, hope to persuade you to revisit the Media Gallery as often as possible and stay as long as possible just for the pleasure of seeing these works again and again.

First, let me briefly describe as best I'm able how these images were created. Hoffman begins with a sketch in his notebook and translates the sketch into mathematical equations which are then expressed in a digital format. He has created proprietary software that then translates the formulae into his delicate images. Though computer generated, these are not digital photography, but "plots" or graphs of his equations.

The exhibit's title is derived from the "Cartesian coordinate system," work that, according to the Wikipedia website on Rene Descartes, bridges the gap "between algebra and geometry." Descartes was the 17th century philosopher, physicist and mathematical genius best known for his rationalist writings on the human condition. He is more generally known for his proof of human existence, "I think therefore I am," expressed in Latin, "*Cogito ergo sum*."

As one sits considering each image, we begin to see them as natural objects simplified. Each work has a pristine clarity that we can observe, if not quite understand. Each seems, in a way, made pure and elemental, basic and honest. We see the giant feather with absolute precision as we have never seen a feather before. The enormous rose seems more perfect than any rose could ever be. The green reeds project a rhythm one can almost sense. The birch bark seems to be a template for whole forests of impossibly flawless birch trees.

The creator of these stunning works is a very young and gifted man. Hoffman was born in Fairbanks, Alaska in 1984 and early on exhibited a love for the natural world as well as things technical. He is a recent graduate of the University of Nevada with a major in math and a minor in music. When not absorbed in translating natural forms into images created mathematically, he may be found building furniture or designing games for slot machines, playing jazz drums or writing.

Since this exhibit is unlike any others we've had at the Nevada Museum of Art, I hope you'll find time to stay a while in the Media Gallery and consider these works at length. You are sure to find them beautiful. Maybe like me, your reaction to them can't really be put into words; that they possess a subtle subtext that makes them seem more real than real.

Joan Elder



Ben Hoffman, *Bigger Bloom*, 2006

Ben Hoffman's, *The Cartesian Medium* is currently on display in the Media Gallery.

Docent's Choice

John James Audubon and *The Birds of America*



John James Audubon, *Great Egret from Birds of America*, 1821/2006. Edition print, 37 7/16 inches x 25 1/2 inches. Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art; Purchased with funds in memory of Dana Rose Richardson. © New York Historical Society and Joel Oppenheimer, Inc.

attempts at painting birds on the wing were not pleasing to him because he felt he couldn't finish the paintings properly. But when he tried to paint birds that had recently been shot, he found it impossible to portray them as they were in life. He experimented with hanging them from strings like puppets, and with constructing manikins. Both of these methods produced paintings that could not convey the feeling of a bird in motion. He claimed that one day the solution came to him in a dream. On an upright board he inserted wires that came directly towards him. He then positioned a recently shot kingfisher on and between these wires, and was at last able to return the bird to life in the viewer's eye. He could pose the bird as if it were flying, feeding, landing or perching.

He had traveling cases which included these boards, graphed out to help him with accuracy in size. He used



John James Audubon, *American Flamingo from Birds of America*, 1821/2006. Edition print, 33 3/16 inches x 24 1/8 inches. Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art; Purchased with funds in memory of Dana Rose Richardson. © New York Historical Society and Joel Oppenheimer, Inc.

How could I make a little book, when I have seen enough to make a dozen large books?"
John James Audubon (1785-1851)

John James Audubon did indeed make those large books. He put together an unprecedented, huge four-volume set, *The Birds of America*, which recorded almost five hundred species of birds. He has been described as a poor businessman, and he was, in regular commerce. But if we consider the scope of his life's work we see him in a very different light.

He traveled through a huge swath of America, under very difficult conditions, closely observing the birds and mammals he encountered. His goal was to immortalize these creatures for art as well as for science. His first

watercolor, but had no compunctions about adding pastels, charcoal, red clay, metallic paint, egg white or pen and ink. When he was growing up in France his father had given him illustrated books and encouraged his observations of nature, but he had little formal training in art. Still, during difficult financial periods he was able to teach himself skills, like perspective, which he needed for his ornithological studies.

So here is a man who is essentially self-taught in art and scientific observation, traveling through uncharted areas, keeping detailed journals of these observations in what is a second language to him, all in pursuit of a very ambitious dream. But there was a business side to it all – Audubon had to raise money through painting, exhibitions and subscriptions. He had to travel back and forth to England to work with Robert Havell, his engraver. It was a massive undertaking and a great success. Audubon turned out to be a savvy businessman after all!

When Audubon died in 1851, his beloved, supportive wife Lucy worked with their sons to support the family. But both sons died in the next few years and the Civil War cut off possibilities for completing and selling a new chromolithographic edition of *The Birds of America*. In her seventies, Lucy had to go back to teaching and in 1863, penniless, and the sole support of a large family, was forced to sell Audubon's original watercolors to the New York Historical Society. Fifty of these fragile, rarely exhibited paintings have been reproduced for the first time in a very limited edition. The Nevada Museum of Art is extremely fortunate to have acquired a set of those prints as a memorial gift in honor of Dana Rose Richardson. Now, for the first time for many of us, we will be able to see Audubon's works in exactly the size he painted them and without the intermediate hand of an engraver.

Kathleen Durham

Explorer, Naturalist, Artist John James Audubon and the Birds of America is currently on display in the Feature Gallery South.

Museum Hours

MUSEUM GALLERY & STORE

Wednesday – Sunday 10 AM to 5 PM

Thursdays 10 AM to 8 PM

Galleries and Store are closed Monday & Tuesday and National Holidays

LIBRARY

Wednesday – Sunday 11 AM to 2 PM

1st Thursday 5 to 7 PM

CAFÉ MUSÉE

Wednesday – Sunday 11 AM – 2:30 PM

Closed Monday & Tuesday

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

Tuesday – Friday 9 AM to 5 PM

Beautiful vs. Sublime

Ideas on the Delicacy and Power of Art



What a study in contrasts -- the exhibit of Chester Arnold's big, striking works with their cautionary imperatives which has just left the Feature Gallery and the lovely images by John James Audubon of native birds in their natural habitats which has replaced it. The former are sublime; the latter simply beautiful.

Contrasting "sublime" with "beautiful" is probably just so much artspeak, but as art museum volunteers it's useful for us to understand the distinction. While rereading "Michelangelo and the Popes Ceiling" recently, I came across the following paragraph. It is a discussion about the works of two contemporary Renaissance artists, Michelangelo and Raphael, who were working simultaneously in the Vatican, the latter painting frescoes in the Pope's chambers and the former painting frescoes on the Sistine Chapel ceiling. I find it useful and have committed it to a notecard for my docent's reminders file and I share it with you now:

"One way to understand the differing styles of the two artists is through a pair of aesthetic categories developed two and a half centuries later by the Irish statesman and writer Edmund Burke in his 'Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful' published in 1756. For Burke, those things we call beautiful have the properties of smoothness, delicacy, softness of color, and elegance of movement. The sublime, on the other hand, comprehends the vast, the obscure, the powerful, the rugged, the difficult -- attributes which produce in the spectator a kind of astonished wonder and even terror. For the people of Rome in 1511, Raphael was beautiful but Michelangelo sublime."

Most of us love the frisson of fright, imagined, of course, when we encounter the sublime. But more of us must also love the rush of pleasure when we view what is truly beautiful.

Joan Elder

TASTE FOR ART



Taste for Art Wine Auction Table.

On Friday, August 20th, the Nevada Museum of Art hosted the 26th Annual Taste for Art. This year's fund-raiser was a tremendous success raising over \$76,000 to benefit the Museum's Education and Exhibition programs.

The sold-out event presented attendees with pairings from more than 45 restaurants and wineries along with a vodka lounge, beer garden and delicious edibles catered by local restaurants.

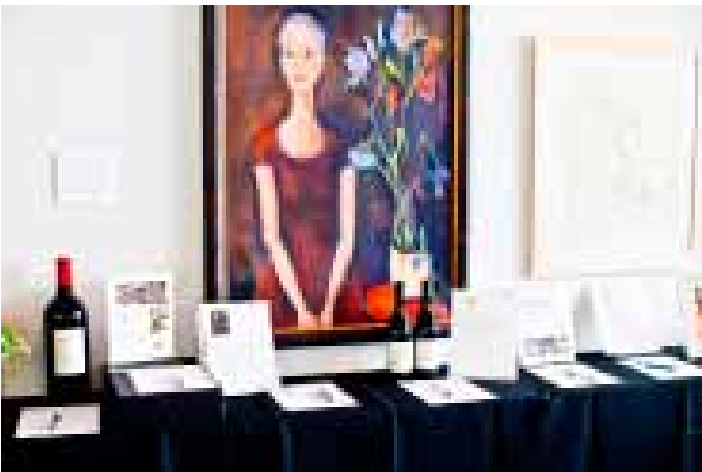
Proceeds from A Taste for Art provide thousands of Northern Nevada school children and museum guests with art education and programming for exhibitions throughout the year, in addition to donating hundreds of trees to the effort to rebuild Haiti.

A special thanks to IGT, McDonald Carano Wilson LLP and Morrey Distributing for sponsoring this event and to the Charlie Palmer Group, Cheese Board & Wine Cellar, Moody's Bistro and Men Wielding Fire for their support and culinary delights. We would also like to thank all the volunteers who worked tirelessly to make this evening so successful. Without your help, occasions like this would not be possible.

Cami Welsh-Griffith



Large crowds enjoy a successful Taste for Art



Art was auctioned along with wine at 2010 Taste for Art.



Caterers offer tasty treats to compliment wine tasting.



Volunteer Art Break

Volunteers, You're invited!

Bring a friend and join us **Saturday, November 20th, 11:30 AM** at the Museum's front desk as we assemble for a docent led tour of the Museum's newest exhibits. Afterwards meet fellow volunteers to discuss the exhibits while enjoying lunch or refreshments at Café Musée.

Museum Store

Dec. 3 – 5 / 10 am to 5 pm

HOLIDAY SALE

*Unique Gifts and
Great Savings
on jewelry,
children's toys
and holiday items.*

**Museum Members
Save 20%**

Museum News Dates & Updates

- **Second Saturdays are Free.** Thanks to the Nightingale Family Foundation, admission to the Museum is FREE every second Saturday through DECEMBER 2010.
- **First Thursday** will feature the groovy music of the Palmore Brothers. Ride your bike and receive free valet provided by Reno Bike Project. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH, 5 to 7 PM
- **Members Premiere** of the *John James Audubon and the Birds of America* exhibit. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6TH, 6 to 8 PM. Live music by "Lonesome" Tom Ward. Cash Bar. Admission is FREE for Museum Members. \$4 Kids Open Art Studio.
- **29th Annual Arts and Flowers Luncheon.** Thursday, NOVEMBER 11TH, 10:30 AM to 2 PM. Atlantis Casino Resort Spa. Tickets are \$45 each or \$450 table. Purchase tickets online or at the Museum's Admissions Desk.
- **Art Afternoon Workshop and Social for Seniors.** FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12TH. Cost for two sessions is \$12, \$10 Museum Members.
- **Last Chance!** *The Human Touch* exhibit will end NOVEMBER 14TH. NOVEMBER 28TH will be the last day to view Pablo Picasso's *Musical Instruments* and Binh Danh *Ancestral Altars*.
- Friday afternoon **Art Bites.** Join Robin Powell on NOVEMBER 12TH for *Nevada's Important Bird Areas* and Brett Van Hoesen, NOVEMBER 19TH for *Visualizing Sound in Picasso*.
- The next **Art Break** is scheduled for SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH at 11:30 AM. This docent-led tour for volunteers only will examine several of the Museum's newest exhibits. Dutch-treat lunch and discussion to follow.
- **Museum Book Sale.** FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH, 1 to 5 PM and SATURDAY & SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20-21ST, 10 to 5 PM. Admission is FREE. All books half-price on Sunday.
- **Sunday Jazz Brunch** welcomes the Susan Mazer and Dallas Smith Quartet. SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21ST, 11 AM to 1 PM. Admission is FREE. A la carte brunch menu provided by Café Musée. Brunch menu \$5-\$15.
- **Museum Store Holiday Sale.** DECEMBER 3RD-5TH, 10 AM to 5 PM. Museum members receive 20% off.

Mailing Volunteers Much Appreciated

Every third Friday of the month a dedicated group of volunteers meets to mail the Museum's membership renewal letters. Organized by Cheryl McLemore and Loretta Baughman (both in the picture) and VIA Administrative Chair, Sharon Dollarhide the volunteers fold, stuff and label the letters while enjoying good food from Sharon, staff member, Julie Tausch and donations from My Favorite Muffin. They are on hand for other mailings throughout the year as needed. Thank you very much to this hard-working group!



Museum Mailing Volunteers, *back row from left to right:* Christine Diaz, Cheryl McLemore, Sam Santoro, Loretta Baughman, Cliff Baughman, *front row:* Marjorie Carroll, Marcia Powell, Ev Dody.

2nd Annual Museum BOOK SALE

Ticketed Collectors' Preview
Thursday, November 18th, 5-8 PM

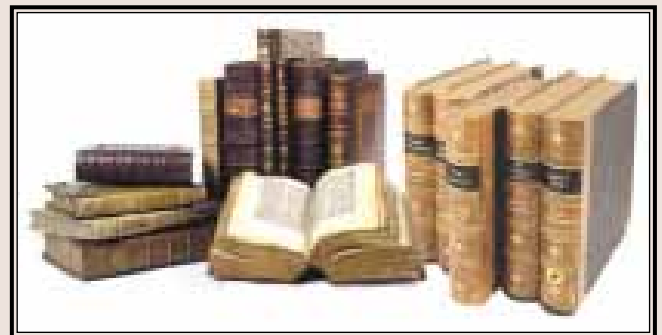
Tickets \$10/\$8 Museum Members

Regular Sale Hours
Friday, November 19th, 1-5 PM
Sat & Sun, November 20th & 21st
10 AM-5 PM

Free Admission

All books half price on Sunday.

Proceeds support CA+E Library acquisitions and programming.



Kick off the
HOLIDAY SEASON
with fellow volunteers,
enjoying great appetizers,
hosted wine or
a no-host cocktail bar.

Please *RSVP* by
Friday, November 12th
to Rosalind Bedell
329-3333 ext. 252
or
rosalind.bedell@nevadaart.org.

JOIN THE VOLUNTEERS IN ART OF THE
NEVADA MUSEUM OF ART
AT THEIR ANNUAL

Holiday Party

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18 • 2010
ATLANTIS CASINO RESORT SPA,
EMERALD ROOM C&D
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Nevada Museum of Art Staff

David Walker, Executive Director and CEO, ext. 229

Rosalind Bedell, Associate Director of
Advancement and Volunteer Programs, ext. 252
Jackie Clay, Gift Shop Manager, ext. 106
Linda Dierks, Vice President of Advancement, ext. 332
Arlene Feola, Controller, ext. 231
Erik Flippo, Designer, ext. 263
Sara Frantz, Archivist/Library, ext. 258
Bob Gabrielli, Director of Corporations, Foundations
and Gov't Relations, ext. 234
Nancy Hansford, Sales Assistant, ext. 107
Connie Howard, Grant Writer, ext. 230
Karri Hurwitz, Dir. Special Events & Sales, ext. 225
Jen Ishimatsu, E.L. Cord Museum School Dir., ext. 260
Katie Lewis, Curatorial Asst./Exhib. Coord., ext. 259
Heidi Loeb, Exec. Asst. to the Director/Special Projects
Manager, ext. 235
Chris Martin, Preparator, ext. 256
Rachel Milon, Director of Comm. and Marketing, ext. 228
Claire Munoz, School Services and Outreach Mgr., ext. 253

Amy Oppio, Deputy Director, ext. 251
Colin Robertson, Curator of Education, ext. 254
Amanda Rookey, Director of Individual Giving &
Membership Programs, ext. 232
Jes Stewart, Director of Operations
and Human Resources, ext. 114
Julie Tausch, Membership Coordinator, ext. 265
Kaleb Temple, Support Services Manager
Ann Wolfe, Curator of Exhibitions & Collections, ext. 255

Admissions Desk, ext. 100
Café Musée, ext. 147
Gift Shop, ext. 107
Founders Room, ext. 317
Library, ext. 204
Security Office, ext. 113

Nevada Museum of Art Phone Number 775-329-3333

This newsletter is produced by Cami Welsh-Griffith. Gosia Clark creates the website www.nmavolunteersinart.org.
Your comments and suggestions are welcome.
Please contact us at contact@nmavolunteersinart.org.

Volunteers in Art
Nevada Museum of Art
160 West Liberty Street
Reno, NV 89501

