

Exhibitionist

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MUSEUM EXHIBITION** • SPRING 1990
STANDING PROFESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON MUSEUM EXHIBITION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

President's Letter

Chicago, here we come! The American Association of Museums national meeting will be held in Chicago May 9-13 and we have many NAME sponsored programs and special events for exhibit-related museum professionals. The "centerfold" of this issue is dedicated to the NAME events planned for the Chicago meetings, please make special note of the NAME Executive Board meetings; interested NAME members are invited to sit in on board meetings and work with us to help plan the coming year.

The NAME election ballot is in this issue as well. Please take a moment to fill out the ballot and return it. Even though NAME does not yet hold "real" elections, the nominating committee must still go through all of the official procedural steps in order to create a slate. No petitions were received so the slate stands as the nominating committee submitted. Background information about each candidate is printed along with the ballot in this issue. Let us know your thoughts about NAME, please include any comments with your ballot. We all look forward to the day when enough of our 1300-plus members are active in NAME so that we can hold "real elections."

By now you all should have received, in a

separate mailing, notification about your membership information confirmation for the Members' Directory. The cut-off date for getting listed in the Members' Directory is April 1, 1990.

Stuart Parnes has reported that he has received enough signatures from our members to get both **George Gardner** and **Paul Groenier** on the

American Association of Museums (AAM) ballot for Councilor-at-Large. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who responded to our call for signatures. Please remember to vote for both George and Paul when you receive the ballot from the AAM.

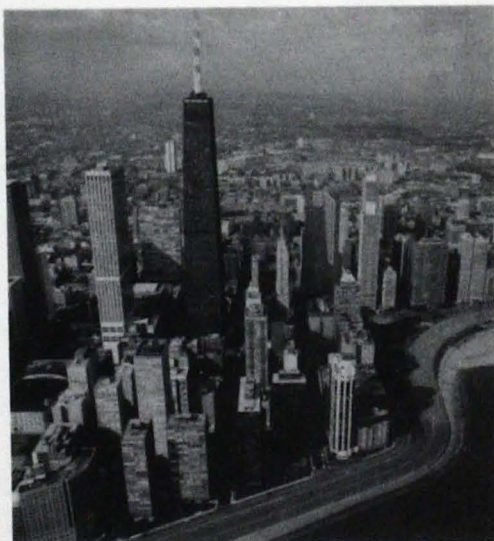
George Gardner has written an article in this issue of the *Exhibitionist* about the AAM Council for any of you who may be interested in

serving NAME by running for Councilor-at-Large.

Thanks to the many NAME colleagues who donated their time to the Workshop projects this past year, I am delighted to report that we have been able to finally afford to buy a computer for NAME membership maintenance. Although we computerized the membership three years ago, we have only now been able to afford our own equipment.

I am please to announce that Darcie Fohrman, the NAME 1st Vice-President, has agreed to coordinate the Advanced Exhibit Professional Retreat we are planning as a 1991 pre-AAM meeting event

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Chicago—site of the AAM Annual Meeting

Photo: Ron Schramm/ Courtesy of Chicago Convention and Visitor's Bureau

NAME
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MUSEUM EXHIBITION

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in Boulder, Colorado. Planning will commence immediately following the 1990 AAM meeting in May.

And finally, I polled the NAME Executive Board members to see who, what, why, where, and when we could run the next NAME Workshops entitled "Just Labels" and learned that half of the board would like to run them in conjunction with their regional museum meetings. So, we are trying to sort this out and we will let you know the five W's as soon as possible.

I hope to see you in Chicago.

Louise L. DeMars
President, NAME

February 7, 1990

Dear Ms. DeMars,

I have just received the issue of the *Exhibitionist* and am writing to tell you how delighted I am with its format, information and design. It is rare that a publication like yours meets the criteria that most of us in the Exhibition Design field would like to see—*Exhibitionist* does!—in these days of flashy desk top publications, (computer oriented) it was a refreshing stroke that allowed you to produce the information in such an "easy to read" and professional manner. You must be most pleased with yourself and those associates who so ably assisted you—I know I am!

Congratulations!

Sincerely,

Addis M. Osborne, Stoneham, MA

Dear Addis,

It is letters such as the one I received from you which makes this job, at times, worthwhile.

I must credit Mark Driscoll for his superb design and layout skills. The man spends an enormous amount of time designing NAME material and making me look good.

Put Mark together with Bob Francis and Mary Ann Demos (the rest of our non-paid Exhibitionist group) combined with regular contributions from many of our NAME Executive Board people and the general membership and it explains why the Exhibitionist has taken off.

LLD

January 31, 1990

Dear Louise,

I just wanted to take a second to tell you how much I appreciate the work you and the other officers of NAME give to the organization. I represent a small museum and the information in the newsletter and at the workshop on April 1, 1989 has been extremely helpful to me. It is good for morale to feel a part of the "museum world" and encour-

Editor: Louise L. DeMars
Technical Editor: Bob Francis
Assistant: Mary Ann Demos
Designer: Mark Driscoll
Layout Asst: Bob Konikow
Inputters: Kathleen Tobin
Proofreader: Gale Iannone

ages us to strive for excellence - or at least as much excellence as we can afford!

Thank you for the opportunities offered by membership in NAME; I hope to see you in Chicago.

Sincerely,
Sally Newkirk

Director, Floyd County Museum

P.S. I have just about worn out the "Exhibitions 89" video. If I can't see the exhibits in person, the video is truly the next best thing. I love it!

Dear Sally,

A big hug from the NAME Executive Board...

LLD

February 1, 1990

Dear Editor:

I enjoyed reading Don Hughes' letter to the editor in the last *Exhibitionist*. I agree with Don that the draft of NAME's Code of Professional Standards and Ethics contains some "fluffy, low-fat words with no substance," and that the code is, indeed, "a sign of the times." I also agree that "we should take the next step and put some teeth in it," but we're referring to different kinds of bites. I'd like the Code to be more explicit.

The draft states that "no NAME member should be...subject to...relationships that conflict with the best interests of the institution." How does an individual judge what is in the best interest of an institution?

It also states that "no member shall represent conflicting or competing interests without the expressed consent of those involved." This only vaguely alludes to the concept of "full disclosure", a very important issue. When is it acceptable to moonlight on outside jobs, and when isn't it? If we are paid for consulting while on museum time, should we keep their money?

It states that "no member shall intentionally injure the professional reputation or practice of another member or colleague." I agree with Don on this one. As it's worded, it comes dangerously close to stifling critical dialogue. (We don't want to

end up like the medical profession, do we?) Nevertheless, it attempts to focus on an important issue. For example, if we disagree with our colleagues, should we bad-mouth them to the public behind their backs? It mentions injuring reputation - what about co-workers' health (resulting from unsafe working conditions or unreasonable stress)?

The draft also left out some issues. For example, no member should willingly jeopardize the physical integrity and stability of collection objects through improper exhibition techniques. (I once saw a well-known designer quietly hot-glue collection objects to display furniture. Is this ethical?)

And what about museum visitors - the people for whom we're doing all these exhibitions? Do we have any ethical responsibilities to them?

Don sounds as though he has fortunately never come up against some of the perplexing ethical issues that plague museums. For the rest of us, a clearly-articulated professional Code of Ethics can guide difficult decisions throughout a career. The sign of a true profession is that it has some standards. If we are ever to attain a higher level of quality and professionalism in our work, we had better pay some attention to standards and ethics.

Kathleen McLean

Letters to the Editor should include the author's full name, address and daytime telephone number and should be sent to: NAME Editor, Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, 170 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, CT 06511. Letters may be edited for purposes of clarity or space.

News & Notices

Position Listings

Designer • The National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, located in Washington, DC, is seeking a lead designer to join a project team developing a major exhibition, "Science in American Life."

The exhibition, scheduled to open in October 1993, will cover approximately 12,000 square feet and will deal with both the history and practice of science, with emphasis on science's impact on daily life. Candidates for the position of principal designer should be highly creative and well grounded in museum-related experience, particularly interactive science and social/cultural history exhibitions.

Interested individuals or groups should send resumes and examples of work to Ms. Dru Colbert, Chief Design Division, Rm 4212, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. EOE. All samples will be returned upon request.

Museum Curator • The City of Redding Carter House Science Museum is recruiting for the following position: Science Museum Curator - \$1,299-\$1,748 per month with full benefits. Position requires a Bachelor's degree in Biology, Zoology, or related field, three years museum/zoo supervisory experience in animal husbandry, record-keeping, and exhibit development. Equivalent training and experience may be substituted. For further information, please contact the City of Redding, 760 Parkview Avenue, Redding, CA 96001, 916 225 4065. EOE.

Exhibits Preparator/Designer • Design, fabricate, install, and maintain temporary natural history, anthropology, and art exhibits in collaboration with curators, museum educators, and buildings and grounds staff. Maintain and refurbish permanent exhibits. Skills in 3-D and graphic design and exhibit production techniques required, including: drawing/drafting, painting, silk screening, matting/

framing, mounting, label copy design, and exhibit layout and lighting. Must be familiar with production tools and materials: wood, fabric, Plexiglass, etc. 3-5 years' experience in design/production of museum exhibits required. Experience with traveling exhibits (packaging, transport, etc.) desirable. MA in graphic arts or exhibit design preferred. Please send letter and resume with references by April 30, 1990 to: Museum of Northern Arizona, Route 4, Box 720, Flagstaff, AZ 86001.

Technician, Installation and Preparation Services • To provide carpentry and technical assistance for the preparation, installation, and maintenance of the permanent collection, special exhibitions, the shipment of works of art, and installation and maintenance of gallery lighting as directed. Requires BFA or equivalent of relevant education and experience; three years art museum experience preferred; demonstrated carpentry skills; knowledge of packing materials, crate design and construction, Plexiglas fabrication, and conservation and storage techniques; experience with power equipment and hand tools and knowledge of proper safety procedures; experience in handling, matting, and framing works of art; commitment to proper care of works of art; ability to work well with others and to follow instructions. Salary competitive; position open. Send letter of application and resume to Kathy Goodale, Personnel Services Coordinator, Amon Carter Museum, PO Box 2365, Fort Worth, TX 76113.

Graphic Designer • Provide graphic design consultation and services for the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, New Haven, CT, for both graphic design and exhibit-related jobs. Conceive, develop, design, and produce a variety of Museum printed matter including brochures, invitations, flyers, and signage. Required: Two years of related work experience and a BA degree in graphic arts or related field; or an equivalent combination of experience and education. Knowledge of graphic design, color, layout, camera-ready mechanical preparation; advanced Macintosh computer skills; printing methods; stat camera; silk screening; bugeting; job estimating; and scheduling. Pre-

ferred: 3-5 years experience in design and production. 25 hours per week. AA/EOE. Send resume to: A. Kaye, Human Resources, Yale University, 155 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, CT 06520.

Museum Workshops Announced

The Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums (MAAM) announces a one-day workshop to be held March 29, 1990 in Rochester, NY. The program is co-sponsored by the Education Committee of MAAM and the Strong Museum.

"For Educators' Eyes Only: An Introduction to the Educator's Role in the Team Planning of Exhibits" will be held at the Strong Museum from 8:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. The team approach to planning, mounting, and evaluating an exhibition can result in the best possible use of a museum's resources. In this full-day program, highly qualified speakers will present methods and standards for educators to follow as museum audience advocates. The sessions will emphasize the educator's contributions to this process, from writing objectives to conducting an evaluation. Speakers include: Naomi Erdmann, Assistant Professor, Nazareth College; Toby Thompson, Rochester Institute of Technology, School of Art and Design; Aideen McMahon, Specialist in Educational Psychology; and Marie Hewett, Vice President for Education, the Strong Museum. Florence Smith of the Strong Museum is coordinating the program.

The registration fee is \$40.00 for MAAM members and \$55.00 for non-members. Registration deadline is March 19, 1990. The workshop is limited to 40 participants. Registration also includes admission to the program entitled "Lights Out: Time for the Magic Lantern Picture Show" to be held at the Strong Museum on Wednesday, March 28, at 7:30 pm.

MAAM also announces a one-day workshop to be held April 6, 1990 in New York City. The program is co-sponsored by the Registrars Committee of MAAM. "The Rigors of Rigging OR Is This Move Really Necessary?" will be held at the Linder Thea-

ter, American Museum of Natural History, from 9:30 am to 5:00 pm.

Regardless of institutional size, type of collection or degree of exhibition activity, there comes a time when most people charged with the responsibility of object care will encounter the challenge of moving large and/or heavy objects that require rigging. In this full-day program, speakers will address issues that can mean the difference between success and failure for such a project. The sessions will explore contractual agreements with vendors, insurance, materials and troubleshooting. Two case studies will be presented. The workshop is directed at registrars, preparators, curators, conservators, and others concerned with object care and handling. Speakers include: Marion Meckleberg, Conservation Research, Smithsonian; Belinda Kaye, Dept. of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History; Philip Babcock, Office of Risk Management, Smithsonian; and Larry Doherty, Rigging Special Projects Supervisor, Fine Arts Express.

The registration fee is \$60.00 for MAAM members and \$75.00 for non-members. Registration deadline is March 30, 1990.

The Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums is a non-profit membership organization serving museums and their staffs in DC, MD, DE, NJ, PA, and NY. In addition to the workshop program, MAAM publishes a bi-monthly newsletter and offers an annual three-day conference, in 1990 to be held October 28-31, 1990, in Princeton, NJ. For further information, contact the MAAM office at PO Box 817, Newark, DE 19715-0817; 302 731 1424.

Workshops in Graphic Design and Film Programming

The Gallery Association of New York State, a nonprofit cooperative of museums and other exhibiting institutions, will offer the following professional workshops in 1990:

Graphic Design for Museum Publications

May 7 - Albany, NY

May 14 - Syracuse, NY

continues next page

News & Notices continues

Film Programming for Children

May 21 - New York City.

For information, contact Gallery Association, Box 345, Hamilton, NY 13346-0345; phone 315 824 2510

"Larger than Life": A Dramatic Opening at New York's Museum of Holography

Some of the largest, most brilliant, highest quality holograms ever made are the feature of an exhibition that opened on January 26 at the Museum of Holography in New York. "Larger than Life" presents the internationally renowned large-format holography of Holographics North, Inc.

"Larger than Life" is a dazzling array of a dozen state-of-the-art holographic images, demonstrating the versatility and dramatic impact of large holograms. At sizes of up to 44"x72", Holographics North produces among the largest commercial holograms in the world. In "Space Station," commissioned by the Alabama Space and Rocket Center, the station's hub rotates in space as the viewer walks past. One of six stunning holograms produced for Leica USA utilizes holography's multi-imaging capability with several antique cameras recorded all in one hologram.

"Larger than Life" also includes works commissioned for the St. Louis Zoo, Leica USA, Mercedes, Pontiac, Tonka Toys, HOK Architects, and a life-sized shark for the Chicago Fish House.

Over the last six years, under the direction of Dr. John Perry, Holographics North, Inc. of Burlington, Vermont has become known not only for its commercial holography but also as an artist's studio, collaborating with artists such as Frank Stella and Antonio Peticov. As pioneers in the field of large-format holography, Holographics North has made a highly respected contribution to the development of holography as a fine and commercial art medium.

"Larger than Life" will be at the Museum of

Holography, 111 Mercer Street, New York City through April 14th. Hours 11:00 am - 6:00 pm Tuesday through Sunday, closed on Monday. Admission during regular hours is \$3.50 for adults, \$2.50 for senior citizens and children. For more information call 212 925 0581.

Exhibit Design Workshop

The Museum Association of Arizona and NAME will co-sponsor an exhibit design workshop on March 24, 1990 from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm at Neeb Hall, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ. This workshop will provide an abundance of creative and practical ideas for all kinds of exhibits with all kinds of budgets. Experienced designers, fabricators, curators and educators will present slides and discuss design processes and solutions. Special topics include working with minimal funds as well as designing labels and other interpretive elements. Registration required in advance. Fee is \$25.00. For more information contact Paula Liken at 602 965 ARTS. Additional funding for this workshop has been provided by the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

SPNCH Symposium

The Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) will hold a special conservation symposium on "Exhibiting Natural History Material" on May 11, 1990 at the Field Museum of Natural History, in conjunction with the SPNHC annual meeting in Chicago. This symposium will be the first time that conservation professionals have come together to address the conservation aspects of displaying natural history specimens. The program will be of interest to exhibit designers, collection managers, curators, technicians, registrars, preparators, or anyone else involved in exhibit development. Research results and practical experience will be provided for such topics as preparing specimens and objects for exhibits; documentation (insurance, condition reporting); materials suitable for use in exhibits; light,

temperature, and humidity; mounting techniques; pest control; security; and packing and shipping. Registration fees before March 10 are \$10 for SPNHC members / \$20 for non-members; after March 10, \$15 members / \$25 non-members. Contact Elizabeth Merritt at 513 621 3889 for information about the symposium and David Willard at 312 922 9410 for information regarding transportation and accommodations. Provided with continuing support for collections care in the natural sciences by The Bay Foundation.

Make checks payable to: Peabody Museum Associates, Dept. RZM, P.O. Box 6666, 170 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, CT 06511-8161

Curators Content Competition

The Curators Committee has announced the Second Annual Exhibit Competition to recognize outstanding achievement in the creation of exhibits in all types of museums, zoos, and botanic gardens. Award criteria focus on exhibit concepts and



A Mural Milestone

It's new! It's spectacular! It's the new reproduction of Rudolph Zallinger's *Age of Reptiles* mural, found in the Great Hall of Yale's Peabody Museum of Natural History.

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of Mr. Zallinger's winning the Pulitzer Prize for this fine work, the Peabody Museum Associates offer this exciting new version of the deluxe mural.

The dinosaurs come alive! It's a wonderful gift.

To order retail:

New *Age of Reptiles* Mural, size 9'-4 1/2" x 19 3/4"

\$25.00 + \$5 for shipping and handling

Age of Mammals Mural, size 9' x 9 1/2"

\$20.00 + \$5 for shipping and handling

Guidebook for each mural \$5.50

To order wholesale:

New *Age of Reptiles* Poster, 72" x 12"

\$12.50 + shipping and handling

Age of Mammals Poster, 72" x 9"

\$10.00 + shipping and handling

Guidebook for each poster \$3.30

content and their successful development by the entire exhibit team. The winning exhibits, selected by a panel of three judges (Joan Lester, Children's Museum, Boston; Frank Jewell, Valentine Museum, Richmond; Allen Young, Milwaukee Public Museum), will be featured at the annual meeting in Chicago on the afternoon of Thursday, May 10. All those interested in exhibits are invited to attend.

MMA Workshop Announced

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, announces a workshop entitled "Cultural Pluralism for Museums: Opportunities and Solutions," to be held April 5-6, 1990, in New York. The workshop is designed for curators, educators, administrators, and exhibition designers, and is accessible to all levels of expertise. Faculty will represent curatorial, programming, and administrative branches of museums. Related disciplines will also be reflected, including public-policy administration, cultural history, and anthropology.

Museums serve as forums for representing

continues next page

News & Notices continues

and reaching a diverse array of cultures. Participating in this exchange can raise many complex issues for museum professionals. This two-day seminar addresses changes in collecting, exhibition, and interpretation. Sessions will examine guidelines for exhibition, taking into account social, political, and aesthetic factors. Cultural assumptions implicit in historical and contemporary exhibitions will be discussed. Sessions will explore the balance between institutions with diverse collections and those that take as their fundamental mission the representation of specific cultures. Parameters for accommodating contemporary expressions of traditional ethnic culture within the mainstream will also be explored. As museums institutionalize pluralism, their attitudes toward audiences of diverse cultures are shifting. Sessions will define constituencies and present mechanisms for programming that can foster relationships.

Tuition is \$100 for New York State participants, and \$150 for out-of-state participants. A limited number of scholarships are available for New York State participants. For more information, contact Stella Paul at 212 879 5500, ext 3645.

Appointments

The Board of Directors of Cambridge Seven Associates, Inc., Cambridge, Massachusetts, is pleased to announce that Robert B. Galloway, AIA; Steven Imrich, AIA; John Merkler, AIA; and Roberta M. Oakley, RA have been named Associates of the firm in recognition of their outstanding contributions toward providing the highest quality of design and service to our clients.

Mr. Galloway has been a project architect with Cambridge Seven since 1983. The diversity of his project involvement ranges from educational and public institutional design to commercial and retail developments.

Mr. Imrich joined Cambridge Seven in 1984

with a diverse background in design and construction. Since then he has acted as project architect on a number of the firm's aquarium, museum, exhibit, and public transportation projects.

Mr. Merkler has been with Cambridge Seven since 1977. As project architect, he has had a wide range of institutional, transit, office, commercial, and exhibit project experience throughout all phases of design and construction.

Ms. Oakley joined Cambridge Seven in 1984 as a project architect. Recipient of a Progressive Architecture research award, she has been involved in a variety of the firm's commercial and retail design projects.

Museum Seeks Nominations for \$10,000 Chiles Award

Nominations for the 7th annual Earle A. Chiles Award in resource management are being sought by the High Desert Museum in Bend, Oregon.

The Chiles Award was established by the Museum in 1983 to recognize individuals whose accomplishments have led either to the thoughtful management of the resources of the High Desert region, or to the resolution of conflicts involving these resources.

The 1990 Award is funded by the Chiles Foundation of Portland and is named for the late Earle A. Chiles, long-time executive of Fred Meyer, Inc. Chiles was particularly interested in the conservation of the Northwest's natural resources and in the development of educational opportunities for youth. The Chiles Foundation was formed to advance such activities and has been one of the major supporters of educational institutions in Oregon, including the High Desert Museum.

The High Desert region, or Intermountain West, is defined as bounded on the west by the Cascade and Sierra Nevada Mountains and on the east by the Rocky Mountains; it reaches north to the Columbia Plateau and south to the Great Basin. It includes parts of the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, Nevada, and California, and the Canadian province of British Columbia.

The Earle A. Chiles Award is managed by a committee of community leaders from the region. Committee members are: John L. Blackwell, Robert Buchanan, Robert W. Chandler, Earle M. Chiles, Don C. Frisbee, Michael P. Hollern, Donald M. Kerr, Harry A. Merlo, Chief Judge Owen M. Panner, and William W. Wessinger.

Nominations for the \$10,000 award must be submitted to the Museum by April 16, 1990. Nomination forms and additional information can be obtained by writing to the High Desert Museum, 59800 S. Highway 97, Bend, OR 97702. The winner will be announced in December, 1990.

Apple Nonprofit Discount Program

If you haven't heard, there is now an Apple non-profit discount program sponsored by the Apple Government Sales group. Discounts typically range between 30-35%.

Apple offers select types of not-for-profit 501c(3) organizations another option for purchasing Apple products. 501c(3) organizations may determine their eligibility by new simplified eligibility guidelines and may purchase from a new 501c(3) price list.

Apple 501c(3) customer eligibility will be determined by IRS 501c(3) Primary Activity Codes. Apple has selected codes from the list of IRS codes and developed the Apple list of eligible IRS 501c(3) primary activity codes. The list of relevant eligible codes is below.

Guidelines for not-for-profit 501c(3) customers are as follows:

Eligible 501c(3) organizations will purchase products from the special State and Local Government "501c(3) Confidential Price List". Apple offers eligible 501c(3) organizations Macintosh products at a discounted price. The 501c(3) price list will be available on April 15th from your local Apple Government Authorized dealer.

501c(3) organizations are not eligible if the IRS 501c(3) primary activity code on their IRS 1023 Form is not listed in the Apple eligible IRS 501c(3) codes.

Eligible 501c(3) organizations must submit the following documents with their initial purchase order:

- Signed and approved Apple Agreement (SPA/GPA)
- A photocopy of page one of their IRS 1023 Form (to verify eligible primary activity code)
- A photocopy of their 501c(3) IRS tax exempt certificate (to verify 501c(3) tax exempt status).

Purchase orders received without verification of eligibility will not be processed.

For more information, please contact your local Apple Government Authorized Dealer.

A Selection from the List of Eligible IRS 501c(3) Primary Activity Codes is as follows:

- 060 Museum, Planetarium
- 061 Library
- 062 Historical Site, Records, or Reenactment
- 120 Publishing Activities
- 122 Producing Films
 - 160 Aid to the Handicapped
 - 161 Scientific Research (Diseases)
 - 162 Other Medical Research
 - 165 Community Health Planning
 - 166 Mental Health Care
 - 200 Chamber of Commerce, Business League
- 349 Other Youth Organization or Activities
- 350 Preservation of Natural Resources (Conservation)
- 351 Combatting or Preventing Pollution (Air, Water, Land)
- 352 Land Acquisition for Preservation
- 353 Soil or Water Conservation
- 354 Preservation of Scenic Beauty
- 355 Wildlife Sanctuary or Refuge
- 379 Other Conservation, Environmental or Beautification Activities

About the Profession

It was too long...It wasn't long enough...It was the wrong color and point-size...It was...

The label from Hell

Does this sound like a movie ad for, say, An American Werelabel in London? A gothic horror story about ugly, soulless entities that come out when the gallery lights are turned on and assault the public aesthetically, verbally, and intellectually to the point that the viewer leaves looking like a blind zombie? 'Ha, fiction!' you say. 'Couldn't happen in real life.' Think about it. We've all seen or had to deal with manic-depressive labels at one time or another: copy so fine that only a lawyer could love it, and text so long that 12 cups of coffee couldn't keep you awake to read it. Fortunately, there are things that can be done to avoid these godless little rectangles of the undead so that the movie can have a happy ending, and the public can walk away informed, yet visually remembering only the art.

In this article I would like to discuss several aspects of what constitutes poor labeling systems, and why they exist. Specifically, I'll deal with what these creatures look like, why I feel they are allowed to reproduce, and the means we have at our disposal for creating more effective labels. I am acutely aware of the fact that this article is addressing some sensitive nerve endings of museum work that some professional disciplines might find disagreeable. Sorry. The intent of this article is simply to identify a problem and see what can be done to make the best presentation possible to the public.

First of all, as generally agreed upon by sapient members of the museum world, the purpose of a label is to identify an object of art and, in the most succinct terms possible, convey something of its meaning or importance. A good label should enhance the experience of viewing the art and not compete with it, either visually or in viewing time. Conversely, a label shouldn't be so weak in appearance that it doesn't work. What the label needs to

say should be determined by the object, and possibly by its relevance to other objects in the exhibition, crowd flow, viewing time, etc. Subjective analysis by the writer, superfluous verbiage, history lessons (what the artist had for breakfast that day), and information that is, and should remain, in the catalogue, really don't have a good reason to be on the label. Excellent catalogue and brochure copy doesn't necessarily work as label copy. I can't think of any libraries that use art as a means of explaining literature. How would one "paint a label" for the works of James Joyce? There are reasons why libraries don't do this—and museums shouldn't, either.

To begin with, there is an inescapable conflict in any label/object relationship. You must use a different part of your brain for each one: the left and right hemispheres, respectively. Domination by one implies subservience by the other. The elements involved—color, content, typeface, point size, length, lighting, object—should work in harmony with each other to create a balance where one element complements the others. A label exists to educate; an object of art exists for a number of reasons, but perception of the object remains essentially a right-brain function (spatial relationships, feeling, intuition, emotion, etc.). When copy has reached a point where the label is an entity unto itself and is magnified by arbitrary formatting and design, one must ask: Why does this label need a piece of art beside it? If a label reaches this point of mutation, easily seduced readers can assume that everything they need to know about the art is contained on the label. Why waste time looking at the art? Just move on to the next label.

This left-right duality is also a factor in determining the personalities of people—in this case, the museum staff who create labels. Visually and verbally oriented people have their own particular talents to contribute to the label. But there is a problem that we all know exists, though we don't talk about it in polite company: sometimes curators, designers, and editors don't listen to each other. The problem is compounded when one, if not all three, feels and acts as if he knows the other's field better than the

specialist. This is an age-old staff condition, sometimes referred to as "Head vs. Hand," which we hope is fading out with attrition and enlightenment. Teamwork and appreciation of the value and necessity of each staff member's profession are essential ingredients of superior labels.

typeset in 2540 dpi or written on a typewriter, it can still function to fulfill the needs of the art and the public.

Below is a comparative process of staff interaction which is guaranteed to produce good and bad labels. This little docudrama illustrates why labels

THE HERO

Curator and exhibition designer discuss focus of exhibition.

Curator/writer writes copy for text panels and labels; submits manuscript copy to editor and exhibition designer.

Exhibition designer and graphic designer rough out format of copy for sizing; determine specifications for graphics. Exhibition designer draws exhibit plans; incorporating scale of graphics; editor returns polished copy to curator/writer.

Curator/writer makes minor changes and sends copy back to editor; editor sends final copy to graphic designer for typesetting.

Graphics staff produce text panels and labels; install three days prior to opening.

Exhibition is successful; director gives everyone 27.5% raises and two weeks off.

LABEL FROM HELL

Curator and designer talk about whether or not we should have invaded Panama.

Curator, editor and designer all meet for coffee break; continue the debate.

Exhibition designer has already designed exhibit to meet scheduling deadlines; asks curator/writer where the hell is copy? Editor receives copy, polishes it, sends it back to curator/writer, who makes changes, adding a few additional panels and labels.

Somehow, copy (complete with typos) is sent to graphic designer three days before exhibit opens; each designer thinks he understands what the other wants the graphics to look like.

Graphic designer leaves point size, leading and column width decisions to typesetter, who has never set foot inside a museum; remembers exhibition designer said something about white labels on blue walls and makes them that way. Graphics are installed at 2:30 am the night before opening.

Curator decides to change arrangement of the art; graphics staff remake labels, overlooking errors; exhibit opens ten minutes late.

Everyone agrees the Panamanian invasion was probably easier to deal with than this exhibition.

Up to this point I've dealt with the dark side of labels; but, of course, there is also a positive side. Human nature has given us an innate defense system against poorly designed and written labels: we don't read them. According to studies that have been conducted over the past 51 years (see bibliography), people stop reading labels after about 60 or 70 words, and text panels after about 150 words. Placement of labels, color, point size, length, and illumination all have a direct effect on how much of the label is read and retained. If this is a documented fact, one may ask, why are counter-productive labels still produced? Simple. Either people aren't aware of such studies, or they choose to ignore them, or (let's be honest) their talents fall short of producing good-quality labels. Small exhibition budgets aren't really a good excuse for poor labels; there are just as many dependable Chevrolets on the road as there are Cadillacs. Whether a label is

that aren't raised properly "go bad" and turn on their creators and innocent museum visitors every day. This kind of carnage is not a pretty sight.

There is no such thing as "the perfect label." Just as a spot of color adapts and changes hue from one larger field of color to the next, a good label does so with each exhibition. The two samples that follow, with specifications, should convey the difference between labels that work and those that need to have a wooden spike driven through their hearts.

The difference between these two labels can best be summarized by casting our attention to the second label. There are obvious problems with the quality of the writing and the formatting. First of all, the choice of a contemporary font is ill-suited to the period being addressed. In addition, Condensed Helvetica at this point-size, leading, column width, and letter-spacing is difficult to read. The margins only reinforce the existent density of the copy, and

continues next page

About the Profession continues

the justified right side of the body makes the label seem more monolithic than inviting. The line-spacing is redundant; the first label offers subtle variations to the viewer.

As stated above, the color of the label

WILLEM IL GATO
Born: 1580, Died: 1589
Opus I, painted: 1582(?)
Oil on canvas
Lent anonymously

This superb example of il Gato's tortuous career obviously shows his triumph over the failures of his attempts at foreshortening the figures in his delicate, yet, rugged compositions. Apparently having spent a good portion of his apprenticeship at the zoo, studying and making red-chalk drawings of the various gestural stances assumed by the animals, Willem's rendition of the penguin in Opus IV is an important step.

The "paw" signature on the painting is believed to have influenced Whistler's "butterfly" three centuries later.

Despite the controversies over the cleaning of il Gato's works the painting seems to enjoy an ephemeral quality (not unlike Parrish's) of color, yet, one that is rooted in the artist's own humanity.

Catalog number twenty seven

WILLEM il GATO
Dutch/Italian, 1580-89

Opus I, 1582
Oil on canvas; signed lower right.
Lent anonymously

This painting represents a crucial point of development in il Gato's mannerist style. Not only are the colors more intense than the earlier works in this exhibition, but also the drawing appears to reflect the influence of his apprenticeship under Michaelangelo in the Sistine Chapel.

Cat. no. 27

should work with the exhibition and not sacrifice legibility.

Concerning the content of the label... well, I had a good time trying to write about art as badly as I probably did as a sophomore in college. If you can tell me what relevance the quality of color has to do with "what is rooted in the artist's own humanity," I'll let you take me out to lunch.

Last, even though we all probably feel that we make the best efforts possible, I would like to suggest a little caution when we turn on the gallery lights.

Randall Henniker
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Instructional Videos?

Did you ever wish someone had been around with a video camera recording the making of a particular exhibit? I mean, how did they mount those elephants at the American Museum of Natural History? Or do you wish there was a nice simple video showing you how to assemble an acrylic vitrine so that it doesn't look as though the maker was sniffing more glue than he was using?

Well, I have; and I think there are a lot of you who

would like to have access to instructional films or videos on a variety of exhibit-related topics. Two years ago I presented an extremely low-budget production of just such a video at the American Association of Museums meeting during the exhibit marketplace. Subsequent to the production, we sent out a dozen copies to interested exhibit professionals. While production values were not lavish, the message was clear and the usefulness evident.

I am proposing that NAME serve as such a source for providing access to instructional videos. This should be an equal opportunity resource with offerings from the low-and high-ends of the production scale.

We will be discussing the logistics of this program at some of the NAME meetings in Chicago in

May. Of course, no one will get rich from this project...right? Obviously, expenses for running this program and considerations for this as an income-generating project for NAME will be discussed.

If you have any exhibit-related or instructional/informational videos available, or are interested in producing such a video, or if you have any opinions on the viability of this project, please contact me at the following address: American Museum of Natural History, Exhibition Department, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, NY 10024. Phone 212 769 5461. Fax 212 769 5426.

Willard Whitson
American Museum of Natural History

Earthquake Workshop

On October 17, 1989, a 7.1 magnitude earthquake rocked a large area in Northern California. On December 11, 1989, over one hundred museum professionals gathered to discuss the effects of the earthquake on their collections and on themselves.

The session was organized by Jane Kamplajn, Registrar of Collections at the University Art Museum at University of California-Berkeley, and co-sponsored by the Northern California Registrars

Labels appear at 50% of
Original size

For more about labels, see *Visitor Behavior*, Volume IV, Number 3, Fall 1989—a special issue on exhibit labeling. *Visitor Behavior* is published by the Center for Social Design of Jacksonville, Alabama in cooperation with the Anniston Museum of Natural History and Jacksonville State University

Committee-Western Region and NAME.

The program began with a presentation that addressed responses of structures and their contents in earthquakes and future activity on the San Andreas and Hayward Faults. Next, with the aid of numerous slides, nine museum professionals shared how the earthquake affected their institutions and how their staffs responded to the disaster. An afternoon panel discussed damage mitigation techniques implemented in storage and exhibition areas and addressed the effectiveness of various methods. Documenting damage for insurance purposes was the closing topic of the program.

The reports of those affected by the earthquake underscored the paramount importance of protecting the collections entrusted to our care. Other issues included difficult personal and professional decisions that often must be made during and after such a disaster, the role of volunteers and professional colleagues in providing assistance and the necessity of accepting compromise in the standards by which we normally operate.

If sufficient interest is expressed, the Registrars Committee-Western Region, will make reprints of the session available after April 1, 1990. For further information please contact Susan Roberts-Manganelli, Registrar and Assistant Curator, Stanford University Museum of Art, Lomita Dr & Museum Way, Stanford, CA 94305-5060; phone 415 725 0461.

Paulette Dunn Hennum

Registrar, Crocker Art Museum

RC-WR, Northern CA Representative

The Regions Report



Mid-Atlantic Region

On March 28, NAME collaborated with the Pennsylvania Rural Arts Alliance and the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art to present a one-day workshop entitled "Relating to the Object," exploring care, conservation, shipping and display of artwork. The session will be held in Loretto, Pennsylvania, and information is available from the PRAA at 814 472 6400.

This type of programming is a good example of how smaller museum or arts organizations may utilize the resources of the NAME network. A letter to Jim Volkert in January resulted in a workshop involving NAME members with relevant subject specializations.

On a related note, four proposals were submitted to the Mid-Atlantic program planning committee for consideration at the regional meeting this fall. At press time, we were waiting for their decisions on acceptance.

After receiving minimal feedback on my proposal for informal meetings of regional members in the last report, I will repeat it. Is there any interest for this type of get-together? Also, please send me information on your exhibits (openings or in-progress), personal news related to the profession, program ideas, etc. To report on this region, we have to know more about the members.

Max Cameron

Mid-Atlantic Co-Representative



Mountain-Plains Region

The Mountain Plains Region will sponsor a workshop entitled "Just Labels" that will focus on design, production methods, typography, etc. of labels. It will be similar to the other regional workshops sponsored by NAME in September, 1990. The workshop will be held as part of the Annual Meeting of the Mountain-Plains Museums Association, October 3-6, 1990, in Bozeman,

continues next page

The Regions Report continues

Montana. Serving as Co-Chairs are Peter Tirrell, Assistant Director/Public Programs, Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, and Claudia Berg, Curator of Exhibits, North Dakota Heritage Center. The Co-Chairs are also attempting to organize a session demonstrating techniques for Plexiglas labels and mountings.

There will also be a scheduled meeting of NAME members at the 1990 MPMA Annual Meeting. Exact arrangements will be available soon.

The region now has 82 members, an all-time high! Regional representatives are devoting efforts to getting this widespread group together, especially via telephone/fax networking.

The NAME Regional Representatives are requesting that the MPMA Council recognize the MPMA group of NAME as a standing professional committee of MPMA in place of the formerly recognized group known as Exhibits Affinity. It is anticipated that the Council will approve this request at the MPMA mid-winter meeting in Denver, Colorado in February, 1990.

The Oklahoma Museums Association and the Texas Association of Museums have been contacted regarding co-sponsorship of future NAME workshops. Both associations have expressed interest. OMA has scheduled three workshops in advance: "Exhibiting Your Community's Heritage," April 24 and 25, 1990; "Exhibit Labels: Content and Production," March, 1991; and "Exhibit Design/Construction", November, 1991.

Peter B. Tirrell

Mountain Plains Co-Representative

The Committees Report...and Report...and Report...

Election of NAME Officers

The following individuals have been nominated for the five offices of NAME for the term beginning July 1, 1990 and running through June 30, 1992.

President—Louise L. DeMars



Louise L. DeMars is Head of Exhibition and Graphic Design at the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History in New Haven, Connecticut where she started her museum career as an exhibit technician in 1965.

Louise has been active in NAME since its inception in 1981 when she was part of the NAME founding group which met in Indianapolis to help form NAME. She served as the NAME New England Representative until 1984, when she was elected 1st Vice President. Louise has served as President since 1986.

1st Vice President—James W. Volkert



With more than 15 years experience, Jim Volkert has supervised the design and installation of over 85 exhibitions. They have spanned a broad range of subjects in the fine arts, history and the

sciences. Coming from a fine arts background with a Master of Fine Arts from Art Center College of Design, he began his career developing exhibitions for a children's museum with an emphasis on visitor interaction with objects and concepts. In addition to staff roles as curator, educator, exhibition designer and project manager, he has been Principal of Exhibition Associates, a private exhibition and program development firm with national clients.

Currently, Jim is Chief of Exhibitions and Publications for the National Museum of American Art and the Renwick Gallery, at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, and he has been serving as the Mid-Atlantic Regional Co-Representative for NAME.

2nd Vice President—Roger Vandiver



Roger Vandiver has held his current position at the Chicago Botanic for five years. He has designed and produced exhibitions for natural history museums since 1969: five years with the Stovall Museum of Natural History, University of Oklahoma, and nine years with the University of Nebraska State Museum. He holds a Master's degree in Museum Studies from the University of Oklahoma.

Roger has served on the board of NAME since 1985; three years as Midwest Regional Representative, and a two-year term as 2nd Vice President and Membership Chair. Roger has worked to shape the membership program into a professional function of NAME. He feels that the program should be driven by clear goals, based on the needs of our members. The organization should address the concerns of all who work on museum exhibit planning and production, in order to further our larger goal of improving museum exhibition.

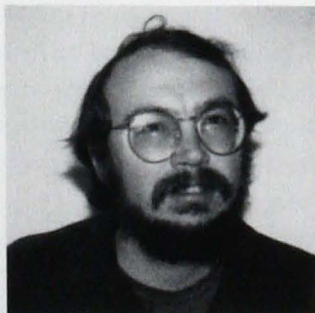
Secretary—Raylene Decatur



Raylene Decatur is the Director of Exhibits at the Maryland Science Center, in Baltimore, Maryland. Formerly she was Director of Exhibits at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Her exhibit experience includes positions with Lynch Museum Services in New Jersey, the Campbell Museum in New Jersey and the Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art, which is part of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

Raylene has been serving as NAME Secretary since last year in an appointed capacity.

Treasurer—James Walther



Jim Walther has been a NAME member since before time it seems, but actually only since 1981. He has served as the Southeast Regional Representative and Co-Representative for two terms. Jim looks forward to continued service to the NAME organization and membership and he considers NAME to be an exciting part of his professional career as a planner and designer of museum exhibits.

Ballot

Election of NAME Officers

The following individuals have been nominated for the five offices of NAME for the term beginning July 1, 1990 and running through June 30, 1992.

Either check-off or write-in one candidate for each office.

Check off
or Write in

President

Louise L. DeMars
.....

1st Vice President

Jim Volkert
.....

2nd Vice President

Roger Vandiver
.....

Secretary

Raylene Decatur
.....

Treasurer

Jim Walther
.....

Name

Please fill out ballot and return by April 15, 1990 to:

Darcie Fohrman
P.O. Box 892
Monterey, CA 93940

We are interested in hearing your comments about NAME, please use this space to let us know your thoughts.

Pretty small space, huh? Add more sheets if you want

Exhibitionist Submission Deadline

The submission deadline for the next issue of *Exhibitionist* is July 15, 1990 for an August 1990 distribution. Please send your articles, job postings, notices, technical information, or other materials to Louise DeMars (see Officers listing)

The Committees Report *continues*

AAM Council Meeting Report

The AAM Council met in Washington on January 12 and 13 of this year. NAME was represented by Louise DeMars, as President of a standing professional committee, and by Councilors-at-Large George Gardner and Sing Hanson. If we NAME members come out in numbers to vote for our petition candidates for Councilor-at-Large, we may be represented by one more person by the meeting in Chicago in May. Come on, folks, get out the vote!

Dates to remember:

AAM 1990 - Chicago - May 9-13

AAM 1991 - Denver - May 19-23

AAM 1992 - Baltimore - April 25-29

AAM staff are currently investigating sites for AAM 1993 and 1994, with an eye toward regional equity and possible locations on the West coast and in the southwest.

Membership in AAM can provide your institution with significant savings through the Association's Vendor Provided Member Benefits program. Call AAM for details on any of these opportunities:

1. The AAM Mastercard program - approximately 400 accounts already.
2. Purolator Courier Discount Program - 200 accounts active currently.
3. North American Van Lines Shipping Program
4. Directors and Officers Liability Insurance.
5. Telecommunications Cooperative Network - TCN has been selected to develop this network, offering discounts on long distance telephone service and discussing such computer-based systems as electronic post offices and bulletin boards.
6. Health and Life Insurance - 190 institutions have requested information and approximately \$250,000 of coverage is in force.
7. Fax machines - 10 machines sold to date.
8. The 1990 *Official Museum Directory*, available to members at a reduced price of \$97 and con-

taining several new sections.

The AAM Task Force on Museum Education, chaired by Bonnie Pitman Gelles of the University Art Museum, Berkeley, held its first meeting in September. Ms. Pitman Gelles gave the Council an interim report; a white paper with action steps and budget implications is expected in May, 1990. The 124-member council will continue the work begun in "Museums for a New Century," intending to focus on education, not educators; learning, not teaching. They are working under the basic assumptions that educational mission is central to the work of museums, that our collections play an important role in serving our public, and that educational reform is a national agenda item motivated by the declining quality of our schools. Recurring themes in the work of the Task Force are multiculturalism, training (of staff, trustees, etc.), scholarly research (in learning theory, evaluation, audience studies, etc.), new technologies utilized to serve the broadest number of publics, and collaborations of many sorts. Stand-by for a new snapshot of where this profession stands and new windows on the educational reforms going on in it.

Another upcoming final report of national interest will be that of the Ethics Task Force, chaired by Bob MacDonald, which will propose a set of canons, principles, and standards for practice, in that order, for the business of the profession, as well as implementation procedures including those for enforcement. The Chicago meeting promises to be a meaty one.

Keep your eyes open for more news about legislation relating to the repatriation of Native American materials from museum collections. Three separate pieces of legislation, the most important of which is Senator Daniel Inouye's "Native American Repatriation and Cultural Patrimony Act," are likely to be considered early in the next session of Congress.

Senator Inouye's bill closely tracks the repatriation provisions of The National American Indian Museum Act of November 1989, which transfers the Museum of the American Indian-Heye Foundation to the Smithsonian Institution and will establish

NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
FOR
MUSEUM
EXHIBITION

NAME **EVENTS** AND **PROGRAMS**

A A M
ANNUAL
MEETING
CHICAGO
1990

Wednesday, May 9

Thursday, May 10

Valentine's Day Dinner Party

On May 9, 1990, the AAM Kickoff Dinner will be held from 7:00–10:00 pm at Sauer's Restaurant on the notorious South Side of Chicago. Fabulous food, wine, entertainment, and transportation from the Hilton Towers is included in the charge of \$22/ person.

So wear your flapper dress or a straw boater; sip wine from tea-cups; enjoy the Chicago-style jazz band; tuck a tommy gun under your arm; and join the fun!



Beyond Gardner and McCarthy: From Theory to Models

9:00–10:15 am

Chair: Nikki Black, Exhibits Planning Director, The Children's Museum, Indianapolis, IN

We hear much about learning theories, but little about models developed from those theories that are applicable to informal learning environments. Yet as

Choosing and Using Exhibit Techniques: A Case Study

9:00–10:15 am

Chair: Michael Spöck, Director, Public Programs Division, the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, IL

To create a three-dimensional learning experience, exhibit planners may choose from many display techniques. Life-size habitats, miniature dioramas, touchable replicas, and working models all have played time-honored roles in museum exhibits, as have real artifacts and specimens, photographs, labels, diagrams, and maps. This session provides a case study of the techniques used in a large natural history and anthropology exhibit about the Pacific Islands. Aspects of choosing and using

Handouts and hands-on samples of materials included. Your input will be digested into a NAME newsletter article.

Getting It Drawn and Built in Chicago

Marketplace of Ideas

3:00–5:00 pm

Chair: James W. Volkert, Chief of Exhibitions and Publications, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

This session focuses on the specific parts of the exhibition process and demonstrates, by example, the translating of ideas into reality. Topics include planning for the exhibition process, working through design issues, solving installation problems, and evaluation. The session in-

NAME - SPONSORED

museums work to forge stronger partnerships with visitors, staff members have greater need for such models. Although Bernice McCarthy's "learning styles" model is becoming well known to museum professionals, there are other models that can be beneficial in exhibit and program development. These include a cooperative learning model designed for heterogeneous and multigenerational groups (our typical non-school visitor groups), an apprenticeship model appropriate for in-depth learning, and an integrated learning model that provides the structure needed to develop interdisciplinary learning experiences.

Sponsored by AAM Education Committee, AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME), and Association of Youth Museums.

exhibit techniques are assessed as panelists discuss how exhibit planners choose techniques. Is there a logical relationship between specific techniques and subject matter? What role does evaluation play in selecting exhibit methods?

AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME) Issues Luncheon—From Soup to Nuts to Bolts

12:00–1:15 pm

Chair: Darcie Fohrman
Open to all AAM delegates
\$16.00

"Materials, Methods, and Problems of Producing Exhibit Graphics"

Chew on the issues in roundtable discussions and ingest new ideas from a panel of exhibit graphic designers and fabricators—Hannah Jennings, Brookfield Zoo; Steven Meyer, Proto Productions Inc.; and Beverly Serrell, Serrell & Associates.

cludes examples in the Chicago area and is subdivided into two segments. The first segment introduces and gives an overview of the project as it relates to a specific topic; the second brings together staff members from each institution to discuss informally and demonstrate specific solutions and procedures.

Sponsored by AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME)

AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME) Events and Meetings

Executive Board Meeting I

Wednesday, May 9
12:30–5:00 pm

Dinner

Wednesday, May 9
7:00–10:00 pm

Issues Luncheon

Thursday, May 10
12:00 noon–1:15 pm

Business Meeting

Friday, May 11
7:30–8:45 am

Executive Board Meeting II

Sunday, May 13
12:00 noon–1:15 pm



**Exhibit Design Philosophy:
Conflict and Conformity**

9:00-10:15 am

Chair: Robert Bullock, Exhibit Designer, The Yale Peabody Museum, New Haven, CT

What aspects of the design process are affected by a respective philosophy? How is design integrity influenced by museum mission philosophy? Is an arche-type design philosophy develop-

lections from a striking direction—increasing visitor perceptions and enriching the community at large. Panelists address the politics, theory, and practicality of exhibitry made accessible and interactive.

Sponsored by the AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME)

**Exhibition Planner:
New Kid on the Block**

1:30-2:45 pm

Chair: Jane Higgins Bedno, Professor, Design Studies, Department of Art, Memphis State University, Memphis, TN

As exhibition presentations shift from artifacts to content and the traditional leadership role of the curator shifts to the team approach, a new job description is being written. It's the exhibitions

of any successful exhibition. But all too often, it is the last component of the planning process. Instead of an active ingredient, design becomes only a means of facilitating an idea. The result can be exhibitions that lack the necessary creativity and spark to engage visitors. As museum-goers become accustomed to the exciting offerings of everyday life—video, television, department store displays, glossy magazines—we must explore the ways in which innovative design can engage visitors and even draw new audiences to a museum. Using a slide format, three designers discuss their innovative treatment of three exhibitions: in an urban history museum, a contemporary art museum, and a history museum. In dealing with dif-

pose of evaluating prototypes of costly interpretive exhibits. As a result, the staff resolved disputes about interpretive ideas and now addresses problems that had not been anticipated. Now, evaluation is valued by the planning team and used in other interpretive program planning as well. Sponsored by AAM Visitor Research and Evaluation Committee and AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME)

**Computer-Aided Design
in Action**

3:00-5:00 pm (off site)

Chair: Tamra Carboni, Director of Public Programs, Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans, LA

In developing architectural designs, the Chicago firm of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill uses an

EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

ing nationally? This session examines such questions. A collection-oriented philosophy and a visitor-oriented philosophy are two distinct views that shape the designer's conceptual approach—and ultimately the visitor's response to exhibited material.

Sponsored by AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME)

**Interactive Exhibits
for Disabled Visitors**

1:30-2:45 pm

Chair: Robert Bullock, Exhibit Designer, The Yale Peabody Museum, New Haven, CT

In an age when communities are paying close attention to minority concerns, disabled museum visitors are valued patrons. Interactive exhibits and timely programs engage these visitors and others as well. Museums that make a concentrated effort to plan interactivity often interpret col-

planner, the new kid on the block. It's a position recently created and perhaps best exemplified by the new public programs division at the Field Museum, where seven exhibition planners (only one a former curator) are in the process of creating entirely new cross-disciplinary content exhibitions, replacing both the traditional curator-driven process and the relatively new team system. Other institutions also are shifting their priorities. This session investigates the phenomenon and provides a forum for discussion. Sponsored by the AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME) and the AAM Curators Committee.

**Engaging the Visitor:
Innovative Exhibition Design**

3:00-4:15 pm

Chair: Ellen Marie Snyder-Grenier, Chief Curator, Brooklyn Historical Society, Brooklyn, NY
Good design is an integral part

ferent objects, scale, scope, and subject matter, each of these installations challenges traditional ways of displaying objects and ideas.

Sponsored by AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME)

**Looking Ahead:
Integrating Evaluation into
Public Programming**

3:00-4:15 pm

Chair: Barbara Birney, Visitor Research and Evaluator, Brookfield, IL

This session emphasizes how formative evaluation can aid in planning innovative interpretive exhibits, and how the evaluation mitigates staff dissent and biases that can have a negative impact on the planning process. At the Brookfield Zoo, the independent design firm brought in outside specialists in visitor studies and convinced the zoo to request state monies for the pur-

advanced computer-aided design system. This leading-edge technology has exciting implications for museum use in exhibit design, as well as in construction and renovation projects. Through an off-site demonstration at the firm's headquarters, delegates who attend this session will experience first-hand an application of this new technology.

Sponsored by AAM Media and Technology Committee (formerly the NonPrint Media Committee) and AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME)



Critiquing Museum Exhibitions: Who Determines What's Good

9:00-10:15 am

Chair: Kathleen McLean, Director of Exhibits, Maryland Science Center, Baltimore, MD

What makes a good exhibition? Museum professionals often disagree on the criteria necessary to evaluate the quality of an exhibition. What may be an

involves input from evaluators at varying stages—including conceptualization, prototype development, and final products. This session presents three approaches to integrating evaluation into exhibit development. Topics to be discussed include front-end research to assist the team in integrating visitor perspectives into the conceptual structure of the exhibit at a history museum; evaluation to assist in developing exhibit prototypes for interactive mineralogy exhibits at natural history museums; and implementation of prototyping in the interpretive planning of an aquarium.

Sponsored by AAM Visitor Research and Evaluation Committee and AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME)

Where Exhibit and Audience Meet: Social and Design Factors

1:30-2:45 pm

Chair: D.D. Hilke, Audience Research Coordinator, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Museum professionals may produce the structured environments we call "exhibits", but we do not directly generate exhibit experiences. That experience is affected both by the structure we present and by the nature of the visitors. In this session, three scholars report research that illuminates some of the structural and social factors that affect exhibit experiences. Their studies span the museum world from art museums, history museums,

ments—to point out pitfalls as well as potential advantages. Panelists share information on theories by which to approach the consideration of a computer system; discuss training, annual maintenance, and supply costs; contrast the CAD process with the noncomputer design process; and offer information on a variety of hardware and software applications.

Sponsored by AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME) and the AAM Media and Technology Committee (formerly the Non-Print Media Committee)

EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

award-winning exhibition from a design standpoint may be considered highly unsuccessful from a communicator's perspective. Yet there are overlapping areas that are not clearly defined. This session attempts to engage professionals from different disciplines and perspectives in a discourse on the criteria for developing "good" exhibitions.

Sponsored by AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME), AAM Visitor Research and Evaluation Committee and AAM Curators Committee

Approaches for Using Evaluation in Exhibit Development

9:00-10:15 am

Chair: Minda Borun, Programs Director, Franklin Institute Science Museum, Philadelphia, PA

Evaluation is being used increasingly by museums to improve the quality of exhibits. This

The Balancing Act: Coping with Stress in the Museum Environment

1:30-2:45 pm

Chair: Raylene Decatur, Director of Exhibits, Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, PA

Behind the hype of job stress and stress management are some important concepts to consider. How do we define a healthy workplace? Is it our only expectation that it be free of threats to physical health? Resources—both money and personnel—often are in short supply, and museum people are constantly beset with challenges ranging from new board members to new buildings to new programs to new regulations. This session explores not only the sources of stress, but also our reactions to these stimuli.

Sponsored by AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME)

and children's museums to zoos. Each presentation includes practical suggestions for enhancing visitor experiences.

Sponsored by AAM Visitor Research and Evaluation Committee, AAM Committee on Exhibition (NAME), and Association of Youth Museums

Old Dogs Must Learn New Tricks:

Computer Assisted Design

3:15-4:30 pm

Chair: Michael Pierce, Curator of Exhibits, Anniston Museum of Natural History, Anniston, AL

Computer assisted design (CAD) is now making inroads into the area of museum design in publications and exhibits. Three panelists represent the capabilities of small, medium, and large museums in exploiting the computer medium. They go beyond demonstration to share their frustrations and advance-

Don't forget to visit the NAME Booth in the Exhibit Hall to see the slide video Exhibitions '90.



Photos courtesy of the Chicago Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Chicago Skyline

Water Tower Pumping Station, Michigan Avenue

First National Bank of Chicago's Plaza

Buckingham Fountain and Amoco Oil Building

All photos by Ron Schramm / Chicago Convention and Visitor's Bureau

a process for inventory and repatriation of Native American human remains and funerary objects in the Smithsonian collections. The Inouye bill is important because it addresses repatriation of objects from Native American and Native Hawaiian collections in private museums that receive federal funds.

A year ago, AAM Council adopted a resolution of support for a National Dialogue on Native American-Museum Relations, a project headed by Michael J. Fox, then Director of the Heard Museum. Dialogue members, both Native American and non-Native American, have met several times and are in the process of concluding their work. They hope to be able to send a position paper to Washington prior to legislative consideration.

In a report to the Council, they stressed that they think repatriation issues need not be win/lose situations for either Native Americans or museums. Positive negotiations are possible, with both sides working in mutual respect for each other, reported Martin Sullivan, whose institution has recently returned wampum belts that were part of the tribal patrimony of Native Americans in New York State. One important benefit of the Dialogue is that representatives from Senator Inouye's office have acted as observers to the process and will be much more knowledgeable about the position of museums when the legislation is considered.

Sing Hanson

AAM Councilor-at-Large

AAM Council May Become "Board of Directors"

Members of the AAM Council may be called "Directors" of the organization if a motion proposed at the January, 1990, meeting in Washington is approved. This was a minor item on the agenda, but is typical of the kind of issues in which the attendees became involved.

Other, more pressing, issues were debated, including the questions of repatriation and of the dues structure within AAM. Pending legislation on the repatriation of Native American artifacts and human remains will affect museums with extensive

Native American collections in a major way. Several changes in the AAM dues structure were suggested. For example, the category of "Self-employed individual (for profit)" lists dues of \$65.00; a debate revolved around the question of whether this should be reduced to the "Individual member—student or retiree" level of \$25.00.

Involvement with AAM Council means that we become aware of issues as they are raised by the AAM Executive Committee as well as by other committees. We can then react or offer an improved course of action that we feel may offer a better solution.

Members can become more involved, first, by joining AAM if they are not already members and if they can afford it. Second, we can attempt to place more NAME members on the Council by any of several methods. Regional representatives as well as affiliates, although non-voting members, can participate in discussions of issues, pro or con. We can attempt to elect people through the petition process as well as by submitting names to the nominating committee for consideration. A new proposal to reconstitute the nominating committee would include one member representing the Standing Professional Committees. This year's nominations represent a broader cross-section of candidates both geographically and by discipline. I urge NAME members to involve themselves in the activities of our parent organization. Incidentally, AAM has a membership of about 10,600; NAME membership currently numbers about 1300! Your voice can make a difference!

George Gardner

AAM Councilor-at-Large

Now is the time to start thinking about programs for AAM 1991 in Denver. On the next page is a NAME-sponsored Program Proposal form. The propoosal deadline is July 1, 1990

PROPOSAL DEADLINE JULY 1, 1990

PROGRAM PROPOSAL
SPONSORED BY N A M E
1991 AAM ANNUAL MEETING
MAY 19-23,1991
DENVER, COLORADO



SESSION TITLE _____

NAME OF CHAIR _____

TITLE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY & STATE _____

TELEPHONE _____

DATE _____

AUDIENCE TO WHICH PROGRAM IS DIRECTED:
SIZE OF MUSEUM: SM ____ MED ____ LG ____
CAREER LEVEL: BEGIN _ MID ____ ADVAN ____

DESCRIPTION: (Please include purpose of presentation, major points to be made, and format, i.e. lecture, film, video, slide.)

SESSION GOALS:

PARTICIPANTS: (Name, title, mailing address & telephone number. Indicate what each participant will contribute to session.)

SPONSORED BY AAM COMMITTEE ON EXHIBITION (N A M E)

PLEASE RETURN TO JIM VOLKERT, N A M E PROGRAM CHAIR
 NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
 SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
 WASHINGTON, D C 20560
 202 357 2326

On the Technical Side

Paints: An Introduction

Paint is ubiquitous—we see it in every aspect of the built environment. We find it covering our furniture, in our offices, on our cars and almost everywhere else we look. Color has been used by human beings for as long as they have been human beings. You almost could define mankind as the color-using animal. Our oldest ancestors did not know much about making paint. They just smeared a little clay or berry juice on the object they wanted to color.

Eventually people learned that they could make colors stick longer if they mixed them with some kind of medium that would adhere to any surface. Some of the earliest paints probably were made by grinding natural earth colors into tree sap. Modern paints appeared after people began to cultivate flax. The oil that can be pressed out of flax seeds makes a very good paint medium.

Crude paints are associated with the earliest civilizations. By the late Middle Ages, painters had access to a full-range of painting materials that essentially were modern. The last century has witnessed remarkable changes in paints. Starting with the permanent colors developed through organic chemistry during the middle of the 19th century, there have been tremendous changes in all aspects of painting materials.

Changes in paint materials force us to be cautious about how we use paints today. Many modern-style paints are not suitable for the restoration of earlier painted surfaces. Similarly, many early-style paints are not appropriate for modern applications. You would not select an epoxy paint to restore an antique marbled chest, for example, nor would you use a lead-based oil paint to cover exhibit panels in a museum gallery.

PAINT MATERIALS

Dictionaries define paint as a dispersion of solid pigment in liquid vehicle. They usually add that paint has a decorative purpose as well as a protective

function. The mixture of pigment and vehicle creates a unique material that is quite different from its constituent ingredients. Pigment applied to a surface would not stick for long by itself. A vehicle applied to a surface has no color, is transparent and has limited life as sunlight passing down through it causes it to decay. When a pigment is mixed into a vehicle, however, the vehicle holds the pigment in place. At the same time, the pigment blocks sunlight from penetrating into the paint film to break down the vehicle.

Pigments

Pigment imparts color to a paint. Generally, pigment is an opaque, insoluble, dry powder that is mixed mechanically with a vehicle to make a paint. The fact that a pigment does not go into solution, creates many problems in itself. The force of gravity is relentless and it acts on any particle, no matter how small. When a pigment is mixed into a vehicle to make a paint ready for application to a surface, gravity tries to pull the pigment down to the bottom of the container.

In older times, pigment could not be ground small enough to remain suspended in a paint for long. So painters would mix only what they needed as they did their work. One of the stumbling blocks to the preparation and distribution of paints in cans was the lack of a grinding technology that could create a particle of pigment small enough to remain in suspension in spite of gravity. The technical name for a particle of this size is a *colloid*. A dispersion of a colloid in a liquid is called a *colloidal suspension*.

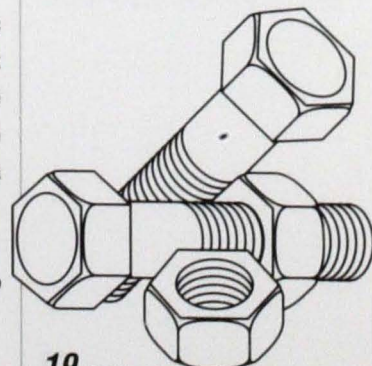
Vehicles

A *vehicle* is the liquid material into which pigments are mixed. Traditionally, vehicles were made from naturally-occurring *oils, resins, gums, animal proteins* and *solvents*. Today, many synthetic products are added to them as well. Vehicles start out as a liquid but end up as a solid. They need to be liquid to be brushed or sprayed onto a surface. Then they change—and change relatively rapidly—into a solid to form a dry, hard paint film.

Oils

Generally, oils are non-drying liquids that help

continues next page



dried paint films retain some flexibility. Without them, a dried paint film would become brittle and break easily when it was hit or bent. In modern plastic paints, *plasticizers* are often used instead of oils to achieve the same purpose.

Resins

Resins are difficult to understand for dictionaries tend to define them as two distinct categories of material. First, they may be any one of a number of natural, solid or semi-solid substances derived from plants and used to make paints and other related materials. Second, they may be synthetic materials used to produce plastics. It is the resin part of the vehicle that solidifies to hold the pigment and the paint film in place. Today, paints utilize both natural and synthetic resins.

There are a number of processes by which resins solidify and dry. One is a very complicated process called *polymerization*. When polymerization occurs, short molecules grow into long molecules. This growth process takes place in different ways. Longer molecules can be formed as the paint film takes up oxygen from the atmosphere. Or, longer molecules can be formed as a chemical reaction when two different liquids are mixed together. Other types of resins solidify as the solvent used to dissolve them evaporates and the resin reconstitutes itself as a solid.

Solvents

The dictionary describes a solvent as a liquid capable of dissolving another material. That is just what solvents do in paints, although different paints use different solvents in different ways. Solvents are usually *volatile* fluids that evaporate readily. Some paints, however, use plain *water* as a solvent. Some of the new, exotic paints may contain solvents that are extremely dangerous to people and artifacts. Always read the label for every paint product to determine if it contains any materials that pose a health hazard to people or might damage artifacts.

Paints and the Law

The difficulty with paints is that there is an

exception for every rule. If you look long enough and hard enough, you will find paints that combine in a single product materials from many different types of paints. Read the labels affixed to all painting materials very carefully. Federal law requires paint manufacturers to list the ingredients of, hazards from, and precautions for use of their materials.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires paint manufacturers to prepare *Material Safety Data Sheets* (MSDS) for their products. As a purchaser of paints, you can request an MSDS at the time of purchase. The manufacturer is required to furnish distributors of their products with MSDSs. In turn the distributors must pass them along to the people from whom you buy paints. Although the manufacturer is not required to make MSDSs available directly to you, if you can't get them anywhere else, give them a call.

Most of the pertinent information about a paint is available on the label. The MSDSs, however, go into greater technical detail. If your organization operates a paint shop, or an area where paints are stored and utilized on an ongoing basis, you are required by OSHA to have the pertinent MSDSs available and to train the staff that uses the paints in the proper interpretation of the data sheets.

Types of Paint

Water-Based Paints

Distemper Paints

Distemper paints are made with a water soluble animal protein or binder, such as *casein* (a milk derivative) or *isinglass* (made from fish bladders). These materials are essentially glue-like substances that dissolve in water and then reform themselves around pigment particles as the water solvent evaporates.

Except for artist's tempera or poster paints, this type of paint finds limited application today. We have all heard a lot about the buttermilk and brick dust furniture paints of an earlier period of American history, but there is little on the market like that now.

Latex Paints

The water-based paint that we use commonly today is based on *latex*, a naturally-occurring rubber product. In a latex paint, colored rubber particles are

Are you moving?

If you are moving,

please remember to

send us your new

address. Because if

we can't find you, we

can't send you your

NAME material.

disbursed throughout the vehicle in the form of an *emulsion*. An emulsion is similar to the already-described colloidal suspension except that its particles are liquid instead of solid.

Once a latex paint is spread on a surface, the water evaporates leaving the pigment and latex emulsion behind to dry and form a permanent paint film. Once the latex has dried, it cannot be redissolved by water.

Lacquers

Lacquer paints consist of pigments dispersed in a vehicle made of resins dissolved in alcohol. Generally, lacquers were made of transparent resins and used to form a highly-polished surface on expensive furniture. They were little used for making paints. Today, in contrast to past practice, lacquers are widely used for primers and for many different kinds of paints.

There are some very exotic lacquers and plastic paints that behave like lacquers on the market today. These paints may use very volatile and dangerous chemicals for solvents instead of or in addition to plain alcohol.

Resin Paints

Oil Resin Paints

Traditionally, the most important component of a paint vehicle was linseed oil, or the oil expressed from flax seeds. The major difference between an oil and a resin is that the former stays liquid when exposed to the air while the latter solidifies to form a dry, hard film. A thin coat of linseed oil, when exposed to the air, will eventually polymerize and dry, but it takes a long time. To hasten the drying of linseed oil used in paints, it was heated with other materials that enhanced its ability to polymerize. Boiled linseed oil flows like an oil but dries like a resin.

The first paint to come into widespread use for furniture and buildings was the traditional *oil* paint made of white lead ground into a vehicle made of boiled linseed oil. The longevity and weather-resisting qualities of this traditional paint have proved difficult to replace. The lead base of these paints has made them illegal for many applications. Some states still allow them to be sold as special materials

for outdoor signs, however.

Many of the materials used in a traditional oil paint have been replaced in recent years. Boiled linseed oil has given way to a host of synthetic products. Turpentine, which used to be distilled from pine pitch, has largely been superseded by the cheaper *paint thinner* or *mineral spirits* distilled from petroleum products.

Plastic Resin Paints

Plastics, which are made of synthetic resins, have come to the forefront as painting materials in recent years. They are durable and colorful, but also may contain dangerous materials. Many paints incorporate alkyd, urethane and acrylic resins to improve adhesion and weathering. Generally, these paints dry by means of the polymerization process.

Also, there is a range of new plastic paints based on what are called two-part systems. Polyester, epoxy, and some urethane paints are made in two-part systems that cause the material to polymerize and form a solid film when mixed together. The catalysts employed to create the chemical change from liquid to solid may be extremely dangerous and hazardous materials. These two-part paints do not depend upon the presence of atmospheric oxygen to dry.

HEALTH AND CONSERVATION ISSUES

Paint materials can hurt people and damage artifacts in many ways. As liquids they can be accidentally ingested or spilled. Dangerous chemicals can enter the body directly through the skin or permanently stain a valuable artifact. Paint dust, if any sanding occurs, can be breathed in by people working without proper safety equipment. And, some paint dust may contain active toxic chemicals that were trapped in the paint film.

A number of the materials utilized to make pigments in the past were toxic to varying degrees. The classic case is paint made from lead pigment. Lead poisoning among painters was so common that the disease came to be known as *painter's colic*. Lead paints have been banned from most uses today to prevent them from being applied in places where paint film fragments can be ingested by children.

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SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

There are a number of standard works that provide good technical information about paints. The few listed here are only examples of the many titles in this area. For further information consult your local technical library.

- Rutherford J. Gettens and George L. Stout. *Painting Materials; a Short Encyclopedia*. New York: Dover Publications, 1966. 333 pages, bibliography. Reprint of the 1942 edition.
- Ralph Mayer. *The Artist's Handbook of Materials and Techniques*. New York: Viking Press, 1981. 733 pages, index, bibliography. (1982 edition revised and updated).
- Michael McCann. *Health Hazards Manual for Artists*. New York: Nick Lyons Books, 1985. 104 pages, index, bibliography.
- Theodore Z. Penn. "Decorative and Protective Finishes, 1750-1850: Materials, Process, and Craft," *APT Bulletin*, vXVI, n1 (1984). Pages 2-45, bibliography.
- Steven L. Saitzyk. *Art Hardware: a Definitive Guide to Artists' Materials*. New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1987. 331 pages, index, bibliography.
- Guy E. Weismantel (editor). *Paint Handbook*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1981. References listed at end of each chapter, index.

Vapors are another source of danger to people and objects. We all are aware of the dangers of breathing in toluene, a solvent in some plastic paints, but we need to think more about the long term effects of low-level paint vapors inside artifact cases.

The wet paint signs may be taken down in a day or two, but a paint film is not 100% dry for a very long time. How long should we wait between the application of a paint to the inside of a case and the installation of artifacts in that case? Good question—but the answers are not readily available. A number of studies about this question are underway today. Reliable information should be available soon.

For the present, the rule of thumb is, *if you can smell the paint, it is not dry*. And, remember, there is a great difference between the smell of a paint on a gallery wall where air circulates around it and the smell of a paint inside a closed display case where the air is stagnant. After you have painted the inside of an artifact case and you think it is dry, close it up for a few days. If you still smell paint when you reopen it, it is not yet ready.

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

Paints are very complex and the above discussion of their composition and use barely scratches the surface. These brief remarks are offered as a doorway into a difficult subject and as a stimulus to further discussion about their application in exhibits. Please send any additions or corrections for improving this article to the author at Post Office Box 45, Oak Bluffs, MA 02557.

This article, improved by your additions and corrections, will appear in a book about exhibit materials now being compiled by Robert J. Francis, Technical Editor of the *Exhibitionist*, and Theodore Z. Penn. If you have any ideas about articles to introduce a category of exhibit materials such as plywood, adhesives, fasteners, photographic products, etc., please write to Bob Francis or Ted Penn and we will help you get underway.

Theodore Z. Penn

New England Region Co-Representative

Shade the Sun: Museums Turn to Window Shading to Prevent Sun Damage to Valuable Artwork

The East and West buildings of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. needed it. So did the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, and the Fogg Museum at Harvard University.

Each of these museums, and a number of others, have found that their valuable artworks were being threatened by ultra-violet light and high ambient light levels from unfiltered sun rays. The solution, they found, was to install window film or louvered screens or fabric screens on their windows.

The result? "We now have the light levels and atmosphere we were hoping for," said J. Franklin Mowery, head conservator at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, after having fabric screens installed in the library's Great Hall. The hall features an exhibition area where rare books, manuscripts, and artwork are displayed.

Folger had eighty-one screens installed on nine windows that measured 6'x18', "a challenging task," according to Mowery. Folger contracted with Mid-Atlantic Service and Supply Corp., a Silver Spring, MD firm, to build and install the screens.

Mid-Atlantic, in the window treatment business since 1973, had become familiar with museum projects in the early 1980's, beginning with the East Wing of the National Gallery of Art in 1982. Since then, the company has completed window treatment projects for 17 museums, and has been recognized as the leader in this highly specialized field.

"We have been fortunate, really," said Mid-Atlantic founder and president Wayne Staley. "We have found a niche for ourselves. Every museum has particular requirements that make each job a unique challenge. We custom design every project."

Aside from reducing damaging ultra-violet radiation, museums find screens and films useful to control over-heating and light intensity, and to enhance visibility and appearance. Recently, Mid-Atlantic has been using its custom design approach to develop ways to better illuminate display cases.

Other Mid-Atlantic clients include the National



Photo by Kathleen Duckalew, National Gallery of Art

Air and Space Museum; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Chrysler Museum; and the Renwick Gallery and American Museum of American Art (both of the Smithsonian Institution). Most recently, Mid-Atlantic has been contracted by the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History to install film and fabric screens for its Children's Learning Center and Historical Society building.

Building Environmentally Safe Display Cases

We all know the importance of environmental control in the museum. And chances are no matter how much effort is made to maintain temperature and humidity at acceptable levels, there are still occasional fluctuations, especially when the museum is busy with visitors. But we all do our best to preserve the works in our collections, and deal with the variables we can control.

At the Dallas Museum of Art, we are currently engaged in the installation of an architecture exhibit ("Architecture and Its Image," organized by the

Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal). This exhibit is mostly works on paper and, because of their sensitivity, the lender established strict guidelines, such as low light levels, temperature and humidity control, and cases that do not emit harmful fumes (e.g., formaldehyde, strong acids, or paint fumes).

Our exhibition schedule does not allow us time to wait for cases to off-gas chemicals after painting or sealing with urethane. Nor does our budget allow for expensive materials like stainless steel. Sound familiar? After getting samples of foils and prices of metal liners, etc., I found a product that is reasonably priced, locally available, and cleaner than any affordably priced product in its class. The product is called MEDEX, and is manufactured by the Medite Corporation of Medford, Oregon. MEDEX is a medium-density fiberboard that was originally de-

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Table case with art installed and plexiglass on case

signed for exterior uses, such as road signs. The reason it is waterproof is that a polyurea resin matrix is used to bond the sheet, instead of ureaformaldehyde resin. This results in very low emission rates; any emissions come from the natural wood itself. We tested it here using Carusorb, a product that changes color when it absorbs chemical fumes, and the results were impressive.

MEDEX, like MDF, is heavier than plywood; this is a consideration if you are build-

ing big cases that you will have to move. Machining is easy, and, like MDF, MEDEX is smooth and finishes well. The cost is comparable to cabinet maple plywood, possibly cheaper in some areas.

Though MEDEX seems to be the answer to

the inside with a paper-backed rayon bookbinding cloth (specified by the exhibition organizers). These cases are not completely sealed; their Plexiglas covers sit in a groove, and no sealer has been applied. Therefore, the case environment is affected slightly by the gallery environment.

Inside the cases, we place Arten gel beads and silica gel beads in trays under a false bottom that has a 1/4" space on all four sides. Arten gel acts as a buffer to stabilize the humidity at a desired level. If the relative humidity in the gallery changes, the cases will keep the level of humidity they had when they were closed. Of course, if the humidity fluctuates often, either silica gel or a dampened material may have to be placed in the cases to return them to a desired level of humidity. Arten gel is reusable and is available nationwide.

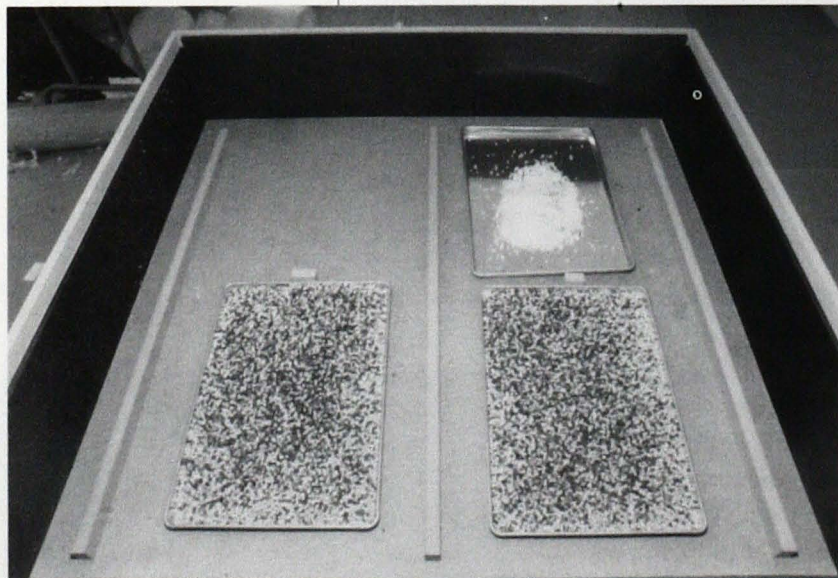
I am sure that more research can be done in this area. The people that I have talked to while planning to build these cases have been a great help, and I hope that by sharing this information with you I have perhaps helped you in turn. If you have any questions on what I have covered in this brief article, please feel free to call any of the following people: Phil Angell, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX 75201, 214 922 1275; Jeff Baker, The Medite Corporation, P.O. Box 4040, Medford, OR 97501, 503 779 9596; Doug Adams, Conservation Materials Ltd., P.O. Box 2884, Sparks, NE 89431, 702 331 0582.

Phil Angell

Head Carpenter, Dallas Museum of Art



Case open, no art installed



Same view as above with false bottom removed to show Arten gel and silica gel

some of the problems that come up in building cases, it is a wood product and does have a mild acidity (pH approx. 5.5), though less than the woods we tested in our shop—woods we normally use to build cases. This is still a problem when art is in a sealed case for a long time. The cases we built here are modeled after the cases of the organizers, which are made of stainless steel. Ours are made of MEDEX, painted on the outside only, and lined on

Projects & Programs

NAME Bibliography Bounces Back

After months in the doldrums, we are breezing toward completing research for the annotated bibliography on museum exhibitions. Sandra Nath, a museum registrar in the San Francisco Bay Area, is helping us to organize (leave it to a registrar) the volumes of material and hastily-jotted notes members have sent us over the past two years.

We are now looking for people to annotate specific references. Of all the books you have in your own personal exhibits libraries, which ones make you the most passionate? Are you willing to describe that passion to others? We are looking for a few good writers who can review those seminal books and articles that helped them in their search for professionalism. (We know you're out there.) Write to me at 1833 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA 94703 or call 415 649 8837.

Kathy McLean

Special Projects Coordinator

Oops!

O.K., O.K., so we're not perfect. I never said that we were. Well, maybe I implied it once or twice, but this proves that we're not...perfect, that is.

We messed up on the "Call for SlideVideo" form printed in the Winter 1990 issue of the *Exhibitionist*. And, because the April 4 deadline has passed, the corrected one is not reprinted in this issue. All NAME members got a corrected form in a separate mailing. I hope everyone got his or her slides or videos to Don Hughes with no trouble.

Louise L. DeMars

NAME Video Wins Oscar...

Well, not exactly, but at the rate we're going, who knows? This year we did a special mailing to advertise the "Exhibitions 89" video, and the response has been astounding. We have quadrupled

last year's orders, and the upstate returns are still rolling in. As for those of you who have not yet purchased your copies, what are you waiting for? How embarrassing to be the last kid on your block to have one...

If you decide that it's time to fill in the gaps in your library, please note that despite the order form, the 1986 tape is not available.

Stuart Parnes

Operating Manual Nears Completion

An operations manual setting forth in a single document the purposes, standards, and organizational structure of NAME is now in its final stage of development. The *Operating Manual*, which includes job descriptions for each position on the NAME Executive Board, is designed to be passed along to each new incoming Board to insure a smooth transition and to maintain the organizational structure of NAME.

Development of the manual has been a valuable exercise for all concerned and might be viewed as a complementary activity to the long-range planning now underway for the organization. Job descriptions were written by NAME President Louise DeMars and then forwarded to the respective Board members for comments or suggestions. In turn, each Board member was asked to draw up a list of recurring duties related to his or her position on the Board. These timetables went to DeMars for study and, in some cases, modification, and then back to the Board member for a final review. The third draft of the manual should be complete by mid-February and the entire document ready for review by NAME officers.

Mary Hunter Demos

Exhibitionist Assistant

NAME is planning an advanced exhibit professional retreat as a 1991 pre-AAM meeting event in Colorado. If you are interested in attending this please send me your comments.

Are you interested in attending an advanced exhibit professional retreat?

How many days should this retreat be?

What format would you prefer for this retreat?

Is there a particular exhibit professional you would like to hear speak?

What issues would you like to see addressed?

Would you like one day of "show and tell"?

Would you like structured presentations or informal discussions?

Other:

I am interested in attending the advanced exhibit professional retreat. Please put me on the mailing list.

Name

Address

Phone

Please send your responses to
**Darcie Fohrman, P.O. Box 892,
Monterey, CA 93940**

National Association for Museum Exhibition (NAME)
Public Relations Committee
Visitor Research & Evaluation Committee
Invite you to join us for

A Saint Valentines Day Dinner Party

May 9, 1990

AAM Kickoff Dinner
7-10pm

Sauer's Restaurant on the Notorious South Side of Chicago

Fabulous food, wine, entertainment
and transportation from Hilton Towers included
\$22 per person

So wear your flapper dress or a straw boater
Sip wine from teacups
Enjoy the Chicago style jazz band
Tuck a tommy gun under your arm....

....and join the fun.



Check #4 on the AAM Registration Form

Membership

Membership Update

As of February 28, 1990 NAME has 1337 members. The current membership breakdown is listed below by region and category.

Mid-Atlantic 319 • Midwest 187 • Mountain-Plains 87 • New England 181 • Southeast 233 • Western 302 • International 28

In-house 918 • Independent 311 • Both 4 • Library 9 • University 15 • Student 36 • Unknown 44

Notice • *Exhibit Builder Magazine*

Did you get a renewal subscription notice from *Exhibit Builder* magazine? If you did, write across it "NAME member" and send it back. There was a mix up at the *Exhibit Builder* mailing house and those notices should not have gone to NAME members. Jill Brookman, Publisher of *Exhibit Builder*, assures me that her magazine is still a benefit of joining NAME.

What's in a Form?

Once upon a time NAME experimented with the design of the membership form and we lost over 200 members in the process. For those of you who have been with us for a while you will remember the form with lots of high tech looking diagonal slash marks allowing each character of your name to sit in its own little box.

I remember pondering about what prompted me to fill out a form and it occurred to me that the form had to be uncomplicated enough to be filled out while I was talking on the telephone. I do some of my best paper pushing while on the phone.

So, our rule of thumb when designing our forms for you, is that filling it out should be an uncomplicated task which can be accomplished while ordering Lucite.

Rules of Thumb ...and index finger.

I've learned alot since I started maintaining membership out of my office a few years back. I started by knowing diddly-squat and I have had a personal education which includes the following things:

1. I will always pay my dues on time (hard and fast rule for any member-driven organization with no paid staff)
2. I will read the membership form before I fill it out. (O.K., O.K. I'll at least glance at it)
3. I will print or type or somehow make the form readable (Hieroglyphics don't count! We are going to give a prize for the most readable membership form.)
4. Other than my state, I will never again abbreviate (You have got to be joking. Because you know the information doesn't mean that I do)
5. I will always fill out all of the information requested on the entire form (Well, maybe not all)
6. I will refrain from giving my home zip code with my office address (This is my favorite)
7. I will record my membership number on all correspondence (Can be found on the NW corner of your mailing label)
8. I will always remember to give my area code (No comment)
9. I will promptly inform NAME of any change of my address (For those who do...bless you)
10. I will make my dues check out to NAME (Hmm, since I really do prefer a warmer climate, feel free to continue making them out to me...)

Louise L. DeMars

President, NAME

Save A Tree!

Your membership number and dues expiration date are on your gummed mailing label.

If your dues are delinquent, we would appreciate it if you would either pay them or let us know that you would like to be removed from our membership rolls. Please use the membership form enclosed in this newsletter to respond; this will save us the cost

continues next page

agers, curators, and educators work together. We provide access to knowledge, technical resources and contact with fellow exhibits workers through this newsletter and through presentations at national and regional museum meetings.

Our aim is to promote excellence in Museum Exhibition. This means that we need to be in touch with people, with everyone involved in the museum exhibition process. Ideally, everyone working in an exhibit-related job should at least be aware of NAME, and have the chance to become a member, or to choose not to.

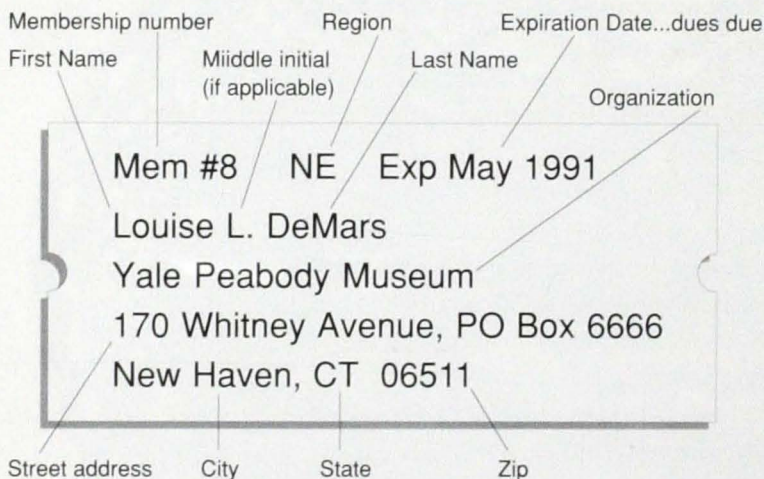
However, NAME has yet to reach many potential members. Right now, most members live and work in the larger metropolitan areas. Looking at membership geographically, enrollment is thin outside the urban areas, yet a greater total number of museums are located between the East and West coasts. Frankly, we are doing a better job in some parts of the country than others. The question is, how do we reach these people? Many of them do not attend regional museum meetings, never mind the national meetings, because their museums can't afford to send them. Much of the difficulty is simply geographic; it is a very real hardship to travel a thousand miles overland to a Regional meeting. (Mountain/Plains and Western Regions extend from Canada to Mexico; Southeast extends from the Atlantic to the Mississippi River.) It is no surprise that areas with low membership are also the more remote, thinly populated areas of the country. Museum workers in these areas are often more strongly oriented to their state associations, rather than regional museum associations.

Do you know someone like this? Yes? Then do this...do not toss this copy of *Exhibitionist*. Send it to a friend with a note to "Read this and join! It will improve your professional life."

The membership development program for 1990 is to develop strategies with Regional Representatives for getting increased exposure for NAME at state museum meetings, and to extend our direct mail invitations to some of the target groups mentioned in this article in the Winter newsletter.

Roger A. Vandiver
2nd Vice President • Membership Chair

The Anatomy of a gummed mailing label.



of sending out more paper.

Each time we have to remind you that your membership is past due, the cost includes printing, envelopes, stamps, time, and—even more precious—trees.

Our computer information is up-to-date through March, 1990. If we have crossed in the mail, please pass the enclosed membership form on to a colleague.

Louise L. DeMars
President, NAME

Give us your tired, your weak, your hungry...

...if they are tired of "re-inventing the wheel"

...if they are weak from carrying the entire exhibit process alone

...if they are hungry for knowledge, resources, and camaraderie...

...here's what we do. NAME produces workshops all across the country to tell how others have invented the (exhibit production) wheel. We organize presentations by experts in team management, who describe improved results when exhibit man-

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

NAME
NAME

The National Association for Museum
Statement
Exhibition—the Standing Professional
of Purpose
Committee on Museum Exhibition of the

American Association of Museums—was
established to provide an organization
which can aid in the professional enrich-
ment and advancement of all museum
exhibition professionals and further the
goals of the museum community. NAME

was designed also to provide a source of
broad dissemination of information on
the conception, planning, design, conser-
vation, fabrication, installation, and
maintenance of museum exhibitions and
to serve those sharing these concerns.

- MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**
- Three issues of the *Exhibitionist*
 - Six issues of *Exhibit Builder* magazine
 - Representation of professional interests
 - Exhibition-related workshops and seminars
 - Products and services information
 - Participation in future programs and projects

NAME has three
membership categories

each of which entitles you to all the
benefits of membership listed here.
The categories and annual dues are:

Regular—\$15.
(this is most of us)

International—\$20.
(because it costs a lot more to mail)

Student / Retired—\$10.
(you know who you are)

**Your membership
can make
the difference!**

Please fill out the application on the reverse and return it along with your annual membership dues check made payable to NAME. Please send your application and check to:

NAME, c/o Louise L. DeMars, Yale Peabody Museum, 170 Whitney Avenue, Box 6666, New Haven, CT 06511

NAME MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I am using this form to: Change address or survey information only (no dues enclosed)
 Become a member Renew membership #

My membership category is: Regular member \$15.00 dues enclosed
 International member \$20.00 dues enclosed
 Student or retired \$10.00 dues enclosed

Name _____ Title _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

I am an AAM member • # _____ My organization is an AAM member • # _____
 I am an in-house museum professional I am an independent museum professional

For all members: The information you provide in the survey below will be part of the NAME member directory, an important vehicle for sharing information within our profession. Please use the survey to indicate those areas in which you would like to be listed as an information resource or commercial provider. **Choose up to four, number 1 (most important) to 4 (least).** Note that the most general areas in the survey—such as Architecture / Interior—may include design, consultation, production, materials, products, equipment, and/or information.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| Areas of your expertise and/or business endeavor | ET <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Development | LA <input type="checkbox"/> Live Animal Facilities | SF <input type="checkbox"/> Security / Fire |
| AI <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural / Interior | EE <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Equipment | MA <input type="checkbox"/> Mannequins / Automata | SG <input type="checkbox"/> Shipping / Packing |
| AV <input type="checkbox"/> Audio-Visual Presentation | EV <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Evaluation | MU <input type="checkbox"/> Murals | SI <input type="checkbox"/> Signage |
| CO <input type="checkbox"/> Computers in Design / Office | EF <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Fabrication | MS <input type="checkbox"/> Museum Studies | SN <input type="checkbox"/> Special Needs / Accessibility |
| CE <input type="checkbox"/> Computers in Exhibits | EI <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Installation | OD <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Exhibits | SP <input type="checkbox"/> Specimen / Artifact Preparation |
| CN <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | EM <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Materials | PC <input type="checkbox"/> Photography / Cinematography | SR <input type="checkbox"/> Specimen / Artifact Replication |
| CS <input type="checkbox"/> Crafts | EP <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Production Management | PE <input type="checkbox"/> Planetaria | ST <input type="checkbox"/> Storage / Handling |
| DM <input type="checkbox"/> Dioramas / Models | GF <input type="checkbox"/> Grants / Fundraising | PR <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations / Advertising | TA <input type="checkbox"/> Taxidermy |
| ED <input type="checkbox"/> Education | GR <input type="checkbox"/> Graphics / Illustration | PB <input type="checkbox"/> Publishing / Printing | TI <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Information |
| EN <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Controls | HO <input type="checkbox"/> Holography | RG <input type="checkbox"/> Registration | TE <input type="checkbox"/> Traveling Exhibitions |
| EX <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Design | ID <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Design | SH <input type="checkbox"/> Safety / Health | VS <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor Services |
| | IN <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance | SD <input type="checkbox"/> Script Development | OT <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| | IT <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation | SC <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture / Casting | |
| | LI <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting | | |

Send application and check payable to NAME to:
 NAME, c/o Louise L. DeMars,
 Yale Peabody Museum, 170
 Whitney Avenue, Box 6666, New
 Haven, CT 06511

NAME office use only		Check #	Ex Bldr sub
		Amount	Prob handl
Date rec	Memb #	N R	Process cmpl
Renewal date	Region	Region / mailing code	Ex.Sp.90.

Executive Board

OFFICERS

President • Editor, Exhibitionist

Louise L. DeMars
Head of Exhibit and Graphic Design
Yale Peabody Museum
170 Whitney Avenue, Box 6666
New Haven, CT 06511
203 432 5003 Fax 203 432 6179

1st Vice President • Program Chair •

Education Chair
Darcie Fohrman
P.O. Box 892, Monterey, CA 93940
408 647 9819 Fax 408 373 8975

2nd Vice President •

Membership Chair
Roger Vandiver, Manager of Exhibits
Chicago Botanic Gardens, Box 400,
Glencoe, IL 60022 312 835 5440

Secretary

Raylene Decatur
Director of Exhibitions
Maryland Science Center
601 Light Street, Baltimore MD 21230
301 685 2370 Fax 301 837 8840

Treasurer

Paul Groenier
Virginia Living Museum
Newport News, VA 23601
804 595 1900

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San Angelo Museum of Fine Art
PO Box 3092, San Angelo, TX 76902
915 658 4084

AAM Councilors at Large

George Gardner,
Chairman of Exhibitions
American Museum of Natural History
79th and Central Park West
New York, NY 10024
212 769 5452 Fax 212 769 5233

Sing Hanson, Director of Exhibitions
Boston Children's Museum
300 Congress Street
Boston, MA 00210
617 426 6500 Fax 617 426 1944

Graphic Designer

Mark Driscoll, Curator of Exhibits
Museum of Florida History
R.A. Gray Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250
904 488 1484 Fax 904 488 3353

ADVISORS

Technical Editor

Robert Francis
Manager of Exhibit Production
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Boulevard and Grove Avenue
Richmond, VA 23221
804 367 0826 Fax 804 367 9393

Advisor/Slide Video

Don Hughes
Monterey Bay Aquarium
886 Cannery Row
Monterey, CA 93940
408 649 6466 Fax 408 648 4810

Advisor/Independent Members

Ben Kozak, Vice President /
Design and Sales
Design Craftsmen Incorporated
8420 West Bryn Mawr, Suite 875
Chicago, IL 60631
312 693 0060 Fax 312 693 1099

Special Projects Advisor

Kathy McLean
1833 Addison Street
Berkeley, CA 94703 • 415 649 8837

Computer Advisor

Charles West
Anne Arundle Community College
Public Relations & Publications
101 College Parkway
Arnold, MD 21031 • 301 541 2514

International Advisor

Jim Olson, Chief of Exhibits
LA County Museum of Natural History
900 Exposition Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90007
213 744 3397 Fax 213 746 2999

Long range Planning and Development Committee Chair

Jon Jager, Curator of Exhibits
Virginia Museum of Natural History
1001 Douglas Avenue
Martinsville, VA 24112
703 666 8600

Conservation Advisor

Wendy Claire Jessup
1814 N Stafford Street
Arlington, VA 22207 • 703 528 4339

Exhibitionist Assistant

Mary Hunter Demos
808 Broadway, Apt 4-H
New York, NY 10003
718 624 0890

Assistant to President

Stuart Parnes, Curator of Exhibits
Mystic Seaport Museum
Mystic, CT 06355
203 572 0711 Fax 203 572 8693

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

New England

Theodore Penn, Director
Commonwealth Museum
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125 • 617 727 9268
Fax 617 727 2816 ext 217

(not a dedicated line/call first)

Penny J. Sander
Exhibit Design Coordinator
Cambridge Seven Associates
1050 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
617 492 7000 Fax 617 492 7007

Mid Atlantic

James Volkert, Chief of Design
National Museum of American Art
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, DC 20560
202 357 2326 Fax 202 786 2607
Max Cameron, Director of Exhibitions
The Brooklyn Children's Museum
145 Brooklyn Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11213 • 718 735 4430

Southeastern

Jim Walther, Curator of Exhibits
Cumberland Museum
800 Ridley Boulevard
Nashville, TN 37203
615 259 6099 Fax 615 254 3814

Michael Pierce, Curator of Exhibits
Anniston Museum of Natural History
P.O. Box 1587 Anniston, AL 36202
205 237 6766

Mid Western

Alex Black, Alex Black Design
693 E 82nd Street
Indianapolis, IN 46206
317 257 9428

Lynne I. Friman, Design Coordinator
Detroit Historical Department
5401 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, MI 48202 • 313 833 4244

Mountain Plains

Reba Jones, Registrar
Amarillo Art Center, PO Box 447
Amarillo, TX 79178 • 806 371 5050
Peter B. Tirrell
Assistant Director Public Programs
Oklahoma Museum of Natural History
1335 Asp Avenue
Norman, OK 73019-0606
405 325 4712 Fax 405 325 7699

Western

Linda Grandke Kulik, Senior Designer
California Academy of Science
Golden Gate Park
San Francisco, CA 94114
415 750 7012 Fax 415 750 7346
Paula Liken, Exhibit Specialist
Arizona State University Art Museum
2643 S Stewart
Mesa, AZ 85202 • 602 839 2043

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The NAME Executive Board is listed in every issue to serve our NAME members. If you have any questions or suggestions about:

SUBJECT	CONTACT
National Programming ..	Darcie Fohrman
Slide Video	Don Hughes
Membership	Roger Vandiver
Dues	Paul Groenier
Technical Information	Bob Francis
Regional Programming	Regional Rep.
Exhibitionist Submissions	Louise DeMars
Independent Members	Ben Kozak
Education Committee	Darcie Fohrman
Publications	Louise DeMars
AAM-related Activities	Sing Hanson
.....	George Gardner
International Members	Jim Olson
Computer Information	Charles West
Conservation	Wendy Jessup
Would you like to become more active in NAME?	Louise DeMars

When contacting any of the above individuals, check the Executive Board listing in your most recent issue of the *Exhibitionist*.

Any - 317-921-4019

Remember!
Your member
number and
expiration date are
on your gummed
mailing label.

Mark Your Calendar

MARCH

- Solicit Advertising from Product and Service people for Members Directory
- Distribute Spring *Exhibitionist* with Election Ballot
- 30 Members Directory information confirmation deadline.

APRIL

- 4 Slide Video Submission Deadline
- 15 Election Ballot return deadline

MAY

- 8 AAM Council Meeting
- 9-13 **AAM annual meeting—Chicago**
- 9 NAME Executive Board Meeting
- 9 NAME/ PR/ Evaluation joint dinner
- 10 NAME Issues Luncheon
- 11 NAME Business meeting
- 13 NAME Executive Board Wrap-up Meeting

JUNE

- Call for Programs-AAM Denver 1991

JULY

- 1 **AAM program proposal deadline for Denver 1991 meeting**
- 15 Submission Deadline *Exhibitionist*

AUGUST

- Distribute Summer *Exhibitionist*

Exhibitionist

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MUSEUM EXHIBITION

c/o Louise L. DeMars
Yale Peabody Museum
170 Whitney Avenue, Box 6666
New Haven, CT 06511

NAME
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MUSEUM EXHIBITION

