

THE MUSEUM REPORT

Supplemental Packet I

Museum Failures

May 5, 2004

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BELLEVUE ART MUSEUM OPENS THE DOORS TO ITS NEW HOME



Bellevue Art Museum opens the doors to its new home on January 13, 2001 with a public dedication ceremony at 10 a.m. Designed by internationally renowned architect Steven Holl, the bold glass, aluminum and textured concrete structure has been crafted to support the Museum's mission of providing opportunities not just to see art, but to explore and make it as well. The move to the three-story, 36,000 square-foot building gives the Museum a dramatic presence in downtown Bellevue's pedestrian corridor. It also allows the Museum to expand significantly its innovative visual arts exhibitions and educational programming, placing it at the center of the region's cultural scene. Located on the corner of Bellevue Way and NE Sixth Street, the new Museum has four classrooms for its Museum School, an interactive Explore Gallery, an artist-in-residence program, an auditorium, a multimedia library, a Museum store and café in addition to 8,500 square feet of exhibition space. Funds for the \$23 million project were raised in three and a half years in the highly successful BAM 2000 Capital Campaign.

"The support for the new Museum was unprecedented and reflected the community's deep commitment to this new gathering place," stated Kemper Freeman, Jr. and Frank Blethen, Campaign Chairs of the BAM 2000 Capital Campaign. "Bellevue Art Museum will be the cultural heart of the City of Bellevue and a regional resource wrapped in world-class architecture."

"Bellevue Art Museum has a simple philosophy - that art's joy, power and creativity are not contained in paintings and sculpture. They lie in the eyes, hearts, hands and minds of artists and audiences," stated Diane Douglas, Museum Director. "Our new home will provide an inspiring venue for bringing artists and audiences together to see, explore and make art."

Steven Holl's new building is both an experiential art piece and a laboratory for investigations into the creative process. Its unconventional design fits closely with Bellevue Art Museum's unconventional approach to art. People, rather than objects, are the Museum's main focus and emphasis is placed on the creative process as much as on its product. This approach led to the decision not to maintain a permanent collection. Instead of acquiring art, the Museum now devotes its resources to dynamic visual arts exhibitions and educational programming designed to further the active exploration and experience of art. Exhibitions, educational programming and the artist-in-residence program are integrated through an innovative learning plan that underscores Bellevue Art Museum's commitment to provide opportunities to see, explore and make art. A commemorative book of Steven Holl's process and Museum design will be available in the Museum Store.

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THE ARCHITECT

"Bellevue Art Museum's spirit of openness and emphasis on the exploration of creativity allowed me to further my own exploration of perception by focusing on how light changes throughout the day and with the seasons," explains architect Steven Holl.

Light and perception were also major themes in Holl's signature Chapel of St. Ignatius for Seattle University, completed in March 1997. The highly acclaimed chapel is considered one of the most significant works of modern architecture in the Pacific Northwest. Holl, a Bremerton, Washington native and graduate of the University of Washington, has also designed important architectural projects in cities around the world, including the Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki, Finland; Cranbrook Institute of Science in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan; American Memorial Library in Berlin, Germany; **Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art** in Kansas City, Missouri; and Fukuoka Housing in Fukuoka, Japan. Holl was awarded a national AIA award for Design Excellence in 1997 for his Chapel of St. Ignatius. Holl was also awarded a New York AIA Medal of Honor. Holl also teaches at Columbia University.

THE BUILDING

Holl made extensive use of glass, terraces and skylights in his investigation of light, creating a structure that is an artwork in its own right. Roughly a third of the exterior surface is glass, with the remaining two-thirds divided evenly between hand-sanded marine aluminum and textured concrete stained in earth-red tones. Throughout the building different types of light are utilized to correspond to different concepts of time. The design also focuses on how light comes into the building and how it emanates out to create an interactive beacon of light at night.

Inspired by the Museum's origins as a street fair, large windows at ground level reinforce the Museum's openness to community. The glass and aluminum entryway off Bellevue Way is two-storied and artwork is continuously projected onto the white exterior ceiling. Visitors are welcomed into the Museum Forum through a reception lobby. The Forum, an elliptical interior atrium, is at the center of the building and rises two stories. This large, open space serves as a gathering place, a starting point for tours and a site for special events. A 5 1/2-foot wide staircase takes visitors to the second floor along the south wall. A suspended stairway transports the visitor to the third floor along the north wall over head.

Like the Forum, the Museum Store and Café on the ground floor are visually connected to the surrounding community by large windows. The 1100 square foot café has indoor seating for 50 and outdoor seating for 20 under a glass awning. Tully's operates the café and serves coffee and light menu items. The Auditorium on the ground floor is outfitted with state-of-the-art audio/visual equipment. Movable seating allows this space to be used for a wide range of functions. Steven Holl has also designed the fixtures for the public spaces of the building. On the rooftop, the elliptical Court of Light highlights

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Steven Holl's interest in the relationship between light and seasonal change. The top of the courtyard's north wall follows the curve of the 48th parallel and allows people to watch the sun trace the arc of the wall during the summer solstice. The Terrace of Planetary Motion on the second floor, along Bellevue Way, has moving star imagery projected onto the exterior aluminum wall.

The Exhibition Galleries on the third floor also have terraces, furthering the building's feeling of openness. The galleries offer changing exhibitions featuring national, international and regional visual art. Like the rest of the Museum, the galleries are wired in every possible way, giving the Museum the capacity to show art utilizing new and emerging technologies. Seven thousand square-feet of gallery space on the third floor can be utilized as separate or integrated exhibition space.

The Museum School occupies two classrooms on the second floor and another two on the third floor near the exhibition galleries. Each classroom averages 1000 square feet and accommodates 24 students. One is a ceramic studio with two kilns and twelve potters' wheels. With 4000 square feet of classroom and studio space, the Museum School opens its doors with 50 classes offering a wide range of hands-on art classes designed to serve all ages and levels from beginning to advanced study.

The interactive Explore Gallery on the second floor reflects the Museum's emphasis on experiential learning. Its high-tech, hands-on inaugural exhibit provides tools for exploring and understanding architecture, particularly the sophisticated architecture of the Museum's new building.

DIANE DOUGLAS, MUSEUM DIRECTOR



Diane Douglas has led the museum's growth since 1991, earning BAM its reputation as an innovative center for artistic and educational exploration in one of the nation's fastest growing communities. Prior to that she served as Executive Director of the David Adler Cultural Center, a multidisciplinary arts center in the Chicago area. She is also a poet and art critic whose writings appear in magazines, journals and books. Diane holds an undergraduate degree in Semiotics from Brown University and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Delaware where she was a fellow in the Winterthur Program. (left: Diane Douglas, photo courtesy of BAM)

Diane has served on numerous review panels and advisory boards for organizations including the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Association of Museums, the Washington State Trade and Convention Center, Meydenbauer Center and the Pilchuck Glass School and for state and local arts commissions in Illinois, Kentucky and Washington. From 1990-1993, she served as Program Chair for the National Council for Education in the Ceramic Arts and currently is a trustee of the Archie Bray Foundation and the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce.

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BRIAN WALLACE, CURATOR



Brian Wallace brings a dynamic vision of contemporary art to Bellevue Art Museum's programming. A graduate of the Center for Curatorial Studies and Art in Contemporary Culture at Bard College, New York, he was Assistant Curator at Cooper Union, New York, and Media Arts Curator at the Computer Museum, Boston, prior to his appointment as Curator at BAM in 1997. He has also worked extensively as an independent curator and writer. (left: Brian Wallace, photo courtesy of BAM)

His curatorial work in exhibitions, film and special projects for BAM reflects an active engagement with emerging trends and media, as well as historical precedents. Wallace has taken on the challenge of creating rigorous curatorial concepts within the framework of BAM's experiential and educational mandates. Recent programs include "Game Show," featuring noted regional and national artists as they investigated the territory between the fun of visible objects and underlying conceptual structures; "The Self, Absorbed," in which new technologies provide the catalyst for new approaches to self-portraiture; "Fresh Flowers," an international survey of complex relationships conveyed through floral imagery; and "Hands on Color," which provided interactive and installation strategies with works by artists from around the country.

<http://www.tfaoi.com/aa/2aa/2aa324.htm>

ADIEU TO BELLEVUE ART MUSEUM

Thursday, September 25, 2003

ADVENTURESOME PROGRAMMING DONE IN BY A WEAK ECONOMY

By [REGINA HACKETT](#)
SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER ART CRITIC

The Bellevue Art Museum is closing, foiled by a combination of a tough economy, white-
elephant architecture and a failure to find an audience.

The museum is the first major art institution in the region to fail because of the perilous
economy. ACT Theatre came close to going under
earlier this year but survived.

Museum doors will close Tuesday, which means the
museum's key fall exhibit, "Clay Body," will open
Saturday and close Tuesday night.

Late yesterday, board President Rick Collette said
that the museum ran out of money.

"We were not successful in getting broad-based
community support," he said. Earlier in the year, the
board approved a trim \$2.2 million budget for the
2004 fiscal year, down from \$2.8 million from the
previous year.



*Pedestrians walk past the relocated
Bellevue Art Museum in 2001 just
before it opened in its new home.*

"We have no bank debt," Collette said. The amount of money owed to vendors and
suppliers, as well as to staff, is being calculated but can be met, he said. "We feel
strongly we shouldn't spend money we don't have."

Asked how much the museum has, he said, "Enough to pay salaries for the next couple
of weeks." Twenty-seven of the 30 staff member are being laid off with no clear
prospects of returning to work.

Remaining on salary are Barbara Jirsa, public relations; Polly Meyer, the museum's
registrar; and Marcia Lingel, chief financial officer.

The Bellevue Arts Fair, now in its 75th year, will continue, Collette said. In July, it
brought the museum \$350,000, most of which has been spent.

Collette would prefer to think of the closing as a time out, enabling the board to meet
with community leaders to figure out what the community will support. He hopes to have
a plan early next year for reopening the building.

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However, he can't say the building will remain an art museum. "Art is just one of the options we are going to consider," he said.

The Bellevue Art Museum opened in a former Bellevue funeral parlor in 1975. It moved to the third floor of Bellevue Square in 1983 and debuted across the street in its own building in January 2001.

The architectural community gave Steven Holl's building a solid thumbs-up, but the visual arts community was considerably less impressed. In essence, the building is full of personality and high style, yet it is a difficult place to display art.

Jirsa, the museum spokeswoman, disagreed. "I think we were clear, but maybe the direction we gave him hasn't worked as well as we wanted."

Collette says that some of the exhibitions haven't been suitable for an Eastside audience, that the museum lost its fans thanks to overly adventuresome programming.

"That's part of it, but really I think the programming hasn't made the critical difference," he continued.

BAM moved into its new building just as the dot.com boom was going bust, which has had an enormous impact on the Eastside, said Collette, adding that 9/11 was also a big factor.

"We have had generous support from a handful of individuals (such as Jon and Mary Shirley), but our earned income (people paying at the door) has been disappointing."

The museum overlooks a hole in the ground known as Lincoln Square, a long-stalled development project that Kemper Development recently took over. Lend Lease Real Estate Development ceased construction on the \$1.4 million project thanks to the weak economy.

The first exhibit in the new space remains its best: "Luminous: Light as Material, Medium and Metaphor." Curated by Brian Wallace, who was forced out shortly thereafter, the artists in it took Holl's luminous space into account and made it work for them, through humor, subversion, savvy aesthetic reasoning and pure, blunt power.

BAM's associate curator, Miriam Sternberg, also has learned how to use the space. Her "Clay Body" promises to engage the audience that remains, which has only three days to see it. Admission is free Saturday.

P-I art critic Regina Hackett can be reached at 206-448-8332 or reginahackett@seattlepi.com.

http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/visualart/141205_bam25.html

BELLEVUE ART MUSEUM – LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

COMMUNITY PROGRESS REPORT

March 17, 2004

As president of the Museum's Board of Trustees, I would like to offer an update on the progress that has been made toward the reopening of the Museum.

New vision and mission statements based on craft and design have been developed. The statements were taken to the public for comment in three forums held in Bellevue, Kirkland and Issaquah. Over 500 individuals and many organizations have been part of the overall process - I offer sincere thanks for the time taken, opinions given and help offered by so many. The support for this vision and mission has been overwhelming and the encouragement to move forward has been heartening.

VISION STATEMENT:

Bellevue Art Museum illuminates and enriches the human spirit through art, craft and design.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Bellevue Art Museum is the Pacific Northwest's center for the exploration of art, craft and design through exhibition, educational programs and partnerships, emphasizing the work of regional artists.

A business plan has been completed and Board committees are addressing the areas of board development, artistic program and building modification. This work is the roadmap to the reopening of BAM returning us to our heritage of craft and design and an institution that enriches the cultural offerings of the community and the region.

While our hope has been to reopen along with this year's Bellevue Arts and Crafts Fair in July, we have determined that it is more important to open when the time is right. With our process and desire to make sure every aspect has been appropriately addressed, it now appears that a fall 2004 opening makes for a better timetable.

I want to thank all of those who have helped us along this journey - community members, artists, docents, volunteers, stakeholders - your support and patience have been unparalleled.

Supplemental Packet I Museum Failures Bellevue Art Museum – Letter from the President

I invite you to attend the Bellevue Arts and Crafts Fair, July 23 - 25 this summer - a 58 year-old community celebration of the arts. Please see the specific information regarding the Fair on this website.

Rick Collette
President, Board of Trustees

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

BLUNDERS DRAG BLACK HISTORY MUSEUM DOWN

RECORDS: WRIGHT HAD NO CASH, NO PLAN, NO CONTROL

April 26, 2004

BY MARISOL BELLO AND FRANK PROVENZANO
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITERS

Coleman Young had a vision as Detroit mayor. He wanted a museum to tell the history of African Americans, a monument in a majority black city.

There was little money or planning. The museum went up anyway.

Since it moved into its cavernous new home, the story at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History has been one of managerial blunders, lax oversight and financial calamity, according to tax records reviewed by the Free Press.

The museum is scraping to pay bills each month and, last week, scrambled to meet payroll for its 54 employees. City records and the museum's annual Internal Revenue Service filings since 1997 show that:

- The City of Detroit has pumped almost \$13 million in public money into the museum with little scrutiny from city officials and the mayoral appointees who serve on the 20-member museum board.
- Top managers didn't consistently track how the museum was spending money. In 2001, when the institution struggled with a \$2-million deficit -- its largest to date -- the museum did not follow basic accounting practices. Museum President Christy Coleman says she didn't know on any given day how much cash the museum had.
- Attendance revenue plummeted by 74 percent between 1997 and 2003. As the museum put fewer dollars in programs and exhibits, it spent more on management and salaries.

Now the museum is waiting for the Detroit City Council to approve a \$500,000 advance to help balance its books.

After an eleventh-hour appeal for help, the museum received \$250,000 from \$1 million in pledges from U.S. District Judge Damon Keith and other wealthy black donors. Even if the museum can survive its current cash-flow problems, its future is fragile.

Museum leaders are banking on the success of a temporary exhibit, opening in July, that explores the history of lynchings in America. They also have high hopes for a new permanent exhibit opening in November -- an interactive exhibit that looks at the

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African-American experience, beginning with the slave trade from Africa through the Civil War and into the 20th Century, including Detroit's role.

The museum is counting on making more from admissions in the upcoming year than it did from 1998-2003.

What happens if the crowds don't come? There is no Plan B.

"It's scary as all-get out," said Coleman, who calls the projections optimistic but informed.

She said she has a new leadership team in place with the experience to finally take control of the museum's finances.

Many want to know why it took so long.

Detroit City Councilwoman Kay Everett said she raised questions in the past about why the museum had so little to offer.

"No one was listening," she said.

"There's a thing called black pride and people do not want to question," she said. "We should have more pride in ourselves and expect more.

"This thing needs to be done right and I don't care if they're black, white or whatever."

VISION FELL SHORT

When the first city-owned version of the African-American museum opened in 1987 -- a-fifth the size of its current building -- then-mayor Coleman Young whispered that the museum wasn't big enough.

So began the vision of an international museum that would be a symbol of black pride and power in Detroit.

That hasn't materialized.

Some say the 120,000-square-foot museum was flawed from the start. It had no endowment -- a financial safety net -- and it could never decide whether to be a museum or a community center.

It failed at both.

"To us who've lived here and watched it flounder as it has, it's disgraceful," said Detroitier George Ramsey, a retired postal worker who grew up around the block from the current museum on Warren Avenue.

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Ramsey said when the museum opened, he became a member, as did many of his friends. But after about two years, he let the membership lapse.

"I lost interest," he said. "Once you went through the museum, that was it. There was no draw. Nothing changed."

NO CONTROLS

The Wright Museum opened with a 5-year financial plan by high-profile accounting firm Deloitte Touche that spelled out the risks it faced.

No one paid attention.

The museum's previous president, Kimberly Camp, said when she started in 1994, the museum didn't have a system to track spending.

She said she made sure all payments went through the finance department and that there was a bid process to lower costs.

Still, when Camp left the museum in 1998 to head the Barnes Foundation, an art collection based outside of Philadelphia, the Wright Museum ended its fiscal year with an \$806,000 deficit.

For almost a year, the museum had no president. At a time when it most needed strong leadership, the museum was led by an inexperienced management team.

Coleman started in late 1999. By 2000, the museum had an almost \$2-million deficit, federal finance records show.

Coleman blames then-finance director, Niaz Ali, an accountant who had worked for the city's finance department. She said he neglected the most basic duties, such as reconciling bank statements.

She said on any given day, no one knew exactly how much money the museum had in the bank.

"It was a mess," she said last week. But ultimately, she said she was the one accountable.

"The reality is there was a lot going on in the museum at that time," she said. Expenses were out of control and donations and other revenue were declining. "It was a quick spiral."

Ali, now an analyst with the city's Department of Human Rights, said it is unfair to blame him. He said he tried to keep up with the day-to-day operations, but he could never overcome the accounting backlog he inherited and the drop in revenues.

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During his year-and-a-half as finance director, Ali said that at least three times, the museum could not make payroll and had to go to city officials or donors for advances.

In light of the turmoil, then-Mayor Dennis Archer appointed two high-powered board members to be more watchful over the museum's finances.

"He thought the museum needed fresh board members and needed to be more critical of what was going on," said Frank Fountain, an Archer appointee and president of the DaimlerChrysler Corp. Fund.

LIVING DAY-TO-DAY

But today, the money problems remain.

On most days, current Chief Financial Officer Ollette Boyd doesn't want to answer the phone. She knows creditors and vendors are calling to collect money the museum does not have.

After she was hired in September 2001 to replace Ali, she discovered the shoddy shape of the museum's finances.

"I didn't realize how bad it was," she said.

Since then, the museum has strengthened accounting practices, planned for a new permanent exhibit and raised more than half of its \$43-million capital campaign goal.

That's still not enough.

Museum leaders, the board and city officials knew last fall that the museum would run out of money by spring, said Tyrone Davenport, the museum's chief financial officer. They didn't go public until March, when they asked the city council for an emergency \$1-million cash advance.

The council balked; it is expected to revisit the funding issue this week.

Council President pro tem Ken Cockrel Jr. said the museum has to stop relying on the city for a bailout. Now that the city faces a potential \$263-million shortfall, the council has to take a harder look at such requests.

"Frankly, I think the museum was given a lot of free passes over the years," he said. "It was the Charles H. Wright Museum and this is a predominantly African-American city.

"I'm a big supporter of the museum and I want to see it succeed, but the museum has to demonstrate it can stand on its own two feet."

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Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick said that to thrive, the museum -- named after the founder of Detroit's first African-American museum in 1965 -- has to operate in a different way.

"Everything is a business now: Churches are a business, museums are a business, and I don't think at first it was looked at as that," Kilpatrick said. "I think it's just the proper time for it to come around and be conducted in a way... that can move forward and sustain itself into the future."

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CULTURE AND CASH: A MUSEUM TIME LINE

April 26, 2004

1997: Museum of African American History opens in April.

- Annual budget of \$6.8 million is more than five times larger than the budget for the previous African-American museum.
- Attendance at the \$38.4-million museum expected to jump from 70,000 to 500,000 annually.

1998-99: President Kimberly Camp resigns (September 1999). A year goes by until Christy Coleman takes over. She is former director of African-American programming at Colonial Williamsburg.

1999-2000: Ernest Duncan, vice president of finance, leaves; two clerks and an outside accounting firm manage museum's finances for about 9 months.

2000: A proposed arts tax in Oakland and Wayne counties fails. Museum would have received about \$1.4 million per year for 10 years. Tax fails again in 2002.

2001: Museum reports almost \$2-million deficit in its \$7-million budget.

- Reduces exhibits, hours and staff.
- Mayor Dennis Archer appoints Rod Gillum, a vice president at General Motors Corp., and Frank Fountain, senior vice president at DaimlerChrysler to the museum board.

2002: The museum kicks off a 5-year \$43-million capital campaign (Legacy Campaign) to build endowment and pay for operating expenses and a new state-of-the-art permanent exhibit. So far, museum has \$24 million in pledges.

2003: Paid attendance drops from 202,754 in 1997 to 37,793.

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2004: Museum unveils survival plan in February, including drive to increase membership from 7,800 to 20,000 by June.

- In March, requests a \$1-million bailout from city. Churches rally to donate and increase membership.
- In April, a group of about 50 wealthy Detroit donors pledge to come up with the \$1 million. Funds expected to be delivered to museum on Thursday.
- New fiscal year begins July 1, museum expects \$1.8 million from city; "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America" set to open.
- An \$8-million-\$10-million interactive core exhibit to open in mid-November.

2004-05: Museum expects ticket revenue of about \$1.2 million, or 240,000 visitors.

Free Press

http://www.freep.com/news/locway/tmuse26_20040426.htm

COURT PAPERS SHOW TERRA BOARD SPLIT

By Robert Becker (Chicago Tribune)

A month before the messy battle over the future of the Terra Museum of American Art spilled into a Cook County courtroom, one vision for the institution was being carefully crafted behind the backs of some of its board members, court records allege. That vision, the records allege, called for shuttering the museum at 664 N. Michigan Ave. and moving its famous collection of paintings and prints to Washington, D.C., along with the Terra Foundation, which owns the museum and another art museum in Giverny, France. The author of the plan, the documents allege, is Paul Hayes Tucker, a board director and president of the foundation.

But according to several Terra Foundation board members--among them Maggie Daley, wife of Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, and former Waste Management Inc. chief Dean Buntrock--they were kept in the dark about a proposed move until Tucker introduced it during an Aug. 24 board meeting.

"They were stunned," said one attorney involved in the case. Tucker subsequently elaborated on those ideas in a paper titled "A Vision for the Future," which advocated relocating the foundation to the American Pharmaceutical Building on the Mall in Washington. There, the foundation could house "a host of scholars, curators and other educators who would be Terra Fellows," according to the paper. As for the Terra Museum's \$100 million collection of American painting, which includes works by Whistler, Cole and Sargent, it "should be in the same city as the foundation itself," wrote Tucker. "It would be foolish to have it any other way."

Accordingly, Tucker proposed "a strategic partnership with the National Gallery [of Art]" in Washington. Tucker closed his assessment--which is contained in court records--by telling board members, "I look forward to reviewing all of this with you in Giverny." Board members met Tuesday in Giverny. According to the court papers, the board had been expected then to consider formally a move of the foundation and its Chicago collection until a Cook County judge ordered them to back off at least for a few weeks. The order came in response to a lawsuit filed by two of the directors. They accuse Judith Terra, widow of museum founder Daniel Terra, Tucker and others of mismanaging millions of dollars of museum assets and plotting to move the facility to Washington.

Circuit Judge Dorothy Kirie Kinnaird ruled Monday that the Terra Foundation board could hold its meeting but could not make a final decision on the proposed move or try to oust any directors. Kinnaird also allowed Illinois Atty. Gen. Jim Ryan's office to join the case.

Ryan's office wants Judith Terra, Tucker and former U.S. Sen. Alan K. Simpson (R-Wyo.) removed as directors of the foundation. It also seeks appointment of a receiver to conduct an accounting of the foundation's assets.

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Buntrock and fellow foundation director Ronald Gidwitz, former chief executive of the Helene Curtis beauty products firm, filed suit against Judith Terra, Tucker and others, alleging that their opposition to the move would result in their ouster from the board. The suit says Judith Terra is pushing to move the foundation to Washington, where she resides, to "obtain a prominent place in social circles" there.

Neither Buntrock, Gidwitz, Terra nor Tucker could be reached for comment Tuesday. Stephen Carlson, who represents the Terra Foundation board, called the lawsuit "frivolous."

"It's a meritless claim," said Carlson. "And ultimately the foundation will prevail." Minutes of the foundation's August board meeting were filed with the suit and quote Maggie Daley as saying that she did not recall any previous discussions about plans for the foundation or museum to leave Chicago.

But Tucker told the board, according to the minutes, that the Chicago museum "needs a great deal of money to be brought up to par with other museums" and there is a "problem attracting attendance." Tucker concluded that the best way to "maximize" resources was to "align with another institution, close the Chicago museum" and focus on the foundation's property in Giverny.

But Buntrock noted "that we had never discussed this at the board level," the minutes say. But Tucker suggested, according to the minutes, "that we definitely make a decision in September." In the paper he prepared for board members, Tucker advocated Washington as the new site for the foundation, saying the city had "the best resources for the understanding and advancement of American art."

The Pharmaceutical Building, he wrote, "would be an ideal site," with ample space and a location adjacent to the State Department. As to the collection, Tucker said a partnership with the National Gallery would be advantageous because the gallery "is the pre-eminent museum in the city and the most respected in the art world."

<http://www.museum-security.org/00/172.html>

MUSEUMSTUFF.COM LISTING FOR UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS MUSEUM

OVERVIEW -- CLOSED DUE TO BUDGET CUTS - WEBSITE IS STILL AVAILABLE -

The University Museum has been an integral part of the Fayetteville academic community since 1873. It develops and maintains extensive collections in archaeology, ethnography, geology, history, physical anthropology, botany and zoology.

URL -- <http://www.uark.edu/~museinfo/>

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR, USA

http://www.museumstuff.com/rec/org_20020201_17677.html

DRAWERS OF KNOWLEDGE

THERE'S NO MUSEUM, BUT THERE'S PLENTY IN IT.

By Leslie Newell Peacock

January 16, 2004

Old dead rats are valuable, writes molecular biologist Jared Diamond, for the genetic clues to evolution they hold. So are salamanders swimming in alcohol; Cornell scientists are using them to evaluate environmental degradation. Birds hold clues to flight and mating habits, even stuffed, tagged and cotton-ball eyed. These dead things pulled from drawers and jars are the place where science starts.

There are 7 million objects, including rats and salamanders and birds, in the collection of the University of Arkansas Museum - which no longer exists. The U of A, in a move that saved \$340,542, closed down the museum's admittedly out-of-date facility, an old field house, and fired six employees. (Two of them filled other campus jobs, one returned to graduate study, one retired and the remaining two left Arkansas.)

But the collection, begun more than 113 years ago, before there was particular exhibit space for it, remains, and so perhaps the "museum" lives on. It's housed in state-of-the-art facilities at the U of A Biomass Research Center. Two people - Dr. Nancy McCartney, curator of zoological collections, and Mary Suter, curator of museum collections - survived the firings and alone are responsible for the maintenance of the collection and its use. That's about 3.5 million objects apiece.

U of A students use the collections, researchers use the collections, other museums borrow the collections for exhibits. Today, if someone wants to look at, for example, examples of Caddoan pottery, he or she must call either McCartney or Suter, who will answer the one phone they now have in their office at the Biomass Building. They still answer "Museum Collections."

"We think these two people can handle the task at hand," said Associate Dean John Hehr, who is now interim director of the museum (another example, perhaps, that the museum lives). "If we were to need a third person, we would try to find the funds to do that." Hehr, speaking in an interview with the Times last week, also noted that the state Archeological Survey "has people out there," in its offices adjoining the Biomass Building, who could pitch in.

Hehr said the University wants to maintain the collection and add to it. He said he and a couple of members of the board's advisory panel - a group of Fayetteville residents - plan to travel later in the year to museums in the region and "begin thinking about ... what size museum should we have, how should it be configured, where should it be, how can we fund it."

He said architecture students would draw up a plan for development officers to present to the public to see if there is interest in endowing a museum.

"I would like a museum here," Hehr said. But, he added, it's one thing to build a museum and another to staff it.

The collection - much of it amassed by the "golden-tongued" (former director Dr. Charles McGimsey's words) renaissance man and zoologist Dr. Samuel Dellinger - can boast of rare prehistoric woven baskets from bluff shelters, items Dellinger went after when he saw Arkansas's Indian heritage being plundered by other states and museums. It also has a fine collection of split oak baskets from the last couple of centuries, examples of a craft brought to the Ozarks from Appalachia. Curators note its collection of work by George Gibson (1890-1979), an Ozark basketmaker for 80 years.

When Dellinger found something he liked "he went out and talked somebody into giving him the money to buy it," McGimsey said. It is apocryphal that Dellinger purchased some of the Spiro Mound material in Fort Smith's red light district from women who'd been paid with looted pots.

Retired Dellinger colleague Dr. Michael Hoffman, an archeologist, said Dellinger believed the collections were more important to the citizens of Arkansas than football and had said "the artifacts should be met with a brass band" upon their arrival.

The band would have sounded off at the museum's exceptional egg collection and its fossil collection (which includes a mammoth head from Hazen). Its Ming vases and Greek vases, while not an expression of Arkansas culture, do Arkansas proud. Its vertebrate collection holds the best faunal record of Arkansas critters in the state.

There are other objects in the collection that trace modern technology. The first computer ever used on the U of A campus, its cord as big around as a mature boa constrictor and its switch plate as big as a man's hand, is there. A campus box office desk designed by famed architect Robert Durrell Stone. The first telephone in Washington County - a phone that, when former director McGimsey took it to a class of schoolchildren, prompted the question from a little boy: "If it was the first phone, who did they call?" They aren't curiosities, but parts of Arkansas history.

The University of Oklahoma once housed its collection of six million artifacts (excluding minerals and rocks) in barns and basements and abandoned stables. That changed when then-director Michael Mares began a campaign - including tours of the pathetic storage spaces - to drum up support for a first-class repository of Oklahoma's heritage. It took 17 years and support from the city, state and a private donor, but the result was the Sam Noble Oklahoma Natural History Museum in Norman. How many curators does it employ for its collection? Fifteen, each of whom has an assistant, as well as a security staff. Its total curatorial staff employs 70 people. Mares, now returned to research from his long-time administration of the museum, found Arkansas's situation distressing. He

knows the collections, is impressed by them. "You can't curate 7 million objects" he said flatly, "with two people,"

Hoffman is similarly distressed. Dellinger, he said, would be "outraged. And would have gone to all the politicians in the state and reversed" the university's decision.

Archeologist Hoffman fears that the museum closure could cost the University some of its most valuable holdings - the exquisite Indian grave goods, such as the rare human head effigies - if descendant tribes believe they're not being cared for properly.

"The pot collection is one of the most important in the Southeast. Many are subject to repatriation. We've hoped the tribes, after acquiring legal title [to the artifacts] would allow the museum to curate them, and we have an agreement with the Quapaw. But the closing of the museum makes that more difficult."

The museum collection was likened to a library - and no one would close a library, right? "People are always comparing museums and libraries," Dr. McCartney responded. "But for the most part, books you can go out and buy another copy or replace. Museums you can't ... [they represent] a point in time. It's a time machine that allows you to travel cheaply and easily into different times." And, she added, its holdings are "irreplaceable."