Director's Corner
Marilyn L. Wheaton

Dear Friends,

Some who read this letter have never been to the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum. Others have been here once or twice, and some of you have visited many times. I invite those who have not been to the Museum to visit and see how special this place is and witness the magic of one of America's most prolific 20th century sculptors.

The Museum houses a unique collection of more than 1,500 works spanning the career of Marshall Fredericks (1908–1998), an internationally-renowned, traditional figurative sculptor. He is known in America and abroad for his monumental figurative sculpture, public memorials and fountains, portraits, and animal figures. The sculpture garden on the beautiful campus of Saginaw Valley State University is comprised of 22 of Fredericks' bronze sculptures, which the Museum maintains through its conservation fund.

In addition to Fredericks' work, two large galleries exhibit the work of regional, national and international artists throughout the year. Currently Tangents and Waves: The Art of David Barr and Diane Carr enlivens these temporary exhibition galleries.

On any given day the Museum is alive with student tours from the tri-county area schools, or SVSU art class students with sketchbooks and palettes on the floor using Fredericks' plaster molds as their model. On a warm summer day you will find young people in the classroom and in the sculpture garden working on projects such as one-point perspective drawings, color theory paintings, African paper mache masks, tetrahedron kite making and more, all part of the Museum's summer art camps. A full-time Curator of Education assumes responsibility for all of the Museum's educational programs and tours.

The Archives is comprised of 200 linear feet of Marshall Fredericks' personal papers, business correspondence and records, photos, sketches, videos, awards and much more and is entrusted to the care of a full-time archivist. The two collection storage areas with more than 1,000 objects from Fredericks' former Royal Oak studio and Birmingham home are entrusted to the care of a full-time registrar.

While SVSU provides tremendous support for capital improvement and operations, the Museum must raise nearly a half million dollars annually to support our educational and exhibition programs, the conservation of art work and the Archives collection, salaries and benefits, professional training, travel, and supplies.

I invite you to make an investment of $100 in the Museum's Annual Fund so that we can continue to provide quality programs and services that we believe our visitors expect and deserve. Please complete the form below and return it with your tax-deductible contribution in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Thank you for your commitment to one of mid-Michigan's greatest cultural assets.

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YES, I will invest in the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum with a gift to the Annual Fund.

☐ $100   ☐ $250   ☐ Other $_____

Method of payment ☐ Check (payable to SVSU Foundation)   ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

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Curator of Education attends the Michigan Art Education Association Conference

Curator of Education, Andrea Ondish, was a presenter at the 2008 Michigan Art Education Association conference in Grand Rapids on Oct. 10. Andrea's PowerPoint lecture, “Using the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum as a Michigan Content Expectations Curriculum Integration Resource,” was well received by educators. For K-8 educators, the importance of teaching Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE) with meaningful tools better aligns what is taught with what is tested in the classroom. Docents at the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum integrate the GLCE in science, mathematics, social studies, English language arts, and visual arts into their tours of the Main Exhibit Gallery and Sculptor's Studio, and in art making activities.

Andrea Ondish making a Power Point presentation to educators at the conference.

Photo: Unknown

Museum the recipient of a $6,400 MCACA grant

The Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum is the recipient of a $6,400 grant from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs for the Nancy Thayer Paintings, Russell Thayer Sculptures: A Unique Partnership exhibition, Feb. 7 - May 29, 2009. The Museum's Board of Advisors and staff thank the MCACA for acknowledging the work of two important Michigan artists with a grant to support an exhibition of their work.

The work of Nancy Thayer and Russell Thayer comes to the Museum

The Nancy Thayer Paintings, Russell Thayer Sculptures: A Unique Partnership exhibition will be on exhibit at the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum from Feb. 7 - May 29, 2009. Russell was Associate Professor Art History, Drawing and Sculpture at Delta College, 1966-1999. Nancy has been an art educator for more than 30 years. Please join us at a reception for the artists on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Russell and Nancy Thayer in their Franklin, Michigan studio.

Photo: Adam Thayer

Tangents and Waves: The Art of David Barr and Diane Carr is on exhibit at the Museum through January 31, 2009

In conjunction with the exhibition, David Barr and Diane Carr presented lectures about their work.

In response to Barr's slide presentation about his global art projects on Oct. 21, an audience member wrote: "I was mesmerized by David Barr’s presentation! It was cosmic and mystical! My mind was racing as I left; there were hardly words to speak. I think that I will compose a letter of thanks to him when I have had a chance to contemplate the enormity of what he has undertaken. This lecture was one of the best lectures about visual art that I have ever heard. How fortunate SVSU is to have had him speak about his passions and his creative efforts at making global connections through visual art.”

-Wayne O'Brien

“I appreciate the opportunity SVSU art students had to hear from Diane Carr about the organic process of creating her art. It's so important that students understand that an artist's work doesn't just happen by divine magic, that it's constantly being clarified and improved upon over a period of time. It is a synthesis of both labor and contemplation, driven by a passion for the process.”

-Sara Clark

Diane Carr speaking about the body of work she has created over the last three years, including Chenega, on Thursday, Oct. 30.

Photos: Geoffie Haney

Spirit of Detroit turns 50

While the city of Detroit was celebrating the 50th birthday of the Spirit of Detroit on Sept. 23, the Museum had its own celebration. Guests were treated to birthday cake and a special exhibition that showcased small scale models, editorial cartoons, and other objects related to the famous Marshall Fredericks sculpture. The Spirit of Detroit, located in front of the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center in Detroit, was unveiled and re-dedicated, 50 years after its original Sept. 23, 1958 dedication, and has undergone much needed cleaning and restoration.

A display was set up for the Spirit of Detroit's 50th Birthday in the Museum. Photo: Geoffie Haney
Few people realize that in addition to being a sculptor, Marshall Fredericks also served as a television commentator for a program entitled "The World of Art." Produced in collaboration with the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Chrysler Corporation, the series, which explored art-related topics, ran weekly on WXYZ-TV Channel 7 in Detroit during the late 1940s. The program often featured guest artists demonstrating their craft for the viewing audience at home. As host, Fredericks commented on pieces of art relevant to that week's topic, providing viewers with the context needed to understand them.

Reflecting on his time on "The World of Art" in a 1981 interview, Fredericks observed, "It was a lot of fun to do and it was, I think, really ahead of its time." Innovative for its era, the program introduced new methods of production for the burgeoning medium. "Things were done which hadn't been done before within television photography. For instance, Rembrandt appeared at least as a little tiny person, he stood in my hand. I was an actor who was dressed up like Rembrandt... It was quite interesting and he told why he did things and how he painted and who some of his patrons were and so on".

Fredericks greatly enjoyed his role as commentator. One incident illustrates the humor infused throughout the program. Fredericks reflected on a particularly amusing anecdote during the 1981 interview; "... one time we had the armor period in which we borrowed suits of armor and things from The Detroit Institute of Arts and I remember I was supposedly explaining all about this big beautiful suit of armor to someone and all about how beautifully it was made and the engraving and everything on it and the man lifted up the visor and in there was a person. It was very amusing".

"The World of Art" aired for thirteen episodes in 1949. Despite the short success of the program, Fredericks believed that television could serve as a valuable medium for artists wishing to impact the public in a more influential manner. Fredericks remarked, "... as an educational aid I think [television] would be just wonderful... It's just a pity that some of the great people of the past, even those as recent as Carl Milles and so on couldn't have explained what they were doing to millions of people." As host of "The World of Art", Fredericks acquainted millions of Detroiters with the art and artists in their own community and worldwide.

Saints, Sinners & Sopranos annual gala a big success

The 250 guests who attended the 4th annual Saints and Sinners benefit gala at the Museum on Friday, Oct. 3 enjoyed Osso Bucco, pork scaloppini al limone, grilled Italian herb salmon, and much more Italian cuisine and fine wine.

The SVSU flute quartet performed in the Museum, while student vocalists presented their finest soprano and tenor voices in the Arbury Center to an attentive crowd. SVSU theater students acting as plaster sculptures were so realistic that President Gilbertson was shocked when one blinked an eye. A fabulous set designed by the theater department's technical director, Jerry Dennis, created a real Italian Piazza feeling.

More than 45 works of art (paintings, photographs, prints, sculpture, jewelry) were donated by regional artists for the silent and live art auction. Thanks to their generosity, Sara Clark's auction organization skills, and auctioneer Mike Purlo's engaging personality and ability to get bidders to raise their paddle, the auction netted $12,000 to support the Museum's education and exhibition programs.

Event co-chairs Lucy Horak and Elaine Hirscheck were a dynamite team in helping plan the event. Honorary chairs Marlis and Heinz Haller were hands-on throughout the event planning. Thank you so much. Thanks also to the many volunteers who served on the planning committee, worked the art auction, shuttled guests to the Museum, and greeted guests. We couldn't have done it without you.
Museum welcomes new board members

Andy Bethune (Saginaw). Andy is Executive Director of the SVSU Foundation and is involved in numerous community outreach activities.

Madeline Burke (Cass City). Before moving to the U.S. four years ago, Madeline was team leader of warehouse operations and customer services at Eli Lilly, Cork, Ireland.

David Fry (Midland). David is an enthusiastic Marshall Fredericks collector, a donor and supporter of the Museum. He has forty-four years of teaching and administrative experience at the university level.

Alexandra Rymal (Brighton). One of nine grandchildren of Marshall and Rosalind Fredericks, Alexandra is a senior at the College for Creative Studies in Detroit.

Roethke Poetry Slam

In honor of the 100th birthday of Saginaw’s Pulitzer Prize winning poet, Theodore Roethke, the Museum held a poetry slam on Saturday, November 8. The event was well attended by members of the Friends of Theodore Roethke, students and the community. Prizes were awarded for the top three in the adult category and top two in the youth category.

Amelia Tlebecki, first place winner, competing in the poetry slam. Photo: Geoff Haney

NEW IN MUSEUM GIFT SHOP
Great Architecture of Michigan. Text by John Gallagher, architecture critic for the Detroit Free Press, photographs by Balthazar Korab, award-winning photographer. A meticulously researched and illustrated celebration of Michigan architecture, this hard cover volume includes architectural survivors like the Point Betsie Lighthouse, some thirty-five private homes, churches, theaters, office towers, stadiums, and government buildings. $60.00, plus tax, and shipping.
Thanks to our donors and supporters...

Your generosity made a significant difference in the number of school groups who visited the Museum, the success of outreach programs, and the quality of programs we were able to provide visitors. With nearly $200,000 in support, you made it possible for the Museum to:

* Collaborate with SVSU art department students and Saginaw public school students to design and paint a mural in the community.
* Restore Marshall Fredericks art works for the enjoyment of thousands of SVSU students, faculty and staff, and visitors to the campus.
* Catalog 90 percent of the more than 2,600 objects in the collection.
* Provide transportation subsidies to dozens of Bay and Saginaw County school groups to visit the Museum.
* Host three diverse exhibitions: Pewabic Pottery; Patronage, Private Residences, Public Building, Sacred Spaces; David Hostetler, Wood and Bronze Sculptures; and Street Sense: A 20 year retrospective of Tyree Guyton and the Heidelberg Project.
* Provide merit awards and honorariums to exhibiting artists.
* Host lectures by artists and art historians at SVSU.
* Hold our first summer art camp for youth.
* Process several dozen linear feet of Marshall Fredericks’ archival materials.
* Publish the quarterly Museum Musings newsletter.
* Conduct six Marshall Fredericks’ oral history interviews.
* Celebrate the centennial of Marshall Fredericks and the Museum’s 20th anniversary.

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We also thank everyone who supported the Museum by purchasing tickets to events and contributing to the donation box.