Director’s Corner
Marilyn L. Wheaton

As the director of the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum I am pleased to tell you that the first exhibition by an international artist will open here on June 13, 2009. Organized by the International Arts & Artists (IA&A), *The Softness of Iron, Welded Sculptures by Orna Ben Ami* exhibition is sure to capture the imagination of viewers. Ben Ami resides and works in Tel Aviv.

International Arts & Artists in Washington, DC is a non-profit arts service organization dedicated to increasing cross-cultural understanding and exposure to the arts internationally through exhibitions, programs and services to artists, arts institutions and the public.

“As International Arts & Artists enters its 12th season, it has become the producer of the largest number of touring art exhibitions in the United States and possibly in the world. IA&A has nearly 40 exhibitions being circulated and scheduled around the US and around the world, and nearly twice that many more in various stages of planning,” President and Founder David M. Furchgott recently said.

IA&A serves artists as well as museums of all sizes, borrowing from and bringing exhibitions to large world-renowned museums, as well as smaller institutions that serve their communities, like the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum.

“Ben-Ami creates highly symbolic pieces that carry universal, local, and deeply personal meanings, conveying thought-provoking contrasts of war and peace, memory and forgetting, the private and the collective. The artist’s works portray simple, man-made objects from her immediate environment such as clothing, books, and furniture examined from a young girl’s point of view. Removed from their natural context, the objects undergo a material and contextual transformation. The resulting sculptures evoke an emotional and cultural history, while simultaneously hinting at the broader human experience,” according to a recent IA&A press release.

The press release goes on to say that, “Through her artwork, Ben-Ami affectionately reconciles her personal experiences with the human condition. Employing the heavy physicality of iron, she captures and freezes her childhood memories, yet her sculptures also convey the transient nature of human celebration and mourning, departure and relocation. Although the artist states that the stories behind her sculptures are foremost her own, and she considers her work to be more social than political, the exhibition also speaks to the struggle integral to Ben-Ami’s Israeli culture since the country’s founding.”

Ben-Ami studied sculpture at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C. and Tel Aviv University. She has presented numerous solo exhibitions in her native Israel, as well as in Europe and the United States. Ben-Ami works in a renovated hen house turned art gallery in Tel Aviv. She is recognized internationally as a technically gifted and insightful sculptress of iron.

Ben Ami will travel from Tel Aviv to Michigan for the opening of *The Softness of Iron, Welded Sculptures* exhibition. While in the Great Lakes area, she will lecture at various venues about her work and the environment that inspires her.

Orna Ben-Ami, left, creates everyday objects of softness out of iron, like this piece titled “Open House,” which depicts the form of a person covered with a quilt on a park bench.

Ben-Ami spent a week in Hickory, North Carolina in early February talking about her work with art teachers, students, community groups and gallery visitors. Twenty-nine of her sculptures are on display in “The Softness of Iron” exhibit at the Hickory Museum of Art through April 5.

*Photo: Jeff Willhelm/The Charlotte Observer*
Direct marketing class will benefit the Museum

SVSU Assistant Professor of Marketing, Tom List, has assigned his MKT 490 Direct Marketing class to create various databases for museum mailings for such purposes as the Regional Biennial Juried Sculpture Exhibition list of artists, a market for a Marshall Fredericks sculpture traveling exhibition, and potential tour groups.

Marketing students involved in the project are Robin Bortner, Kristin Dubs, Susan Fryzel, Susan Griffith, Kristina Griffus, Jennifer Hill, Kathleen Kelley, Corianne Martin, Andrew Neilson, Patrick Nowak, Katte Rondeau, Desiree Slaterline-Bassi, Shannon Smith, and Kyle Stokes.

The Museum is grateful to Assistant Professor List and the students for their work on this important marketing project.

Transportation subsidies available to schools

Thanks to the generosity of Team One Credit Union, Saginaw and the Bay Area Community Foundation, transportation subsidies for the city of Saginaw and Bay County schools are available for field trips to the museum. If your class, or a friend’s class, is interested in a field trip to the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum, contact the museum at (989)964-7096 for more information about funding to subsidize your trip.

Summer Art Camps at the Museum

The Museum will host two-week Summer Art Camps at SVSU. Camp dates are Mon.-Fri., June 1-5 and 8-12, July 6-10 and 13-17, Aug. 3-7 and 10-14. Classes from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon are for ages 8-10 years, and from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. for ages 11-13.

Classes are designed and taught by SVSU art education majors. Each two week-long art camp is $170 and is limited to 12 students. A few scholarships provided by a SVSU Foundation Resource Grant are available for students who demonstrate need. Call the museum at 989-964-7096 for more information.

Comments from 2008 camps:

"Please offer more classes! We loved them."

"What a great program!"

"I wanted to tell you what a great time the girls had (at summer art camp). They can not wait until next year."

Students enjoy painting (top) and creating plaster relief sculptures (bottom) at the 2008 summer art camp.

Photos: Geoffe Haney

Thayer + Thayer, Paintings + Sculpture opened at the Museum on Feb. 14


Russell and Nancy will give two lectures in the Museum about their work on Thursday, April 2, at 3:00 pm and again at 7:00 pm.

Russell was Associate Professor of Art History, Drawing, Sculpture at Delta College from 1966-1999. He is currently a lecturer of Drawing, Figure Drawing, and TMP Metals at the University of Michigan. Nancy is currently on faculty at the School of Art & Design at the University of Michigan.

The Thayer + Thayer, Paintings + Sculpture exhibition is at the Museum through May 30. This exhibition is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs.

Photos clockwise from top left:
A. Russell and Nancy Thayer at the exhibition entrance.
B. Alma Gilmore Doud taking a break at the reception.
C. Marilyn Wheaton welcomes Vern and Evie Wheat.
D. Don and Liana Bachand enjoying the exhibition.
E. Donna VanSteenhouse (left) and Marlis Haller admire Russell’s sculpture maquettes.
F. Russell Thayer with Dr. Donald Carlyon.

Photos A-E by: Geoffe Haney, Photo F by Nancy Thayer

Don’t forget to visit our blog: www.marshallfredericks.com
From the Archives

Marshall Fredericks frequently used the figure of a swan in his sculptures. Many cultures feature swans in their mythology and folklore. Swans have come to symbolize fidelity and purity and are associated with music, poetry and divination. Fredericks often employed the swan as a symbol of resurrection and eternal life in his sculptures. *Wings of the Morning, Freedom of the Human Spirit, Indian and Wild Swans* and several other Fredericks’ works feature swans.

It seems that Fredericks’ possessed a deep love and appreciation for these beautiful and graceful creatures. Besides sculpting swans, Fredericks played an integral role in a swan nesting project during the 1960s. As a civic gesture to his hometown of Birmingham, Michigan, Fredericks presented two pairs of swans to the city. The Australian Black and White Mute swans made their home in Quartzon Lake located in the heart of the city. Unfortunately, several of the birds did not fare well in their new surroundings and had to be replaced by the city of Birmingham.

During the 1970s, in order to protect the swans and encourage nesting, the parks department constructed a bird sanctuary in the middle of the lake. This tiny floating island, constructed of several government surplus “life rafts,” was approximately thirty-five feet in diameter and covered in a vegetative screen of wild grasses and rushes. Each winter, the swans would be removed from the lake and provided with shelter by the parks department until spring when they would return to the water. The swans would then spend the rest of spring, summer and early fall on Quartzon Lake where passerby’s delighted in their presence.

As Fredericks’ home in Birmingham overlooked Quartzon Lake, it is quite plausible that one of these birds served as a real life inspiration for the swans often found in Marshall Fredericks’ work.

New stands make reading labels easier

Generous gifts from Margaret W. Winkelman and Robert A. Krause and the SVSU Office of Academic Affairs made it possible to have 25 new didactic label stands made for the Museum’s Main Gallery. Constructed of travertine marble and polished aluminum, the stands bring the labels to a height that makes reading easier for all Museum visitors.

The provenance and acquisition information of *Flying Wild Geese*, donated by Roz and Jerry Blumenau and Family, is described on the new didactic label stand to the right of the sculpture.

*Photo: Geof Haney*

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**MARSHALL M. FREDERICHS SCULPTURE MUSEUM**

Yes, I/we would like to be a member of the Museum and make a tax deductible contribution!

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Dear friend,

A membership contribution from you will support the Museum’s inspiring educational programs for kids and adults, exhibitions by regional, national and international artists, conservation of Marshall Fredericks’ sculptures, the Marshall Fredericks’ Archives, and maintenance of the beautiful sculpture garden adjacent to the Museum. Please become a member today and return this form with your contribution. Thank you!

*Marilyn L. Wheaton*

**MEMBERSHIP LEVELS**

- ☐ $2,500 Benefactor
- ☐ $1,000 Patron
- ☐ $500 Supporter
- ☐ $250 Donor
- ☐ $100 Friends
- ☐ $50 Individual
- ☐ $35 Senior/Student

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(see reverse for details)

- ☐ Exhibitions
- ☐ Education Trust
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- ☐ Operations
Museum Events - 2009

Thayer + Thayer, Paintings and Sculpture
February 7 - May 29, 2009

Lecture by Russell and Nancy Thayer in the Museum, Thursday, April 2, 3:00 and 7:00 PM.

June/July/August Summer Art Camps (see page 2 for details)

The Softness of Iron: Welded Sculptures by Orna Ben-Ami
June 13 - September 20
Israeli sculptor Orna Ben-Ami’s exhibition, The Softness of Iron: Welded Sculptures, demonstrates an intimate understanding of the strength and dexterity of iron.

Saints, Sinners and Sinatra
October 2
This fabulous annual gala is a fundraiser for the Museum. In its 5th year, some 300 guests from the Great Lakes Bay Region are expected to attend and enjoy Sinatra style Italian cuisine and wine, great Sinatra music and dancing, and a silent and live art auction. Featured musicians are Michael McMath, painter and vocalist, and his two-piece band. Reserve your tickets by calling 989.964.7082

Host your special event at the Museum

Do you have a special event coming up and are looking for a unique space to host it? Let the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum provide a picturesque backdrop for your party, meeting, or special event. Call the Museum to schedule a walk through and see how we can make your special event memorable. Rental rates are competitive.

Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum
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