GOLDSTEIN MUSEUM OF DESIGN NEWS

SUMMER 2012

Quest for the World’s Best Baskets

Joanne Eicher
Scholar, Advocate, Leader
HAPPENINGS

CHARACTER IN COSTUME: A JACK EDWARDS RETROSPECTIVE
exhibition opened January 20.

NORTH OAKS VILLAGERS
Needleworks group viewed unique needlework and quilted pieces in GMD's Research Center on March 13.

APPAREL DESIGN STUDENT
Sherry Sanden Will received a grant to work with GMD’s collection.
GMD’s Graduate Students: Caitlin Cohn and Jenny Parker

Academic museums operate on schedules tied to the rhythm of the school year. We gear up for new adventures in the fall as regular classes resume, hustle to the end of the semester with a winter break to refresh and renew, start over again in the spring. The excitement of spring semester ends with commencement and the promise of summer’s warmth.

At GMD, the end of spring semester is also a time that we generally bid good-bye to our two graduate student assistants. This year we wish all the very best to two skilled emerging museum professionals—Caitlin Cohn (MA apparel studies/Minor museum studies, PhD student) and Jenny Parker (MFA graphic design/minor museum studies).

Caitlin has been with GMD for two years, one as the communications assistant and one as the collections assistant. As communications assistant, Caitlin worked on developing GMD’s blog, promoting GMD’s behind-the-scenes activities and writing well-received explorations of collection items, highlighted with photos from the new digital database. As collections assistant, Caitlin worked with assistant curator Jean McElvain as co-curator of the exhibition Polarieties: Black and White in Design. This exhibition explored the enduring impact of the simple combination of opposites. It dramatically highlighted the broad range of this design choice across the entire object spectrum of the collection.

Jenny took over the role of communications assistant this year as Caitlin began her duties as collections assistant. Jenny was the first MFA student that GMD had hired, but this was not her first museum experience. As a student in an exhibition design class, she worked on an earlier GMD exhibition and as an assistant designer, she worked at the Minnesota History Center, developing graphics for The 1968 Exhibit. As communications assistant, Jenny’s graphic design skills were applied to the redesign of this newsletter, to Polarieties graphic identity, to a lively new eblast format, and to other communication elements. Her unique combination of museum awareness and graphic design benefited GMD’s message to audiences near and far.

As both Caitlin and Jenny completed minors in museum studies, we wish them all the best for future museum careers or wherever their pursuits take them. We will look forward to seeing Caitlin around McNal Hall for a while as she pursues her PhD in Apparel Studies. Next fall, GMD will welcome two new graduate students to these essential positions. Look for an introduction to them in the next issue!

Yours in design,
Lin Nelson-Mayson

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

**VJAA | 2012 AIA**
National Architecture Firm Award Recipient

Sponsored by Judy Dayton
June 2–August 26, 2012
Reception June 15, 6–8pm
HGA Gallery, Rapson Hall, Minneapolis Campus

Founded in 1995, VJAA has won acclaim for the way it uses architectural research to create buildings uniquely and empirically attuned to their geography, climate, history, and culture. The firm’s three principals—Vincent James, FAIA; Jennifer Yoo, AIA; and Nathan Knutson, AIA—have led VJAA on a wide-ranging search for the embedded logic of projects: the essential markers of place, function, materiality, and craft that lie beneath each work and serve as an armature for its development.

**Quest for the World’s Best Baskets**
June 8–September 9, 2012
Reception June 8, 6–8pm
241 McNal Hall, St. Paul Campus
See page 4

**Rural Design: A New Design Discipline**
HGA Gallery, Rapson Hall, Minneapolis Campus
September 4–October 21, 2012
Reception/Book Signing—September 7, 6–8pm

Rural areas worldwide are undergoing profound change creating considerable challenges and stress for its residents and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Rural Design brings design thinking and the problem-solving process of design to rural issues, recognizing that human and natural systems are inextricably coupled and engaged in continuous cycles of mutual influence and response. In conjunction with Dewey Thorbeck’s recently released book on rural design, his exhibition outlines the theoretical base for rural design and the importance of connecting issues to create synergy and optimal solutions from a global, national, state, region, and local perspective.

**Circumstantial Evidence—Photographs by Balthazar Korab**
HGA Gallery, Rapson Hall, Minneapolis Campus
October 27–December 15, 2012
Reception/Book Signing—November 2, 6–8pm

The various portfolios of Balthazar Korab assembled for this exhibition bear witness to scenes of raw beauty, everyday urbanism, and the robust monumentality that together compose cultural and physical landscapes. Additionally, the portfolios presented in the show demonstrate many of the sensibilities and tendencies that Korab developed and nurtured during his tenure in Italy that influenced his professional practice as a commissioned photographer of architecture.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

**We the Designers**
September 28–December 30, 2012
241 McNal Hall, St. Paul Campus

Politicians, journalists and pundits use language. Graphic designers use visual language. Drawing on two realms, designers unite visual and verbal content in compelling communication. In a divisive era, when words alone have not been enough, can the power of design help unite citizens on the issues? Twenty three participating contemporary graphic designers wield opinion and analysis to inform and persuade about the unique issues facing the Obama administration; among whom are College of Design Professors Daniel Jasper and Steven McCarthy.
Quest for the World’s Best Baskets
Many GMD exhibitions provide a fresh look at objects that visitors think they already know about. *Quest for the World’s Best Baskets* showcases over 200 baskets from around the world that may test visitors’ preconceptions about what baskets can look like, what materials they can be made from, their uses, and their importance to a culture’s sense of identity and its livelihood.

The baskets in this exhibition represent about one-fourth of the riches that resulted from collector Nancy Schermer’s 40 years of world travels. The title reflects the sense of purpose that propelled her trips: to find the most beautiful and most interesting baskets on the planet. An educator, Schermer inspired exhibition curator Susan McArdle with the baskets’ unique stories, which connect the baskets to the lives and circumstances of their makers.

GMD’s marketing partner for the exhibition is Grand Hand Gallery in St. Paul. The shop will present a collaborative exhibition, *American Baskets: from Traditional to Contemporary, from Coast to Coast*, June 2–July 8, 2012. thegrandhand.com

In South Africa, the Zulus had long produced tightly-woven baskets from grasses and palm leaf. During Apartheid, urban Zulus began to substitute colorful recycled telephone wire. Today these unique baskets can be purchased on the Internet.

The diversity of materials and techniques in Appalachian baskets reflect the huge area comprising Appalachia. Today Appalachian baskets reveal an evolution from utility to art so complete that collectors now seek out Appalachian baskets by specific artists.

Navajo and Hopi baskets may be familiar. Less familiar is the story of competition and cultural borrowing between these two cultures. The exhibition will show the subtly striking design results of this rivalry.

Since the 1970s, the Embera-Wounaan Indians of Panama’s Darien rain forest have made baskets for sale to tourists and collectors. Their more recent baskets celebrate the gorgeously plumbed birds of the rain forest.
In May 2011, GMD was awarded a Conservation Project Support Grant (CPA) from the Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS). The grant, Preserving Costume through Re-housing, supported the purchase and installation of an additional 11 storage cabinets and the fabrication of 1000 die-cut corrugated plastic sheet shoe trays. The additional cabinets will house approximately 800 pairs of shoes and accommodate over 200 floor-length garments which were previously in cabinets that were too short for them.

Prior to receipt of the grant, GMD’s shoe collection had been housed in cabinets constructed of non-archival materials and in a manner which did not use space efficiently or allow easy access to objects. Long garments were compromised by insufficient cabinet height and, as a result, the garments were folded near the bottom edge, causing compression and possible fabric damage. New cabinets are made from powder-coated steel, and feature continuous hinges and gaskets to keep the dust out. Shoe cabinets have sliding trays that allow for safe and easy access to shoes. Garment cabinets are open with no obstructions for hanging full-length garments.

Shoes are difficult artifacts to support in storage and to transport safely. When stored in drawers, they can move during opening and closing causing a shoe to slide, tip or become separated from its mate. In the fall of 2010, GMD Registrar, Eunice Haugen, and Assistant Curator, Jean McElvain, met with Ann Frisina, Textile Conservator at Minnesota Historical Society (MHS), to understand how they had dealt with similar storage issues. They learned that MHS used a shoe tray system originally designed by the Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT). FIT designed a carrier or tray constructed of coroplast (corrugated plastic board) which isolated each pair of shoes on a single mount. MHS had contracted with the Minnesota company, Modernistic, to fabricate the FIT shoe carrier design. Although the original MHS dies had been discarded, GMD was able to work with Modernistic to create a new die from the original drawings and fabricate new trays.

The coroplast is folded to form the tray and shoes are supported with tissue, acid free board, or padding to retain and/or restore their original shape. Shoes are fastened to the trays with twill tape threaded through pre-cut slots in the carrier and tied around the shoes. As of the spring of 2012, 45% of the shoes have been readied for storage by trained volunteers.

Thanks goes to IMLS for awarding this grant, the staff of MHS, FIT, and our loyal volunteers, Mark Schultz, Marjorie Ford Sethna, Ann Sisel, Natasha Thoreson, and Linda Webster!
The grant *Preserving Costume through Re-housing* supported the purchase and installation of 11 storage cabinets and the fabrication of 1000 die cut corrugated plastic sheet shoe trays.

**Before**

**During installation of new cabinets**

**New shoe trays with custom support in new shoe cabinets**

Clockwise:
- Satin wedding slippers, 1891
- Embroidered shoes, Miji, 1960–1979
- Satin Pumps, Capezio, 1947–1954
JOANNE EICHER
Scholar, Advocate, Leader
Without the skillful leadership of Goldstein Museum of Design Lifetime Member Joanne Eicher (Regents Professor Emerita), GMD would not be the museum it is today. In 1977, Eicher was head of the Textiles and Clothing Department, and became involved with GMD through an invitation by Gertrude Esteros. Esteros, head of the Design Department, undoubtedly recognized the fortuitous nature of this alliance; Eicher's research in African dress and textiles, her anthropological background, and her keen ability to bring people together brought considerable momentum to what was then called the Goldstein Gallery.

Early on in her directorship, Eicher recognized the importance of holding GMD to high museum standards, and she applied to the American Association of Museums for an official museum assessment. Based on the Museum Assessment Program's recommendation, and with the support of the College of Home Economics, Eicher hired GMD's first full-time administrative assistant in 1985, and its first full-time director in 1987.

Eicher also collaborated with faculty and staff to create the 1987 Goldstein Gallery Collections catalog, a publication with collection photographs, and written overviews of GMD's history, mission, and collecting areas. While there have been many changes at GMD since the catalog's creation, it remains the most comprehensive publication on the collection to date, and the tenets and aims outlined in it still have relevance today.

Eicher, an international leader in her field, continues to serve on multiple boards and stays active with GMD despite her many teaching, writing, editing, and speaking obligations. She has also consulted on exhibitions, and donated objects to GMD's collection. Eicher recently served as Editor-in-Chief of the 10-volume Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion, released in 2010, which features writings on dress by scholars from all over the world. Eicher generously donated a full set of the Encyclopedias to GMD.

GMD is indebted to Joanne Eicher not only for her leadership, but for her deep appreciation and true understanding of objects as invaluable conveyors of cultural histories.
Rapson on the Road

The GMD exhibition *The Importance of Drawing: Ralph Rapson’s Legacy* is traveling the country, presenting strong architectural hand drawings and renderings by a master of the craft and by the students he taught. Organized with support from HGA Architects and Engineers, the exhibition was first presented in GMD’s HGA Gallery (located in Rapson Hall) November 11, 2010 through January 9, 2011. It then hit the road with presentations at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee and at North Carolina State University where architectural faculty with ties to Rapson’s influential teaching stress the importance of developing drawing skills to enhance communication. The exhibition will also be on display at the University of Detroit Mercy in Fall 2012.

One of Ralph Rapson’s (1914–2008) most admired skills—besides designing outstanding, humanistic architecture—was his exceptional ability to draw. This exhibition, curated by GMD’s Rapson Hall exhibitions coordinator James Dozier, features examples of Rapson’s Minnesota Style plus examples of work by his students, now prominent architects in their own right. The Minnesota Style included: strong use of line to define three dimensional form; mastery of the use of shade and shadow to define these forms and give them materiality; and buildings and landscapes populated by believable characters of all shapes, sizes, ages, genders, and nationalities. Above all, the style that Rapson championed engages the viewer with a vision of architecture as the vibrant setting for the theater of everyday life.

It is no surprise that Rapson’s emphasis on drawing continues to influence contemporary learning. Through his own drawings and the legacy he fostered in his students, contemporary students across the country will discover the importance of hand drawing in an age of computer graphics and of creating meaning through human-centered design.
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Assistant Curator
Director
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Designer
Photographer
FLOWER POWER IN GMD’S COLLECTION

Clockwise from top left:
- Paper Dress
  Wastebasket Boutique by Mars
  1966–69
  Gift of Barb Bailey Wegers
- Kimono Lining
  1968
  Gift of Hima Berglund
- Yellow Shift Dress
  The Villager
  1965
  Gift of Sharonne Hayes
- Rotating Patio Chair
  Bottomfilter, Matt
  1960–1984
  Gift of Mr. John Sundet
- Cotton Yardage, "Unikko" Print
  Maja & Kristina Isola for Marimekko
  1964
  Gift of Dorothy E. A. Ramsland

Y ellow Shift Dress
The Villager
1965
Gift of Sharonne Hayes

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