49° latitudes 42°
Idaho's seven degrees of latitude suggests range, freedom from narrow restrictions, and a tolerated variety of action and opinion.

the CHARACTER of form:

CONSONANCE IN TERRA COTTA

Kerry Moosman, *Untitled*, burnished terra cotta vessel, coil-built, sagger fired, 24 x 13". Photo courtesy Stewart Gallery.

It is nearly midnight. Kerry Moosman, clad in T-shirt and faded jeans, is hunched at his kick-wheel in a spacious, windowed room at Fort Boise Community Center, polishing a voluminous, globular earthenware vessel, coil-built of terra cotta. This is his studio and classroom, a realm largely of his own devising, and one he has occupied since 1982, teaching a class of sixteen students one night a week in winter and spring. After hours, the space is his alone, along with the measured gift of concentration uninterrupted.

A famous English potter wrote at the end of his eightieth year that "the training of a potter is a process limited only by the span of his life." As he steadily burnishes the vessel with a small green agate pinched between thumb and forefinger, Moosman, who has been an artist himself for more than thirty years and is justly famous, readily agrees. "Yeah, there's never a guarantee with any of it. I'm still learning about process – more so than technique. My students just wedged some food into their clay [as temper]. I tried the dry lentils," he adds with a choirboy grin.

A fifth-generation Idahoan on his grandmother's side, Kerry was raised on the southern spur of the Sawtooth Mountains in the now outworn mining town of Atlanta, Idaho, because his grandfather (accompanied by Kerry's grandmother and father, then age five) arrived there in 1931 to work at the gold mine of the St. Joseph Lead Company. Caught in the vise of the Great Depression, his grandfather ran a wheelbarrow for the foundation of the mill; the family wintered in a tent. The town peaked in the late 1930s at about 500 residents. Along with eleven other students, Kerry attended the two-room school through the third grade. Then the mine closed, and his family moved to Boise in 1959, where he enrolled in Franklin Elementary, a school whose student body easily surpassed the entire population of Atlanta. However, by the time he reached junior high, and again in high school, he had proficient ceramics teachers who recognized his artistic talent and encouraged his efforts. He still managed to summer with his grandparents in Atlanta, content with water pump, woodstove, and outhouse.

In 1975, Moosman (rhymes with "Bozeman") earned a B.F.A. in ceramics and sculpture at Boise State University. During his undergraduate years, he served as a studio assistant to renowned Korean-born, Japanese potter John Takehara; later, he himself was a ceramics instructor at BSU and took graduate courses in ceramics.

Kerry Moosman accumulates venerable objects – tools and utensils, pots and baskets, paintings and photographs – and lives in two vintage houses gorged with them (Atlanta in summer, Boise in winter). As a boy in the mining community, he ransacked the hills and shacks for relics, fascinated by fragments from the past, whether tin, wood, or stoneware. He says, "History is a living thing. It's *not* the past. Everything we do and are is a product of everything that has come before." He found crockery shards especially tantalizing: "I remember finding broken dishes and thinking it was cool that they had survived, that they hadn't rusted or deteriorated, that you could still see the designs." Yet another curious coincidence from those formative years, given his later predilection for coil-built pottery, was the occasional assistance he provided local women in braiding coiled rag rugs.

What has passion to do with choosing an art form? Everything. There is nothing else which determines form.

– Gertrude Stein

Although no one knows when some ancestor first discovered that fire transforms clay into a better container than either leather or baskets, assuredly pottery is among the oldest of art forms. And despite the lack of a Clay Age, its use by early cultures dates to at least 7000 BCE. Neolithic Egyptians, for example, employed fired clay to fashion their semi-spherical bowls. That Moosman, with his unquenchable interest in all matters historical, should choose an art so engulfed in the past seems everlastingly apt and fitting. "Nothing has more historical significance than pottery," he says. "For lots of cultures, that's all that's left. That's what I like about clay. It lasts."

Pottery, like Gaul, can be divided into three parts: earthenware, stoneware, and porcelain. No *one* of them has an inherent superiority, but Kerry Moosman favors earthenware. Fired at much lower temperatures (1250°C), it requires less fuel and can be made from relatively inexpensive materials. Unlike the other two, however, earthenware plates, bowls, and pots may be porous, depending on how their exterior is finished. In any event, set a place at the art table – between painting and sculpture – for pottery, because clay is an elemental medium that depends upon material, design, color, balance, texture, and form.

I N S I D E T H I S I S S U E

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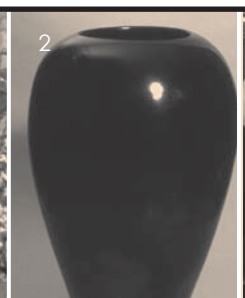
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IDAHO COMMISSION on the ARTS

THE CHARACTER OF FORM: continued...

Spirit of Healing Waters, stoneware mural, 35 x 25', 2002.

Untitled, burnished terra cotta, coil-built, *sagger* fired, 33 x 14".

Kerry Moosman, *Alley History*, stoneware tile mural, 35 x 25', 1992.

Rather than "throwing" stoneware pots on a wheel, Moosman builds his vessels from coils of clay – a slower, more deliberate process. He begins with a slab base, then on a table – hands flat, fingers together – rolls ropes of clay, backward and forward, with a consistent half-inch diameter and a drawn length of up to five feet. He deftly gyres these pieces into a shape conceived from a preliminary pencil sketch. Though a half-dozen recycled wooden modeling tools rest within easy reach, his experienced hands are obviously his primary tool. Coil-building is both art and craft: the coils must be wedded with fingers and a wooden spoon or paddle, leveled, smoothed to the same wall thinness, lap-spliced over several days (at eight or so coil-ring intervals) because until it has air-dried sufficiently, the pot cannot support its flare – all the while turning the shape methodically, adding coils and scuffing them together in a symmetrical form. Within the interior, for contrast, he leaves the marks of his tools and his process. Lifelong potter Michael Cardew said, "To those few skilled in *both* techniques, hand-building is more difficult to master than throwing; and as a training in the sense of form, it is probably superior." In Moosman's instance, ten days is a minimum simply to complete the form.

Once the pot is bone-dry, the artist wets it again with a brush and begins to polish it with his smooth agate, burnishing a small area, back and forth, back and forth along the grain of the coil, for hours at a time. Finishing an area the size of a child's hand is an all-day commitment. Ever so gradually, back and forth, one discovers how extensive a skin lies on the surface of a globe or a cylinder. Still, each burnished latitude and longitude leaves a patterned texture along its selvage somewhat resembling that of a patch quilt, and the overall effect is dazzling. "It's really vulnerable until you fire it," Moosman cautions. "You can only do so much at a time. In reality, you have to be a bit of a masochist to polish pottery. But," he explains, "it's the only way to get the transparent depth I'm looking for." This is surely no art for the minimally exceptional.

After a month and a half spent burnishing a large pot, it is bisque-fired in an electric kiln for a day to drive off its chemically-bonded water. Following a cooling stage, it is loaded into a *sagger* – an enclosed, airtight container (barrel or drum) intended to shield the ware from open flames, bottomed with fuel such as sawdust, chopped straw, or powdered dung – and in turn, the *sagger* is placed within a gas-fired kiln. The high gas kiln temperature cooks the encapsulated *sagger* fuel, but since it is deprived of oxygen (reduction firing), the fuel pulls the metallic oxides out of the clay and coverts them to base metals. Iron oxide to iron, for instance. With earthenware, one consequence is extraordinary coloration: cinnabar, matte red brown, baked yam or squash or apricot, burnt sienna, random black smudges. The process, three days including pre-heat and cool-down, is serendipitous enough to make each opening of the *sagger* resemble an Easter morning. The potter crosses his fingers. "It's not an exact science," says Moosman. He labors over one large piece at a time and might complete five in a Boise season. He does not pot in Atlanta, however, because it provides a relief from city life, as well as time to turn his hand to historic preservation. Moreover, referring to the temperamental mountain climate, he says terra cotta does not like thermal shock.

I call that man an artist who creates forms... I call that man a craftsman who reproduces forms. Painters and sculptors, whenever they were great, transfigured the forms they had inherited.

– Andre Malraux

Untitled, burnished terra cotta , coil-built, sagger fired, 20 x 28".

The potter-artist has noted astutely that while art cannot exist without craftsmanship, "craftsmanship alone will not make you an artist." Although Kerry Moosman's technique is impeccable, it is his forms and their scale that are even more imposing. Some pieces are forty inches high – one even required the dismantling and reconstruction of a kiln. All of them are, reflecting the artist himself, generous and gentle – balanced forms, forms expressive and elegant, forms beyond function – because, after all, it was not until the fashioning of clay "went beyond gratification of physical need" that pottery evolved into a radiant art: the artist as form-giver, the viewer as form-recipient. A metamorphosis. Little wonder, then, that the descriptive anatomy of a pot runs from foot to body, from waist to shoulder, neck, lip, and mouth.

When artists finally taught clay to sing, its use was refined to include ritual and ceremonial objects, a change coinciding, not incidentally, with the transition from hunting to agriculture. Originality, coupled with harmonic proportions and volume (for example, the size of the opening), gave forms their own significance – a purely aesthetic one. The new fabric of form, as distinguished from utilitarian compositions, wove universal forms, along with self-contained elegant variations, naturally enough, and Kerry Moosman's are their spiritual descendants: hymns in clay.

For the last several years, Moosman has worked in terra cotta (from the Latin, *earth baked* or *cooked*), a red, silky, unglazed clay high in iron oxide, and much preferred in Renaissance Italy for high-relief plaques. Sometimes, in a stark variation, Moosman fires it monochrome ebony.

Asked about artists in and out of clay whom he admires, his opinion has to be coaxed. He speaks of traditions in Chinese, Oxaca pre-Columbian, Hopi, Acoma, and Santa Clara pottery, of Nampayo and Maria Martinez, of Mark Rothko and Robert Motherwell. Queried further about why he does not even title or sign his own work, he responds, "I don't like artist's signatures on paintings, or artist statements for that matter. Most of the Southwest potters couldn't read or write, and they never signed their pieces."

The piece, when it is over, is not about what is made, but how it is made.

– Andrew Kuntz

Kerry Moosman has created two acclaimed works of public art in Boise, each a ceramic tile mural. In 1992, *Art in Public Places*, a program of the Boise City Arts Commission, selected his proposal for *Alley History* at Ninth and Bannock Streets. It consists of tiled fragments grouted over layers of vintage advertising exposed when the brick wall was sandblasted for the installation. The tiles themselves incorporate "historic shards" ranging from Chinese ideograms that recall the loss of Boise's nearby Chinatown, to a Spud King and female nightclub dancers. The 35-by-25-foot mural, containing more than 150 tiles, may be read as an outcry against the homogenization of local contemporary culture.

The complementary *Spirit of the Healing Waters*, three blocks away at Tenth and Main Streets, was commissioned in 2002 by BCAC and installed on the rear wall of the Idanha Hotel, built in 1900 but recently converted to condos and office space. This mural, too, was assembled as a collage of historical analects and ephemera – stock certificates, stationery, photographs – and uses the former hotel's logo of Wolf Robe, a Cheyenne chief, whose image was appropriated at the time as a patron for health and healing. The stoneware likeness pays homage to generations of American Indians who made Boise Valley, as well as Idaho, their home. It, too, contains more than 100 ceramic tiles.

The artist considers both murals "visual history lessons," combining several periods. Many of the fragments depicted now exist only in their ceramic representation. At the same time, the interwoven blank areas invite the viewer to fill in with his or her own "remembrance of things past."

A recipient of numerous awards and selected exhibitions, and well represented in Idaho corporate collections, Moosman also has vessels – one of them as early as 1972 – at the Boise Art Museum. "His work is an asset to our collection of American ceramics," says associate curator Heather Ferrell. "He is a master of his technique who we hold up to artists of national and international stature."

At his kick-wheel, Kerry Moosman reflects, "You are not going to be here forever. What you are creating won't be here forever, either." Nevertheless, he persistently pursues his timeless forms, gracefully encompassing old and new. He lifts clay intonations out of earth, fire, and ashes, vital and vigorous and dynamic forms of character infused with a balanced quietude. They fill the viewer with wordless satisfaction: "forms the eye goes to with gratitude."

•CC

Untitled, burnished terra cotta , coil-built, sagger fired, 18 x 28".

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

THE CASE for FUNDING IDAHO ARTS

I do not want art for the few, any more than education for the few, or freedom for the few.

– William Morris

I would like to share with you some of the points I made on February 1 before the Joint Finance Appropriations Committee regarding the overall programs of the Idaho Commission on the Arts. I also want to share the outcome, in order to reiterate how crucial your role in advocating for the arts in Idaho has become.

• Dan Harpole, Director

Approximately 40% of the Idaho Commission on the Arts funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, the balance from our state appropriation.

Ours is essentially a service and funding organization with a professional staff providing arts guidance, assistance, and know-how, while also providing grants and awards to individuals and organizations.

The Commission serves *all* of Idaho. Over the past seven years, grant applications have been funded in every legislative district. These grants all require matching dollars, or in-kind support, leveraging remarkable statewide support for the arts. Here are some examples:

In northern Idaho, over $285,000 in grants have been awarded to artists, arts organizations, and arts educators in the past seven years. One of the outstanding examples from that region is the Panida Theatre in Sandpoint. With General Operating Support and Cultural Facilities grants in excess of $60,000, the Commission has provided essential support to this historic facility. •Cultural Facilities grants are also helping with the restoration of the 1915 Adams County courthouse in Council, converting it to a community cultural and performing arts center. •And the same grants have assisted with the restoration of the 1920 Wilson Theatre in Rupert, transforming it into a community arts center. •Since 1999, in the Idaho Falls area, over $255,000 in grants have provided increased access to the arts and arts education. This past year, with the support of the NEA, Idaho Falls established a downtown cultural district. •The largest Commission grant program supports arts education. •For the past five years, with administrative assistance of the Log Cabin Literary Center, the Commission has placed writers, who are also mothers, in six-month residencies in teen-parent schools in Boise, Nampa, and Pocatello, to assist these young parents to better express themselves through writing. •The Commission has also worked closely with Caldwell Fine Arts to support school enrichment programs in which they share their seasonal professional performances with students through in-school performances and presentations at the Jewett Auditorium. Their generous outreach brings the arts to the surrounding rural area and the towns of Marsing, Wilder, Middleton, Parma, and Payette. In many cases this is the only exposure these young people have to professional dance, theatre, and music.

Grants and awards too numerous to mention provide support for the diverse art forms, from traditional to contemporary. They are evident in our largest communities, as well as in towns such as Elk City, Driggs, Oakley, Hope, and Salmon. Over the past seven years, the Commission has provided more than 1,600 grants and awards across the 35 legislative districts for a total of $4.5 million. Moreover, the Commission's support of the arts in Idaho goes well beyond providing grants and awards. Increasingly, we provide the greater arts community with critical technical assistance:

In 2004 we provided sixty-three workshops and presentations for arts organizations and artists in every region of the state. They included forty-two skill-building workshops for artists and arts organizations provided in partnership with Arts Northwest, Idaho Commerce and Labor, and eight local arts councils. •With Commission assistance, Moscow recently joined Coeur d'Alene and Boise as cities passing a percent-for-art ordinance. In the year ahead, at the request of Mountain Home and Rexburg, we will be working on similar endeavors. •In this past year, 600 individuals attended 8 workshops on public art in locations around the state.

And, of course, we are working to bring greater national recognition to Idaho and the outstanding arts and artists found here. Recently, the Nez Perce Tribe was one of only 17 recipients from 300 nominees to receive a "Coming Up Taller Award," accompanied by a $10,000 grant for a summer culture camp where tribal youth become immersed in Nez Perce traditions (see pgs.14-15). The Log Cabin Literary Center was one of only ten summer arts programs in the nation to be provided with an additional $25,000 NEA grant, and it used the money to expand its summer writing camp for youth. The Idaho Shakespeare Festival, furthermore, was selected by the NEA for the second round of the "Shakespeare in America" initiative, providing additional resources to expand its "Shakespearience" arts education program.

Nonetheless, the budget recommended by the Governor was still approximately $10,000 below our 1999 appropriation. JFAC voted on March 2. The *Idaho Statesman* reported the outcome:

JFAC Denies Extra Money for Arts Grants

JFAC has rejected the state Arts Commission request for another $40,000 in grants for artists and groups throughout Idaho. What's more, the committee refused to give even the $9.000 the agency wanted to replace its 10-year-old phone system.

Rexburg GOP Sen. Brent Hill pushed for no additional grant money, while Moscow Democrat Rep. Shirley Ringo tried for $15,000.

Hill said the agency already has $372.000 in taxpayer support for the program, and added to federal funds, there's more than $600,000 available for arts grants. Hill said he even contemplated cutting the arts grants back by $100,000 because of that. He opted not to do so.

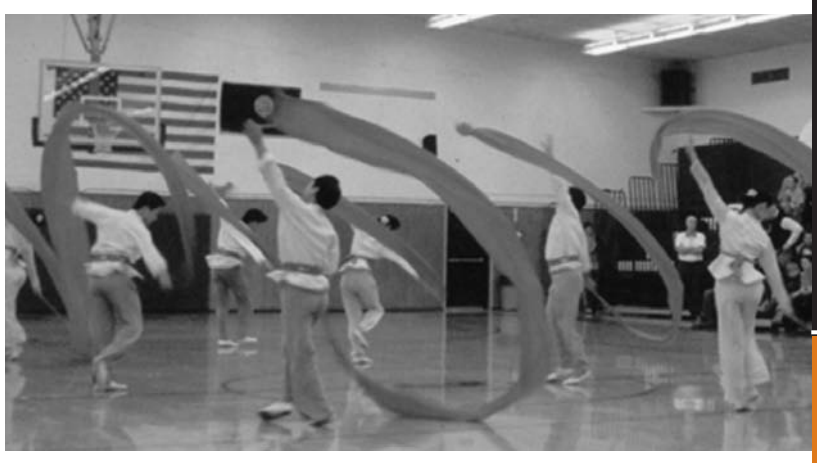
Caldwell Republican Sen. John McGee tried to offer a compromise of $9,000. McGee's motion landed the panel with a 9-9 tie, requiring JFAC Co-chairman Dean Cameron of Rupert to break the deadlock.

Reluctantly, Cameron voted in favor of McGee's proposal, giving it the votes to approve the plan. But Co-chairwoman Maxine Bell of Jerome switched her vote at the last second, killing the McGee proposal by 10-9.

Ringo's proposal failed on a party line 15-4 vote. Hill's motion, keeping the grants funding exactly where it is now, passed 19-0.

I MEAN that THE BELLS CHILDREN could hear were inside them.

– Dylan Thomas



"It's wonderful to perform to large audiences in big theaters, but for us this is what it is all about – sharing with the people and the children," said Ann Woo, executive director of the Chinese Performing Artists of America. The "people and children" are the 300 third-through-eighth-grade students sitting in the Potlatch High School gymnasium, awaiting the start of "Dances of China, A Journey of 5,000 Years." (In addition to Potlatch High, the program was presented in the Beasley Performing Arts Coliseum in Pullman for 700 students from Moscow, Troy, Lapwai, Juliaetta, Kendrick, and Genesee, Idaho; and Colton and Pullman, Washington.)

As soon as all the students were seated, Ms. Woo greeted them in Chinese and taught them how to count to ten. She also talked about how many Chinese there are in the world, and then set the scene for the colorful program, which includes excerpts from "The Dragon King," a fantasy set beneath the sea. The students saw mock sword, peacock, and turtle dances, as well as dances with fans and silk scarves. The program featured a spectacular solo with a female gracefully dancing despite balancing ten rice bowls on her head. The finale was a colorful dance using ribbons to represent fireworks. As the dancers prepared to leave, the students cheered and applauded, shouting *shai shai* (thank you).

"Dances of China" was part of the Festival Dance Youthreach Project, whose mission is "reaching, teaching, and inspiring our youth with the best of the arts." Festival Youthreach, fifteen years old, reaches 4,000 students annually with professional dance and music programs selected for artistic excellence, ethnicity, stylistic diversity, and school experience. Students from twenty-six schools in fourteen communities have benefited from the program.

"Not only do the students get a wide diversity of performances that they would not otherwise have in our rural area, they are seeing some of the finest companies available anywhere," says Micki Panttaja, executive director of Festival Dance. Her view is echoed by teachers: "This was the first live dance performance for many of my students, and it was the first time for all of them to see dances and costumes from China," writes Kim Cirka, a fourth-grade teacher at Juliaetta Elementary." A Juliaetta student capped her. "It was the best dance we have ever seen in our lives."

• Ruth Piispanen, Director, Arts in Education

Photos:
CPAA, a California company of 14 performers, including guest artists from China, toured the Northwest for the first time in 2004. The mid-November stop in the Palouse was sponsored by Festival Dance & Performing Arts.

Susan Jacklin

Q&A WITH AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Susan Jacklin

At-Large appointment 2003
Education: Westminster College (B.A. art education)
Home: Post Falls

Jacklin was a board member of the Sacred Heart Hospital Foundation and is a past board member of the KMC Foundation and board president of Hospice of North Idaho. Currently, she is president of Community Building Partners, a nonprofit organization dedicated to renovation of The Old Church as a community arts center in Post Falls. Her avocations include fly fishing and gourmet cooking. She and her husband have a teen-age son.

Where did your interest in the arts begin?

I was watching a television show on sumi painting as a young child. I fell in love with the simplicity of the stroke and the magic of making beautiful scenes with the brush. I wanted to learn that technique and have loved watercolors ever since.

Can you identify specific arts needs in your area?

We are a community of 20,000+ with one frame shop that has showings, and a dance studio. We need so much more. A place to have art classes and share the talents of our community with theater, music, and dance. Post Falls is situated between Coeur d'Alene and Spokane, both of which have supported arts through theater, galleries, and music.

Tells us about the present vision and progress on The Old Church.

The Old Church will be the center that will hold the arts. We are so fortunate to have this Gothic church building – it was to be torn down for a parking lot when we discovered that the hewn timbers were in excellent shape. The community came to the rescue and has been working on it since 1998. A nonprofit was formed to transform it into a place celebrating the arts and community. This $1.2 million project has a capital campaign to match the M.J. Murdock grant awarding us $150,000. Once we raise it, we will have $300,000. What a boost! Idaho Commission on the Arts and the NEA have granted us support for an elevator, stage flooring, and lights. So Community Building Partners (our name) is grateful. The main floor will be opened this May.

What do you still carry from your experience as an elementary school art teacher?

I love teaching art! Being with our children is a joy, watching the excitement in their eyes as they create. How they can draw without fearing failure, they just go for it! To build that confidence is an important philosophy of mine.

If you could go to any event, what would it be?

I have always loved musicals, especially Andrew Lloyd Weber and Tim Rice. I have seen "Phantom of the Opera" in London, and when it was over I couldn't get out of my seat, it touched me that much.

What do you like most about northern Idaho?

The natural beauty of the mountains, lakes, streams, forests, and wild animals. I thrill every time I see a bald eagle, or see a moose. I love to fly fish and cross-country ski.

Tell us a dream of yours.

I was once asked to write a paper on the meaning of success. For me, the feeling of people working together is it.

Kitty Gurnsey

Kitty Gurnsey

At-Large appointment 2004
Education: Boise State University (B.A. business administration)
Home: Boise

Born in Donnelly and known as "Kitty" since childhood, Gurnsey was the third of six children. She grew up on a ranch in Long Valley (her grandfather raised Herefords, her parents had dairy cows) and graduated from McCall-Donnelly High School as valedictorian. While working for the U. S. Forest Service in McCall, she met Vern, a forester for Boise Payette Lumber Co. They married in 1950 and moved to Boise. They have three children, and Kitty represented the North and East-ends of Boise in the legislature for twenty-two years. When she began, out of 105 legislators only 9 were women. Appointed to JFAC in 1976, she became co-chair in 1980 and served in that capacity until retiring in 1996. She has been active on behalf of several civic and charitable causes such as YMCA and the Red Cross. She is an avid golfer and bridge player, and sometimes participates in small theater productions.

Since you were an early advocate for greater participation by women in civic affairs, do you perceive any associated needs in the arts?

I seriously feel that our legislature has come a long way from the period where we struggled to get an arts appropriation large enough to match the federal one. In at least one instance, the funding passed because the wife of a legislator, who stood in while he was absent, voted for it when he would not have, simply because 'she liked the arts.' One of the chief reasons we have come so far is because the arts have made their presence known in small communities, instead of just in Boise. For a long time, the artist-in-the-schools program was all there was.

As for public art, it has been a struggle, but in Boise look at the airport, look at downtown, the convention center, city hall. And look at the theater in Oakley, look at Idaho Falls and Coeur d'Alene. We've come a long way.

Is there an art form you enjoy more than others?

Theater, especially musicals on stage; I admire people who can sing and act at the same time in performances such as "Sound of Music" and "My Fair Lady."

Growing up in Long Valley, did you have access to the arts?

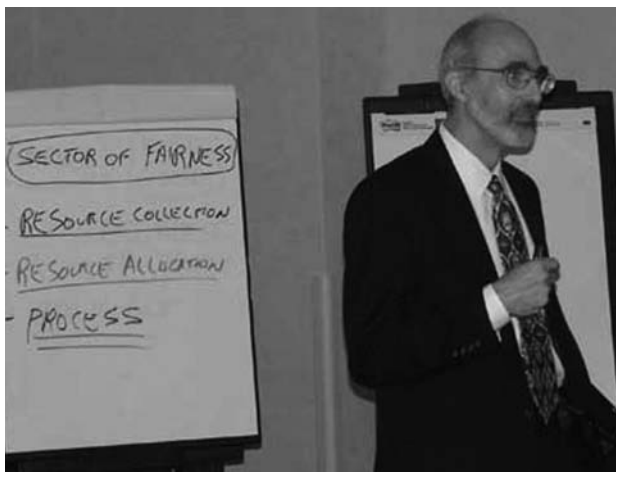
No. we were fortunate to have a teacher who played the piano well. My dad bought a guitar for the family, but the teacher never showed [smiles].

What makes you laugh?

People – the most humorous subject I see.

A DEAR JON

letter FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.



Jonathan Katz

Warm regards, members and constituents of the Idaho Commission on the Arts and *Latitudes* readers. I'm executive director of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), the association that represents and serves the fifty-six state and territorial arts agencies of the United States. I hope to have the pleasure of meeting you in person when NASAA convenes its annual meeting in Boise, September 8-11. By way of introduction, let me tell you a little bit about what people who network through NASAA get done year round, what you can expect to do at the annual meeting, and why I'm personally so pleased that our conference is being held in Idaho.

NASAA's mission is to advance and promote a meaningful role for the arts in the lives of individuals, families, and communities throughout the United States. We connect the members, staff and constituents of state arts agencies, people who care that every individual has abundant opportunities to participate in the artistic experience; that the arts play a valued role in the educational, economic and cultural well being of our communities; that the nation's artists and arts organizations are key partners in providing public benefits; and that our nation's diversity is recognized and celebrated through the arts.

The state arts agencies created NASAA in 1968 to strengthen their partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Since that time, as state arts agency budgets have grown to over $350 million and Congress has determined that 40% of NEA program funds will be channeled through states, NASAA's work has expanded to shape cultural policy, increase resources through advocacy, turn information into action, empower cultural leaders, and improve the environment of arts support. For example, NASAA plays a leadership role in management of the Arts Education Partnership. The Partnership is the nation's forum for advancing learning in the arts; more than 140 education, business, civic and arts organizations participate in its activities. NASAA collaborated with the NEA to catalyze lasting partnerships and leverage resources for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Cultural Development Initiative. We also provide the National Governors Association and the National Conference of State Legislatures with information about how elected officials and their staffs can draw upon the arts as a resource to address their most important issues and concerns.

The theme for this year's annual meeting, *Shaping Cultural Landscapes*, focuses on the best ways that policies affecting support for arts organizations and cultural activities can reflect and respond to each state's uniquely diverse natural, built, economic, and political environments. You and 400 arts leaders from all over the country will examine innovative approaches to the stewardship of cultural resources, explore the application of change management in making good public policy, and develop communications strategies that effectively educate opinion leaders about the value of the arts.

Blending leadership development with artistic experience, the conference will also showcase the city of Boise; the arts, culture and quality of life of the state; and the scenic beauty and diversity of the West. Hal Cannon, founding director of the Western Folklife Center in Elko, Nevada (home of the original National Cowboy Poetry Gathering), is a keynote speaker. Individual artists and arts organizations from all over Idaho will perform throughout the event, including former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Hass and buckaroo poet Waddie Mitchell. With NEA Chairman Dana Gioia joining us, the conference will conclude with a celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the NEA and a salute to public arts support.

Since Idaho State Tourism Director Carl Wilgus first invited me to speak about cultural tourism to a statewide gathering five years ago, I've taken advantage of every opportunity to return. NASAA has held its leadership institute for state arts agency executive directors in Coeur d'Alene. I've keynoted ICA conferences and participated in that agency's strategic planning, and NASAA convened its annual meeting planning committee during Boise's Art in the Park. It has been a joy for me to experience the Shakespeare Festival, the art museum, the Human Rights Memorial, the Egyptian Theatre, the Record Exchange, First Thursday, Basque culture, the Esther Simplot Performing Arts Academy, the premiere of Dana Gioia's "Nosferatu" performed by Opera Idaho at the Morrison Center for the Performing Arts, and the Library! – among Boise's unique cultural resources; and to have memorable meals at Gino's, Angell's, kulture klatch and The Milky Way – among many more good places to share food in Boise. The Capital City is, of course, distinguished by its balance of stimulating activities such as these with an amazingly beautiful natural environment and with a bustling commercial one.

With all this to show off, I'm still confident that what will most impress our annual meeting participants from all over the country will be the people they meet who welcome them, show them around, and share with them the ways they've created the quality of life that makes Boise and Idaho so special. It's become that way for me. ICA Chair Mark Hofflund, Executive Director Dan Harpole, Host Committee Chair Dee Fery, and the rest of their Commission, staff, and committee members, as well as the leaders of Boise's cultural, civic and business communities – the individuals who are shaping this cultural landscape – are the real attraction. Likewise, you'll enjoy meeting and working with your colleagues and counterparts from all over the U.S. Please mark your calendar for September 8-11. I look forward to seeing you in Boise.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Katz

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Urban ArtWORKS mural on Boise Co-op, Ninth and Fort Streets.

I said, SON,

TAKE A GOOD LOOK AROUND,

this is your hometown...

Footbridge over Indian Creek, Caldwell. Created by local high school students and artist Juan Martinez.

Goodbye Winter, watercolor, 20.5 x 15", Helen Grainger Wilson, participating artist, Moscow ArtWalk 2004.

Bison in the Basin, a public art project, Driggs, 2004.

The Northwest Community Development Institute, a three-year training program presented each summer by Idaho Commerce and Labor and the Association of Idaho Cities, includes this community development principle in its course binder:

The purpose of community development is to raise the living standards and to improve the quality of life for all citizens.

The arts, when aligned with community goals and involved as an intrinsic element, are an important, basic, community development tool. Here are a few examples of just such Idaho arts projects:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Cultural District, Idaho Falls

On April; 17, 2004, the Idaho Falls Arts Council, in conjunction with the Eagle Rock Art Museum, Idaho Falls Symphony, Museum of Idaho, Actors Repertory Theater of Idaho, Idaho Falls Public Library, Chesbro Music, Downtown Development Corporation, Greater Idaho Falls Chamber of Commerce, and Rev 2 Advertising, founded the Idaho Falls Cultural District in the historic section of their downtown. Inspired by the development of four new cultural facilities within the last seven years – the Willard Arts Center & Colonial Theater, Museum of Idaho, Eagle Rock Art Museum, and Actors Repertory Theatre of Idaho – all adjacent to the public library, the partner agencies regarded the district as a means of marketing Idaho Falls to tourists. The first-year budget was $24,000, providing 20,000 brochures, billboards at the airport and on the main thoroughfare between Idaho Falls and Yellowstone Park, banners on light poles throughout downtown, and signage directing cars from the interstates to the district. Funding came from the National Endowment for the Arts ($10,000), Idaho Travel Council ($7000), Downtown Development Corporation ($2000), city of Idaho Falls ($1200), Idaho Commission on the Arts ($1,000), and other smaller donors. Since the establishment of the Cultural District, Idaho Falls has seen substantially more downtown visitors. Downtown building renovations have increased, including a new wine shop, restaurant, theme hotel, and a stylish coffee shop.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT:

ArtWalk, Moscow

In 2004 Moscow Arts Commission, a city agency, in partnership with the Moscow Chamber of Commerce and the Moscow Downtown Association launched ArtWalk, an exhibition of artwork by dozens of local artists from within twenty-eight businesses in the downtown area. The goal: to draw residents and tourists downtown. A participation fee of $150-$500 from each business paid the promotional costs. Businesses were overwhelmed by the response. Typical of the reactions: "People came who we have never seen before." Moscow is looking forward to ArtWalk 2005, scheduled to begin June 17.

RECREATION:

Arts & Trails, McCall

The McCall Arts and Humanities Council, in partnership with the McCall Improvement Committee, the city of McCall, and the Central Idaho Mountain Bike Association, was awarded a $10,000 Arts & Trails grant to create site-specific public art along the McCall Trail Network, already under development with existing and planned new trails. The art is intended to enhance the experience of those who use the trails, create physical connections within the trail network, and make the trail systems more visible. The artwork will be dedicated June 2005 in celebration of National Trails Day. In 2005, Arts & Trails, a regional initiative of the state arts agencies of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, and working with the National Park Service, provided one grant in each of the three partner states.

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT:

Indian Creek Project, Caldwell

In 2003, Caldwell Fine Arts and the Hispanic Cultural Center received a $10,500 grant from the Commission to create two public artworks (a pedestrian bridge and a tile mural) celebrating the flora and fauna of Indian Creek. These artworks extended the community-planning and open-space design efforts of the Office of Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance of the National Park Service, and thereby launched the city's effort to uncover Indian Creek through its downtown reach, building a pedestrian parkway. "This is amazing," said a National Park Service

One of five billboards promoting the Idaho Falls Cultural District.

Fort Boise middle school students perform an environmental project, 2002.

staff member. "The artwork is leading the revitalization. Usually the art follows the renewal." The Indian Creek Festival, established in 2004 to dedicate the public art and bring support for the revitalization, will expand to two days this year (September 15 & 16). The creek restoration is well underway. A carwash which fell into the creek, thereby sparking discussions, has been hauled away, and the city recently received a $1.1 million grant to rejuvenate its historic train depot, provide a plaza, fountain, and landscaped parking on Main Street.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

Urban ArtWORKS, Boise

Urban ArtWORKS is a neighborhood arts and vocational training program for young people ages 14-21. In 2004, funded partially by a $9,500 arts education grant from the Commission, twelve youngsters worked with photo-journalist Diane Ronayne to document Boise's Northend. Graphic artist Ward Hooper then worked with thirteen youngsters in creating a 1,600-square-foot mural on an exterior wall of the Boise Food Co-op at Ninth and Fort Streets, using collages of their photographs as inspiration. The project helped them learn significant work and art skills, technical and creative processes, and engaged them in their community. Project partners included IDA-ORE Planning and Development Association, WorkSOURCE Youth Council, Workforce-e, Boise City Arts Commission, Boise City's Healthy Community, Healthy Youth; and the Governor's Coordinating Council for Families and Children.

FAMILY RESOURCES:

Hands in Clay, Pocatello

Acting upon the principle that parents are the first and best teachers of their own children, the "Hands in Clay: Teaching and Learning Together" project brought the Southeastern Idaho Community Action Agency and Idaho State Craft Shop together as partners in collaboration with artist Cathy Sher, providing clay arts classes for at-risk youth and their families. One class was for teen parents, and another was for adult parents at the Pocatello Women's Correctional Center and their children. Goals included expanding healthy activities for at-risk youth and their families, introducing at-risk families to community resources, and providing model communication skills. It was partially funded by a $7,400 arts education grant from the Commission.

The Lace Master

ENTREPRENEURSHIP:

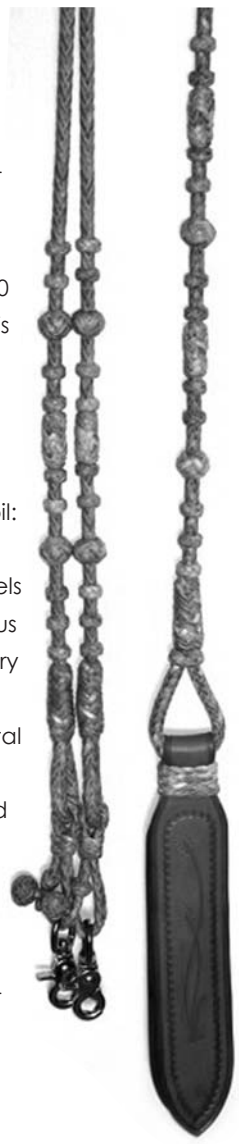
Tools for Rawhide Braiding, Meridian

Steve Derricott, originally of Montpelier, learned to braid rawhide from his father and has made fine horse tack for more than thirty years. He uses shades of rawhide skins obtained from various breeds to achieve subtle contrasts in his braided reins, bosals, headstalls, quirts, and other horse gear. In 2003, Derricott received a $2,000 Traditional Arts Apprenticeship grant from the Commission to teach rawhide braiding to saddlemaker Deana Attebery of Homedale, Idaho. As part of the grant, Derricott provided $500 worth of tools and supplies to his apprentice. Unable to find a professional quality tool for cutting and beveling rawhide, he utilized the grant funds to design and develop a prototype. Now in full production, the "Lace Master" cutter and beveller is cast by Boise Foundry in Melba and fabricated by Universal Machine of Garden City. Within the last two years, Derricott has sold more than $10,000 worth of Lace Masters at cowboy shows and on his Web site, www.lacemaster.com/index.htm.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY:

Insidious Milfoil Project, McCall

McCall area fifth graders have confronted milfoil: an invasive aquatic plant that spreads rapidly in lakes, displaces native plants, reduces oxygen levels in the water, and adversely affects fish. The Insidious Milfoil Project, a partnership between the elementary school, Idaho Weed Awareness Campaign, and Smile At Me, teaches students in their environmental science class about milfoil. Students then worked with Idaho writer Nick Hershenow devising skits and poems about the milfoil problem. Richard Johnson, a mask-maker, showed students how to fashion costumes and props for an environmental education performance the students will give for the community on May 11, 2005, as part of "Water Awareness Days" in Valley County.



Braided rawhide reins.

TOURISM:

Bison in the Basin, Driggs

Bison in the Basin, a public arts project of the Teton Valley Arts Council, was a creative response to a fire in downtown Driggs that destroyed most of a Main Street block and killed a beloved shopkeeper, and an effort to attract summer visitors downtown, by providing an uncommon reason to stop. TAC called for artists to create a herd of artistic bison. Working with the Downtown Driggs Community Association and the city of Driggs, volunteers prepared the site and waited expectantly – ear to the ground, so to speak. Over the next week, twenty-three bison thundered in, contributed by artists of all ages. One hulk named Fred was made of horseshoes. Bison in the Basin culminated with an auction of the figures; it earned $17,000 for artists and $4,000 for TAC. Fred, however, has never left, changing locations when the spirit moves him.

• Delta Smith, Director, Community Development

You can't ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU WANT...

—some considerations for artists about donating work—

Last year I asked my newsletter subscribers to share their self-promotion stories for an article I was writing. A handful wrote to tell me that donating their work to charitable organizations has paid off in numerous ways. When you donate to a charity, you may meet new, influential people in your community and derive the satisfaction of assisting a worthy cause. Unfortunately, this is not always the outcome.

Artists are bombarded with requests for organizational donations. Before you agree to such giving, understand that on your federal tax return the United States code only allows you to deduct the cost of materials. That is correct. The artist is not permitted to deduct the fair-market value of his or her donation. This has been the law since 1969, when the earlier allowable deduction code section was repealed.

Surprisingly, if someone else owned your work and donated it to a charity, they could deduct the entire fair-market value. You cannot. Generally, museums would like to return to the old deduction, because it encouraged more donations from artists. Arts organizations and some members of Congress have been trying to repeal the present restriction to no avail. The 1969 law still stands.

Many art and artist organizations requesting donations now make certain that artists are paid before the work is auctioned. Artists then have the choice of donating their payment or keeping a reasonable amount, and letting the organization keep the balance. Still, numerous charities are unaware of how current law treats artists unfairly. When asking an artist to donate work, they unwittingly put artists in an awkward position. As an artist, you have to educate them. Listed are some credible sources about the issues involved and Congressional attempts to restore the law:

www.artsusa.org/issues/advocacy/advocacy_article.asp?id=1377
www.manhattanarts.com/pages/banas.html
www.law.harvard.edu/faculty/martin/art_law/denial_of_fmv.htm
www.acfnewsource.org/art/artists_gift.html

The Society of North American Goldsmiths offers excellent guidelines for donating artwork: http://www.snagmetalsmith.org/documents/Fundraising_Auctions.pdf

Keep in mind that despite the parsimonious rule, there are still many admirable reasons to donate your work to a cause with which you are sympathetic or to which you are committed. But, obviously, it is your responsibility to ask the questions and inform the recipient.

• Alyson B. Stanfield.

Stanfield is an artist-marketing consultant who assists artists to promote themselves and their business. Sign up for her newsletter and get her "Six Habits of Highly Successful Artists" for free at www.artbizcoach.com.

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NEWSLETTER DESIGN & PRODUCTION
Green House Creative

FATHER'S DEAD

MOTHER'S IN THE CHINESE

Elm, the highest

branch. Mother, come

back! She

turns slowly, balances herself. Then swings

down

like a gymnast, like an ape.

Branches snap, break

off as she descends. In

the yard

a pink cloud vibrates, hums: an

efflorescence.

Look

in there.

She squints at the crabapple: something stock-

still at the fork (dis-

closed, almost

erased

by all that trembling

tissue) in a glossy body, white, watching us

with its red

eye, newly wattled, combed: a

cock, a

cockerl.

– Margaret Aho is a graduate of the University of Albuquerque and lives and writes in Pocatello. Her two chapbooks have been published by Limberlost Press, and she has been nominated twice for a Pushcart Prize.

Holly Gilchrist, *Jim's Coffee Shop*, lino-cut, 40 x 32".

"RITUALS

WE PERFORM

to ward off ruin..." (Virgil)

Boil water. Spoon
coffee in the beaker's
filter. Download
last night's

dream: a
leaky dinghy, the creaky
ratcheting of being
lowered, you

bobbing, thanatotic. . .
Entelechy's huge hull heels up,
drops over the edge.
You've brought your writings, your wadables?

That's good. Masticate. Like a wasp
make something use-
ful: ogham oakum, portmanteau
pulp: puispith, pulchaw . . .

Bail! Caulk! Pray for old world long-
windedness, squat quat-
rains . . .
Row! Say: I love to row.

CULTURAL

MARKERS ABOUT PEOPLE AND PLACE
in Idaho's Landscape

The land is important to me, but even more important is the idea that it became a "place" because someone has been here.

– Marlene Creates

Conveying the notion of place, the words site, plot, shop, home, neighborhood, town, city, or region link the landscape and the human activity it affords. A farm or school house, a cattle chute, a cemetery, a sod barn, the town welcome sign are cultural markers in the landscape. Their relationship to the living communities of people and their activities is the measure of their significance.

Idaho's geography has afforded the development of lasting cultural and artistic traditions. Different ethnic groups brought their architectural styles and work practices and implements, methods for working on and conserving the land and its resources, as well as their dances, songs, music, crafts, and stories. A changing economy and new demographics resulted in new patterns of land occupancy and urban development creating new challenges for vernacular and natural landscape conservation. Nationally, the awareness of distinctive places reflective of distinct cultures has prompted a variety of community efforts to identify, conserve, and tell the stories of such places through self-initiated projects.

The Basque Block, in Boise, is one of Idaho's most compelling examples of conservation and documentation of a living ethnic neighborhood. Located downtown between Capitol and 6th Streets, the Basque Block is comprised of two boarding houses – the Uberruaga, and the Anduiza with its unique indoor frontón (formerly *jai alai*, now *pala* arena) – and the Basque Center, the Basque Museum and Cultural Center, Bar Gernika, and the Basque Market. In 2002, this section of Grove Street was renovated and two oversize steel layaks (agricultural tools) were installed to greet the visitors. Today, the pavement displays the Basque national colors, as well as granite slabs etched with song lyrics, the names of local families, and the crest for each of the seven Basque Provinces. In addition to exhibiting a collection of artifacts, the Basque Museum and Education Center's archive contains documentation about the buildings and oral histories of community members.

An invitation to all Idahoans...

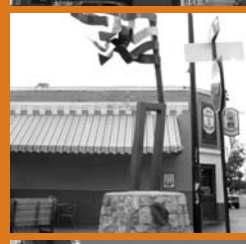
As we recognize places as cultural markers, a connection between personal and community history emerges, creating a sense of belonging to where we live or where we came from.

The Folk & Traditional Arts program invites you to look for places of cultural or historical significance in the life of your community. We invite you to talk to others about them, photograph and describe them in a paragraph or two, and submit that collection as an entry to the Idaho Folklife Archives at the Idaho Commission on the Arts.

This collection of Idaho cultural markers and the histories you helped create will be shared with the public in museums, Web site exhibitions, and publications.

For a brochure with instructions on how to submit your entry, contact the program director at 208/334-2119 or 800/278-3863, ext. 32, or E-mail mcgambliel@arts.idaho.gov.

• MC Gambliel, Director, Folk and Traditional Arts Program



Photos:
Ahavat Beth Israel Synagogue being moved to new site, Boise.

Tacos Michoacan Restaurant, Caldwell

General Sotre, Spalding

Egyptian Theatre, Boise

Bar Gernika and Iaiak, Boise

Paris Café, Idaho Falls

Logway and New York Canal, Boise

Basque Block renovation, Boise. Photo courtesy Basque Museum and Education Center

Olnkari St Ignatius, Ikurrinia dance, Boise

Panida Theatre, Sandpoint

Panaderia La Michoacan, Rupert

Aspen carving of sheepherder house, Ketchum

Spanbauer barn, Jerome

Teatro Ramona, Buhl

Afghanistan Unveiled, a film by Brigitte Brault & the Aina Women's Filming Group.

Between DREAMS AND REALITY

public galleries

I am for an art that is political, erotical, mystical, that does something other than sit on its ass in a museum.

– Claes Oldenburg

Boise State University Visual Arts Center exhibits artwork from students, as well as regional artists in Gallery 1 (Liberal Arts Building) and Gallery 2 (Hemingway Center). Both galleries will be featuring the student show and in May the ceramic sale, then they will be closed for the summer. 208/426-3994.

Boise State University, Student Union Art Gallery exhibits *James Castle, Icehouse Unto Early Attic: Books & Art*, containing 25 works by the self-taught, autistic artist from April 29-June 1. Paintings from the *Idaho Watercolor Society* will be on exhibit from June 3-29. 208/426-4636; http://union.boisestate.edu.

Selected works from the *Idaho Triennial* at the **Boise Art Museum**, a statewide, juried art exhibition reflecting the quality and diversity of the artwork being created in Idaho, will travel to the Prichard Gallery in Moscow from August 17-October 1, then to the Herrett Center for Arts and Science, in Twin Falls from October 25-December 17. Through May 15, *Artists of the Northwest: Selections from the Wells Fargo Collection* demonstrates themes of regeneration and transformation and the relationship of humans to their environment. From March 26-June 5 see the work of *James Castle*. An Idaho artist, he developed a highly sophisticated means of communication through drawing and spent his lifetime creating unique images, ignoring traditional drawing materials in favor of discarded cardboard, scraps of paper and homemade charcoal and dyes. 208/345-8330, www.boiseartmuseum.org.

T**he Rosenthal Gallery of Art** is the small venue art gallery on the **Albertson College of Idaho** campus in **Caldwell**. It has six shows a year, including an exhibition of the school's senior art students and an exhibition of art from various art students. It is closed for the summer. 208/467-8398; www.albertson.edu/art/Rosenthal Gallery.

Through May 3, at the **Willard Arts Center's Carr Gallery** in **Idaho Falls**, see *Kimono*. This Blair Murrah Traveling Exhibit includes more than 40 kimonos for all occasions. From May 8-July 8, *International Bronze*, the work of Tim Holmes is on display. Holmes created awards for the United Nations Millennium Peace Prize and the Eleanor Roosevelt Living World Award and his work is in collections worldwide. 208/522-0471; www.idafallsarts.org/galleries/html.

At the **Eagle Rock Art Museum** in I**daho Falls** see *Explorations in Textiles, Watercolors by Sally Ellis* and *Winter Images*, works by members of the Eagle Rock Art Guild, until April 9. From March 17-April 13 the Congressional District High School Art Competition and Exhibit, *Journey to Freedom*, sponsored by Congressman Mike Simpson, is on display. *The Eagle Rock Art Guild Annual Spring Show* will be shown from April 22-May 21. From May 26-June18 see *All About Alice: Retrospective of Alice Foster Trumble*. 208/524-7777; www.idafallsarts.org/galleries/html.

The **Lewis-Clark Center for Arts and History** in **Lewiston** will feature artists from Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and Montana at the 21st *Annual Dogwood Festival Invitational Exhibition* from April 1 to April 23. Also see *Stephen Lyman Festival of Children's Art*, an exhibition of two-dimensional, dogwood-related art at the Center's Upper Gallery until April 30. 208/792-2243; www.artsandhistory.org.

The **Prichard Art Gallery** at the **University of Idaho College of Art and Architecture** in **Moscow** will feature the *Art, Architecture and Design Faculty Exhibition* until April 15. Then the *MFA Thesis Exhibition* from April 22-May 14. 208/885-3586.

From April 8-June 3 at the **Moscow Arts Commission** see the *Mixed-Media Group Show* featuring local and regional artists. 208/883-7036; www.moscowarts.org.

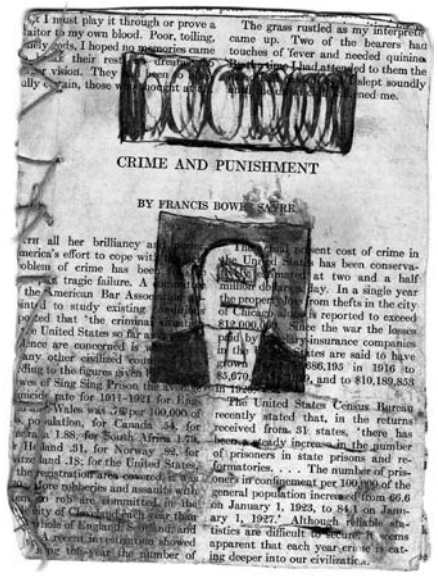
The **Friesen Art Galleries** of the Northwest Nazarene University Brandt Center in **Nampa** are closed for the summer. 208/467-8398.

The Pond Student Union at Idaho State University in **Pocatello** includes the **Transition** and **Mind's Eye** galleries. The ASISU Program Board provides these galleries with a variety of shows that have been host to major touring art shows, as well as ISU student art displays. The Transition gallery provides space for a wide range of media. The Mind's Eye gallery hosts smaller, more intimate shows. www.isu.edu/union/gallery/index.shtml.

Through April 1, the **Sun Valley Center for the Arts** will show *Confluence*, an exhibition examining the merging of Middle Eastern cultural traditions with current Western values through contemporary art; evenings feature *Confluence*-related literature, music, and film. Questioning conventional thinking about gender, Islamic tradition, and identity, artists Ghada Amer, Shirin Neshat, and Shahzia Sikander grapple with paradoxical issues of women as subject and object. From April 15-May 20, *Everyday Objects* brings to light our consumer society and its affect on our environment. 208/726-9491; www.sunvalleycenter.org.

Through March 26 the **College of Southern Idaho Jean B. King Gallery** in **Twin Falls** will show *Exit 173*, a selection of work by CSI art professor Mike Green and his friends. From April 12-May 28, see *The Annual Juried Exhibition of Work by CSI Art Students*. www.csi.cc.id.us.

Through March 23 the **Full Moon Gallery of Fine Art & Contemporary Craft** in **Twin Falls** will exhibit the *Idaho Paints Idaho* traveling exhibition. Enjoy ongoing exhibits at the Full Moon Gallery and the Galeria Pequena at the Magic Valley Arts Council Offices. 208/737-0389; www.magicvalleyartscouncil.org.



Album-style book in the Idaho Center for the Book exhibition James Castle, *Icehouse Unto Early Attic: Books & Art*, at the Student Union Gallery, Boise State University, 29 April-1 May.

NATIONAL HONOR

HAVE A LITTLE

FAITH IN ME...

Nez Perce Arts Council "Comes Up Taller"

The *Coming Up Taller* Awards are the highest national honor for excellence in after-school and out-of-school arts and humanities programs for young people, encouraging and enriching the creativity of our next generation. Each year the awards recognize excellence in such programs for underserved children. All recipients must be nominated in order to be eligible, and are selected by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. Three other national cultural agencies serve as partners for the Awards: the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. There are, moreover, many individual, foundation, and corporate sustainers. Awardees receive $10,000 and a plaque in a Washington, D. C., ceremony attended by the First Lady.

The development of artistic skills and the study of human experience, past and present, are at the heart of these programs, now in their ninth year. Children learn about cultural traditions, family histories, neighborhoods, and nations. They learn diverse methods of expression and communication. As well, Coming Up Taller programs assist youth in job training, school performance, community development, and cultural preservation and rejuvenation.

At the same time, the Awards also celebrate the contributions that educators, curators, historians, scholars, librarians, and artists make to families and communities. In the words of First Lady Laura Bush, "Guiding this new generation are artists and humanities teachers who share their talents and wisdom. They serve as advisors, mentors, and friends who support their young learners on new paths to personal success and commitment to community. We thank them for the wonderful work they do."

In 2004, the Idaho Commission on the Arts nominated the Nez Perce Arts Council for a Coming Up Taller Award because of its six-year commitment to the Nez Perce Culture Camp. It was selected as one of 14 recipients out of 380 nominations, a testament to the importance and quality of the work of the Arts Council. This national endorsement, in the words of the President's Committee, "adds significantly to the credibility of the recipients and allows them to increase their visibility, funding support, and impact."

Ann McCormack, cultural arts coordinator for the Arts Council, comments, "I had written three Youth-at-Risk grants to the Commission that provided funds to bring the elders and experts in Plateau Culture to the Camp each year. We

are deeply honored to receive this award...to be recognized for something to which we are all so committed." She adds, "We also measure our success in the smiling faces of our Camp participants, the pride of our actors in a performance thousands enjoyed, or perhaps one of our students finally saying the Nimiipuu Language Pledge without help. These are our most valid indications that we are making a positive difference in our tribal community."

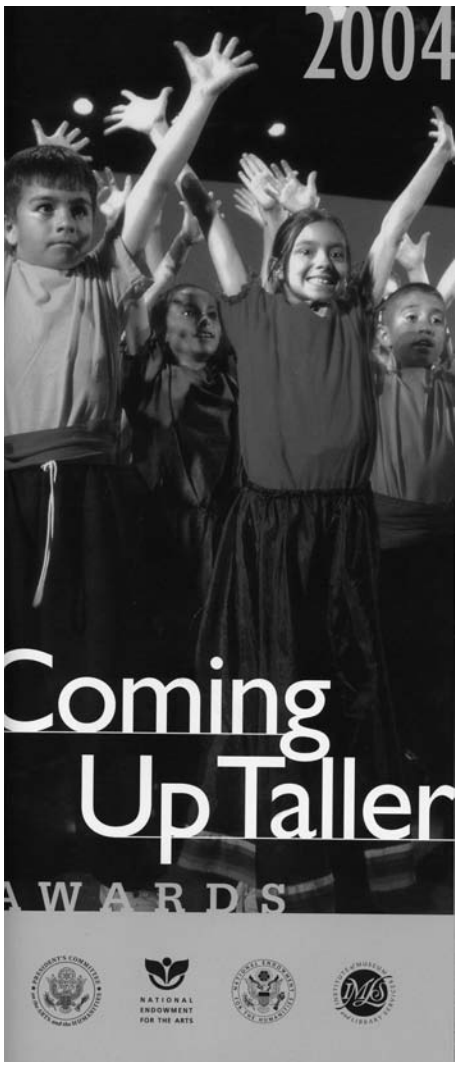
The Nez Perce Arts Council, in partnership with other tribal organizations, three tribal community centers, and Lapwai School District, created Culture Camp to support the transmission of traditional culture and to develop leadership among its youth. Struggling with an array of social problems common to reservation life, the tribal community is using arts and humanities education programs to sustain traditions and strengthen families across the generations. Together, the organizations formed a Council of Elders to guide the content of the program and serve as teachers and mentors. The Camp is cross-generational from planning to implementation, and its impact extends into family life and the school year.

Through the Camp and ongoing year-round after-school programs, the Arts Council links the generations by teaching young people Nez Perce history and culture. Continued appreciation and understanding of the tribe's values and traditions contribute to the permanence of the ancestral culture that guides youth into community participation and development.

Every August, 150 Nez Perce youth ages 8-18 travel to Wallowa Lake, Oregon, for an intensive two-week immersion in tribal heritage: arts, language, ceremonies, song, dance, current issues, history. Recognizing the essential connection between language and culture, a linguistics scholar has developed a special curriculum and materials that teach Nimiipuutimtki, which is used at Camp and incorporated into all activities and lessons.

When news of the Award reached the Art Council, Camp organizers identified those youth who had attended since its inception and placed their names in a hat for the trip to the ceremony at the Capitol Building. Earl McCormack, whose Indian name is Ma-mas-key-yi, was drawn first, and Coty Reuben was drawn as runner-up. Earl then traveled to Washington, D. C., for the presentation ceremony. His mother was there, as was Ann McCormack, representing the Nez Perce Arts Council. They gave First Lady Laura Bush a Nez Perce historical doll.

When asked why he goes to Camp, Earl responded, "I like going because I get to learn some of my native language. I don't hear that in the city. I also learn traditions. I think it's a good thing, so we don't forget our culture. The Camp [location] is where some of our Nimiipuu lived two generations ago."



Photos:
First Lady Laura Bush, Honorary Chair of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, congratulates Earl McCormack, and in turn accepts Nex Perce historical doll accompanied by a book from Ann McCormack On the left is Dr. Bruce Cole, Chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Top right: Scenes from Culture Camp.

DEADLINES

We turn faster than disks on a harrow, than blades on a reaper. Time: You can't chock the wheels.

– Annie Dillard

DEADLINE

QuickFunds.....June 6, 2005

Yesterday's Gone,
Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow.

September 8-11, 2005

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