EITELJORG LAUNCHES RELIGION AND THE AMERICAN WEST

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SPRING 2021

HARD TWIST: WESTERN RANCH WOMEN—PHOTOGRAPHS BY BARBARA VAN CLEVE JAN 30–APR 25, 2021

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AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY COMMEMORATED IN EVENTS AND ART P5, P8

SCOTT SHOEMAKER’S CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS P12
Eiteljorg’s Religion and the American West project supported by $2.5M Lilly Endowment Inc. grant

By Bryan Corbin, Storyteller magazine editor

Religion and spirituality throughout the American West and Native America will be the focus of significant future exhibitions and programs at the Eiteljorg Museum, thanks to a $2.5 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. announced in December.

Part of Lilly Endowment’s Religion and Cultural Institutions Initiative, the grant will support the Eiteljorg Museum’s exploration of religion in a holistic, thoughtful and ongoing manner, through art, educational and scholarly programs and a new museum endowment. Among its components:

• The museum will incorporate the relationship of Native peoples to religion and spiritual beliefs into the planned renovation and reinstallation of the Eiteljorg’s Native American galleries, scheduled for 2022.

• The Eiteljorg will partner with the New-York Historical Society to showcase an exhibit, Acts of Faith: Religion and the American West, in 2024, and will take the lead in producing a companion publication.

• With the Clements Center for Southwestern Studies at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, the Eiteljorg will co-sponsor a symposium in 2024 on Religion and the American West.

• A new endowment will be created to make religion a core element of the museum’s work. That endowment will fund a new position on the Eiteljorg staff to oversee religion- and culture-related initiatives including: coordinating the Acts of Faith exhibition and producing the associated publication, participating in aspects of the Native American galleries reinstallation, researching and writing about aspects of the collection and religion in the American West, and developing future exhibits and programs.

“Although religion and spirituality have been a component of the Eiteljorg Museum’s collections, exhibitions and programs, this generous Lilly Endowment grant will allow us to be more purposeful about it and to develop a leadership role in the museum field nationally. This initiative will significantly expand the museum’s impact, and we are grateful for Lilly Endowment’s support,” Eiteljorg President and CEO John Vanausdall said. “The Religion and Cultural Institutions Initiative grant will serve as a catalyst for exploring the role religion and spirituality have played in the American West and the lives of Native peoples and other groups,” Eiteljorg Vice President and Chief Curatorial Officer Elisa Phelps said. “Individual perspectives and community stories will be important elements as the Eiteljorg prepares for the reinstallation of its Native American galleries in 2022, the exhibition and symposium in 2024, and beyond. This ongoing project will enhance our interpretation and contextualization of artworks and cultural objects associated with faith and belief systems in our museum collections, and create fascinating visitor experiences and scholarship for years to come.”

Lilly Endowment’s Religion and Cultural Institutions Initiative is designed to foster public understanding about religion and celebrate the contributions that people of all faiths and diverse religious communities make toward greater civic well-being. The Eiteljorg thanks Jessica Ciales, Ph.D., coordinator of the museum’s Religion and the American West planning project, who helped develop the museum’s proposal and worked on the grant application. Visit Eiteljorg.org and the museum’s social media for details of the upcoming exhibitions and event dates.
Friends,

We often hear the phrase “the new normal” these days. While we have put the most difficult and unusual year in the museum’s history behind us, the previous routines of life might not return right away. I am confident, however, that a sense of normalcy will be here by the end of 2021.

When I joined the Eiteljorg nearly 25 years ago, it never occurred to us that face masks and social distancing someday would be part of the museum experience for guests, staff and volunteers. The dramatic events thrust upon us last year — closing the museum for three months, postponing the 2020 Indian Market and Festival, switching to all-virtual formats for Quest for the West® and Día de Muertos and all the other changes — would have seemed inconceivable in the pre-pandemic era.

We endured all of it together, and learned much from the experience, and the resilience of the Eiteljorg gives us continued optimism for the future.

First, I am grateful for the West and Native America.

We also congratulate Alisa Nordholt-Dean, who was recently promoted to vice president for education, and Susan Lewis, who is retiring from personal experience. Hyacinth Rucker energetically managed administration and chief financial officer, has done tremendous work in ensuring the museum’s finances are in order for the past 23 years. Hyacinth Rucker energetically managed our online and social media presence, and Cassandra Sanborn enthusiastically led our membership program.

Despite the difficulties of the past year, we have much to be thankful for and much to look forward to, and we hope to see you very soon. If there is to be a “new normal,” let it be one filled with gratitude, optimism and understanding.

Sincerely,

John Vanausdall
President and CEO
Eiteljorg Museum

Ernest Leonard Blumenschein (American, 1874-1960)
The Penitentes, ca. 1935, oil on linen
Gift of Harrison Eiteljorg

See story on the facing page.
The term “hard twist” is used in association with yarn and thread. A hard twist yarn is one that has been twisted very tightly in the spinning process. The tightness of the twist gives it strength and flexibility. The same term can be used for rope, in particular manila lariat rope, made from the fibers of the abaca, which is a member of the banana family grown primarily in the Philippines. Just like yarn, the manila fiber has been tightly twisted — hard twisted — to make rope, which brings us to the Eiteljorg’s new exhibit *Hard Twist: Western Ranch Women — Photographs by Barbara Van Cleve*. 

*Hard Twist* as a title is appropriate in the context of Western ranch women who are tough, strong and flexible — like lariat rope. The striking black-and-white images captured by photographer (and Montana rancher) Barbara Van Cleve are accompanied by several objects from the collection of the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in Fort Worth, Texas, which is also the organizer of the photography exhibit. The public will have an exciting opportunity to hear from Van Cleve about her work and life on the ranch, during a virtual talk March 13 at Eiteljorg.org.

Objects in the *Hard Twist* exhibit that opened Jan. 30 were owned and used by four of the ranch women depicted in the photos. Their stories are equally fascinating.

**Cowgirl spirit**

Ruby Gobble and Gretchen Sammis worked the Chase Ranch in New Mexico together for almost 50 years, with Gretchen as owner and Ruby as foreman. Both were accomplished horsewomen. Ruby grew up on a ranch in Arizona and learned to ride on desert burros at the age of three. She became a trick rider and, while still a teenager, a professional roper, winning multiple titles as World's Champion Team Roper. Gretchen's great-grandparents founded the Chase Ranch near Cimarron, New Mexico, in 1869. Gretchen was born on the ranch and owned and operated it for 58 years. She planned that, after her death, her property would become a place to educate young people about ranching. In 2013, the Chase Ranch Foundation and the Boy Scouts of America signed an agreement for the ranch to be managed by the Philmont Scout Ranch, which continues to run Gretchen's favored Hereford cattle and provides educational programs for young people and ranch visitors.

Fern Sawyer was also a New Mexico rancher and accomplished horsewoman. The holder of many "firsts", her accomplishments include being the first woman to win the cutting horse competition at the Fort Worth Rodeo, first director of the Girls Rodeo

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*Eiteljorg Museum Storyteller Magazine*
Join us for virtual talks and programming events related to *Honoring Women* exhibitions. See pages 8-9, and visit [www.eiteljorg.org/calendar](http://www.eiteljorg.org/calendar) for details.

*HARD TWIST: WESTERN RANCH WOMEN — PHOTOGRAPHS BY BARBARA VAN CLEVE*  
JAN 30–APR 25  

#EJHardTwist

*Star Shower, 26.5" x 37" ©1993 Barbara Van Cleve*  
*Farr Cattle Company, 26" x 38.25" ©1993 Barbara Van Cleve*  
Image courtesy of Hadley Fruits Photography
Association which became the Women’s Professional Rodeo Association, and first woman inducted into the American Cutting Horse Association Hall of Fame. Fern was known for her flamboyant wardrobe which featured spandex, gold leather, shiny satin and spangled Western suits; custom boots in a rainbow of colors and styles, many with her name or brand featured on them; and her Cadillac with custom “Fern” license plates. She literally died in the saddle, having suffered a heart attack as she rode out of the arena during filming for a 1996 PBS documentary Just for the Ride.

World Champion bareback bronc and bull rider Jan Youren says that she has broken so many bones it is easier for her to remember the ones she did not break during her career. Youren says, “Cowgirl spirit means having the guts to reach for it, whatever ‘it’ might be. It’s going outside of the regular limits of what goes on around you, to reach for what you want to be and do what you want to do.” She certainly did that, raising eight children of her own while winning multiple world championships in a rodeo career that lasted more than 50 years.

(Continued from page 3)

Powerful Women

Hard Twist is part of our continuing celebration of Honoring Women, as is another exhibition, Powerful Women, which features contemporary art by Native women artists including Jaune Quick-to See-Smith whose work was recently selected as the first piece of Native American art ever to be purchased by the National Gallery of Art. The exploration of powerful, strong and accomplished women in contemporary art is a subject that is too big and important for a single exhibit to do it justice. Powerful Women II, which opens on April 17, will feature work by diverse women artists including Anita Rodriguez, Allison Saar, Wendy Red Star and Hung Liu. About all these powerful women, Jennifer Complo McNutt, curator of contemporary art, says, “Each one of these women is celebrating, challenging or enlightening people to create a new perspective, a different perspective, while helping all individuals have a broader view of our world.”

Powerful Women: Contemporary Art from the Eiteljorg Collection

First rotation, continues through MAR 21
Second rotation, APR 17 – OCT 3
#EJPowerfulWomen
New Acquisition Spotlight: 
For Freedom by Dean Mitchell

By Johanna M. Blume, curator of Western art, history and culture

The Eiteljorg Museum is committed to sharing the stories of the many diverse communities who are part of the Western experience. This requires an inclusive approach that makes space for groups often missing from art of the American West. Over the last several years, the museum has prioritized collecting works by artists from underrepresented communities and works that depict underrepresented aspects of the American West. An exciting recent acquisition from a donor, For Freedom by Dean Mitchell, is an important addition to the permanent collection. Despite the fact that African American settlers, soldiers and cowboys were a part of the historical American West, there are very few depictions of them in early Western art. This lack of representation is a contributing factor in their erasure from the history of the American West. It is also in part what inspired Dean Mitchell to create the piece. Through his work he is interested in honoring a history that he hadn’t been taught, and honoring people who are overlooked by society.

Additionally, the subject of this piece is African American, a Union soldier. The model was a Civil War re-enactor at Fort Scott in Kansas. Kansas was the first state to recruit, train and deploy Black soldiers into combat in the Civil War, and Fort Scott was the home base for the First and Second Colored Infantry. The history of that war in the American West and the role of African American soldiers in the Civil War are subjects rarely tackled in Western art, and completely unrepresented in the Eiteljorg’s permanent collection. The addition of For Freedom to the collection enables the museum to share this piece of history with visitors.

Dean Mitchell is an extraordinarily talented watercolorist, and For Freedom is an example of his skill in that medium. With this piece he wanted to focus on the man, leaving the background abstract, and drawing the viewer in to the weariness of the soldier, “leaving nothing else around to entertain you except that he has a gun.” The end goal is that the viewer has to “confront this man as a soldier and a human being.”

For Freedom was one of Mitchell’s artworks spotlighted in the Eiteljorg Quest for the West® Virtual Art Sale in September 2020. A collector who is a dedicated supporter of the Eiteljorg, Catherine Turner, purchased the painting and donated it to the museum. New acquisitions such as For Freedom are an important step in expanding the museum’s ability to interpret the full range of stories and experiences that make up the American West. This work is ongoing, and just one facet of the museum’s commitment to fulfilling its mission.

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY EVENTS AT THE EITELJORG

FEB 20
1 p.m. Virtual Leon Jett Memorial Lecture with Walter Thompson-Hernandez

Starting the week of FEB 23
Blacks in the West: the Story Behind the Art.
View the prerecorded virtual tour at www.eiteljorg.org.

JUN 5 & 19
Juneteenth Community Celebration

See pages 8-9 for details.

Learn about the Eiteljorg’s diversity statement at www.eiteljorg.org.
In May, the Eiteljorg will premiere a travelling exhibition from the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian in Santa Fe, New Mexico, called *Laughter and Resilience: Humor in Native American Art*. The curatorial staff leapt at the opportunity to bring this exhibit to the Eiteljorg because of its focus on humor, which is often at the heart of Native art. I have worked at the Eiteljorg for a little more than four years, and I have had the privilege to work with both the renowned biennial Eiteljorg Contemporary Art Fellowship and our annual Indian Market and Festival, two programs that sponsor and promote Native artists. Sometimes these artists' works of art are serious, abstract and specific. An equally important thread woven into the work of our Native artist friends is their light-heartedness, amusing comedy and quick wit.

*Laughter and Resilience* approaches Native humor by arranging the exhibited works into the following categories: Tricksters, Satire and Parody, Cartoons and Cartoonists, and Whimsy. These categories help unpack the concept of Native humor to a new audience. We are grateful to the Wheelwright Museum for graciously allowing us to add related works from the Eiteljorg collection to the exhibit.

Humor is a complex expression. Some of us respond to the critical wit from satirical movies. Others enjoy reading a favorite comic strip, or adding playful elements to their day-to-day lives. (See Heidi Brandow's *Cute Monster* for some true whimsy.)

When translating from different languages, cultural context can be absent or misinterpreted. For me, this is apparent in the word “trickster,” one of the categories highlighted in *Laughter and Resilience*. “Trickster” evokes thoughts of a mischievous, shadowy figure that manipulates innocents in a parable or cautionary tale. In many Native cultures, however, the Trickster is not fictional, and instead, multi-faceted. Trickster can be Creator, Hero, a Trouble Maker, or all three. Coyote, Rabbit, Fox and Raven are common.

Trickster figures into many Native American and First Nations (of Canada) stories that are still relevant (and humorous) today. Trickster can be fun, silly and self-deprecating and yet serious, clever and boastful: One moment Trickster...
is creating the world and teaching the people how to live, and in the next he is a prankster, warning us not to be too proud or vain or you might grow a second nose or something! Either way, Trickster is revered.

To laugh in the face of adversity requires strength of character. The past year seems to have tested everyone’s resiliency, and humorous expressions — from cat memes, to late-night comedians — helped many of us get through. For Native peoples, repeating a joke or lovingly making fun of each other has been a characteristic that empowers us to be resilient despite difficult histories, moments and situations.

Santo Domingo Pueblo contemporary cartoonist Ricardo Caté has wicked deadpan humor. His cartoon, *Untitled (Santa Fe Coyote)*, features three coyotes in a desert scene: One coyote asks another about a third coyote that has a scarf tied around its neck and is howling towards a blue sky. The second coyote replies, “He’s from Santa Fe.” This trickster satirically comments on how a scarf is an iconic fashion statement among those from Santa Fe.

One way to poke fun at or satirize social behaviors and events is through parody. In this exhibit, you will see Hopi Koyola carvings from the Eiteljorg collections wearing silly outfits and making somewhat unsuitable gestures. To their community members, these Native American clowns are reminders of the types of inappropriate behavior to avoid, but communicated in a humorous way that makes their messages accessible.

When visiting *Laughter and Resilience* and participating in its programming, expect to gain an insight into the creative minds of several Native artists who incorporate humor into their paintings, prints, photographs, silverwork, claywork and cartoons. And most importantly, expect to laugh!

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**LAUGHTER AND RESILIENCE: HUMOR IN NATIVE AMERICAN ART**

**MAY 22–AUG 8, 2021**

Organized by the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and featuring additional artworks from the collections of the Eiteljorg Museum.

#EJNativeHumor

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Visit [www.eiteljorg.org/calendar](http://www.eiteljorg.org/calendar) for details of public programs about *Laughter and Resilience*, such as virtual talks and tours.
NOTE TO VISITORS: The events and dates listed here were in effect at the time of publication. At different times, individual exhibits or a specific gallery may be temporarily closed for reinstallation or renovation, even as the museum remains open. Please check www.eiteljorg.org before your visit for the most up-to-date information on exhibits and activities taking place at the museum on the day of your visit.

Starting the week of FEB 23

Blacks in the West: the Story Behind the Art
Eiteljorg volunteer guide Gayle Cox highlights the contributions and all-too-often unknown stories of historical and contemporary Blacks in the American West through four pieces of art. View the prerecorded virtual tour beginning Feb. 23 at www.eiteljorg.org.

Friday MAR 5
Noon
VIRTUAL Curator’s Choice: Hard Twist: Women in the West
Join Johanna M. Blume, curator of Western art, history and culture, and learn more about roles women have taken on in the American West. Visit www.eiteljorg.org to register for this free program.

Saturday MAR 13
1 p.m.
Barbara Van Cleve
VIRTUAL Talk
Join us for a virtual discussion with photographer and rancher Barbara Van Cleve about her life photographing the West and the Eiteljorg’s new exhibit of her work, Hard Twist: Western Ranch Women. Visit www.eiteljorg.org for more details.

Saturday MAR 27
2 p.m.
VIRTUAL Class: Black & White Photography in a Color World
Join Walter Kuhn of Roberts Camera and learn more about black-and-white photography, why its unique look remains relevant today, and what the future may hold for this important art form. Fee: $10. Register at www.eiteljorg.org.

Western Book Club
The Western Book Club meets to discuss an array of titles spanning and sometimes pushing the limits of what constitutes a Western. Meetings will be via Zoom until further notice. To attend, contact museumprograms@eiteljorg.com.

Wednesday MAY 7
Noon
VIRTUAL Curator’s Choice: Powerful Women II: Contemporary Art from the Eiteljorg Collection
Join Jennifer Complo McNutt, curator of contemporary art, for a look at Powerful Women II: Contemporary Art from the Eiteljorg Collection. Visit www.eiteljorg.org to register for this free program.

Friday JUN 4
Noon
VIRTUAL Curator’s Choice: Laughter and Resilience: Humor in Native American Art
FEB/MAR/APR/MAY/JUN

VIRTUAL Artist Talk Series
Visit with a new artist each month without leaving the comfort of your couch. Join us for virtual talks Feb. 24 with the music group Pamyua and March 24 with artist Natalie Ball, times TBD. More details about these and other monthly talks are coming soon at www.eiteljorg.org.

Saturday
MAY 22
Exhibition Opening: Laughter and Resilience: Humor in Native American Art
Experience the laughter in Indigenous art. In this traveling exhibition of the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, Native artists past and present employ humor in a wide variety of ways, using a range of artistic media. It’s open through Aug. 8. Check www.eiteljorg.org/calendar for details of public programs and events.

Fredrick Cruz, b. 1961 (Tohono O’odham)
Untitled (Dog with Hat), ca. 2009
White and green yucca, devil’s claw, and beargrass, 10.25 inches x 8.46 inches
Image by Addison Doty. Courtesy of the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian.

Saturdays
JUN 5 & 19
Juneteenth Community Celebration
The Eiteljorg Museum hosts an annual community commemoration of Juneteenth, marking the anniversary of the end of slavery and the arrival of freedom in Texas in 1865. Visit www.eiteljorg.org for details of free in-person and virtual events on two dates.

THROUGH MAR 21

Powerful Women I: Contemporary Art from the Eiteljorg Collection
The museum’s exhibition Powerful Women highlights and celebrates diverse women artists in contemporary art. The first rotation of the exhibition honors and acknowledges the contributions of Native women artists to their communities, the contemporary Native art community and the art world in general.

APR 17–OCT 3

Powerful Women II: Contemporary Art from the Eiteljorg Collection
The second rotation of the Powerful Women exhibition highlights a diverse group of women artists in contemporary art, featuring works by African American, Latino, Asian American and European American women contemporary artists.

THROUGH APR 25

Hard Twist: Western Ranch Women Photographs by Barbara Van Cleve
This traveling exhibition of documentary-style photographs explores women’s fascinating experiences in the West. Hard Twist has been described as a celebration of women of the range, their ranches and the breathtaking Western landscapes in which they live.

THROUGH JUN 6

Prints of Gene Kloss
Visit the Eiteljorg’s Myrta Pulliam Gallery of Photography for the second rotation of an exhibition of a collection of etching prints by prolific printmaker Gene Kloss, known for her etchings of landscapes and Southwestern subjects and Hopi culture.

Unknown photographer
Gene Kloss operating a printing press
Photograph
Image courtesy of Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Gene Kloss Papers, 1934-1941

BEAUTIFUL NATIVE AMERICAN ART AND JEWELRY
The Eiteljorg Museum Store offers an outstanding selection of Native American jewelry and pottery, Western home décor and a wide selection of coffee table books, art catalogs and cookbooks. The store also can take orders online and ship merchandise.

STORE HOURS
MON–SAT: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
SUN: Noon to 5 p.m.
317.275.1300 | 800.878.7978
store@eiteljorg.com
@Eiteljorg.Store

Honoring Women
Q: “Do I have to wait until 72 to donate through my retirement account?”
A: Yes. The Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act of 2019 changed the RMD age, but this age requirement did not change. After you turn 70½, you can donate to a nonprofit through your retirement account. Please consult with your financial advisor on how to do this, as the money must go straight from your financial institution to the nonprofit. When you turn 72, this QCD will reduce your taxable income from your RMD. A QCD is a wonderful way to help yourself and a nonprofit you are passionate about.

Q: “Through this pandemic, I chose to update my will and estate plans. What next?”
A: The pandemic has affected us all in different ways. For some, it has been a time to reflect on the way in which they want their money to be used after they pass. People are realizing that regardless of the amount they leave behind, they want it to do something positive. At a time when everything has felt out of control, this is something you can control. If you have chosen to put the Eiteljorg Museum in your will or estate plans, please contact me. I would enjoy having a conversation with you. We can work through your thoughts, and make sure the money is directed toward what you are most passionate about.

Till hunkering down as vaccines continue to arrive. Will we ever get on the other side of this pandemic? Yes! We might feel exhausted, beaten down, and weary... but we will get there... together.

In this edition of A Note From Nataly, I will answer more questions from our readers and supporters as they have come to the forefront.

Q: “Did the required minimum distribution (RMD) age change from 70½ to 72?”
A: No. Known as a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), this age requirement did not change. After you turn 70½, you can donate to a nonprofit through your retirement account. Please consult with your financial advisor on how to do this, as the money must go straight from your financial institution to the nonprofit. When you turn 72, this QCD will reduce your taxable income from your RMD. A QCD is a wonderful way to help yourself and a nonprofit you are passionate about.
Attention Businesspeople: Eiteljorg corporate partnerships help companies reach new audiences

During the pandemic, businesses in our community have endured enormous challenges, sometimes closing their locations to in-person customers and shifting their operations to serve clients remotely. Promoting a company and its services is challenging when the usual ways of reaching customers are disrupted.

Many readers of Storyteller magazine are businesspeople who live in Indianapolis, Hamilton County or surrounding counties, and manage or work for companies in those communities. And we know many Eiteljorg Museum supporters are civic-minded, resourceful and love the arts.

Are you a businessperson or an employee at a company that is trying to rebuild its pre-pandemic level of business and re-establish its audience? If so, did you know that the Eiteljorg offers various types of partnership opportunities for businesses? When a company's name and brand is associated with a museum exhibition or program, it can be amplified to the museum's own loyal audiences — often grandparents and empty nesters — who make thoughtful decisions about their time, money and purchases.

We have sponsorships available at the Eiteljorg at various levels for corporations and companies large and small. Beyond being a philanthropic gift, a sponsorship with the Eiteljorg can be part of a marketing strategy. Museum exhibitions and public programs emphasize cultural diversity and educate about societal issues. A sponsorship can help raise a company's visibility among the museum's supporters and the community.

Sponsorships and corporate memberships are mutually beneficial. Some companies have their name or logo placed prominently on exhibit signage or museum marketing materials. Others are interested in opportunities to entertain clients at exhibit-opening receptions and other museum events.

Still other companies want to share the museum experience with their employees and provide opportunities to experience the arts in Indianapolis. One law firm as part of its partnership recently arranged for a curator-led gallery tour at the Eiteljorg. The museum can tailor plans to suit your company's needs.

You might not work in the marketing and advertising department of your company, but you probably know a colleague who does and who makes those kinds of decisions. Please share this copy of Storyteller magazine with them. The Eiteljorg Museum's corporate relations manager, Susan St. Angelo, can discuss corporate sponsorship and membership options that will heighten visibility and raise awareness of your business among the Eiteljorg's loyal fans. You can contact Susan at 317.275.1333 or ssstangelo@eiteljorg.com.
Dr. Scott Shoemaker, curator and Miami culture bearer, served the Eiteljorg in many roles

Few people have made such an important impact on the mission of the Eiteljorg Museum as Scott Shoemaker, Ph.D.

A citizen of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, Shoemaker for the past six years served as the museum's curator of Native American art, history and culture — a position endowed by a gift from Thomas G. and Susan C. Hoback. In that role Shoemaker curated important exhibitions of Native American art, including those of Hopi carvings and woven baskets of numerous cultures across North America. He developed collections, cultivated relationships with collectors and donors, and consulted with Native nations about the museum's exhibitions of their artworks and cultural objects.

But Scott's connection to the Eiteljorg dates back more than 23 years, when as a young artist and culture bearer for the Miami Nation, he served as an artist in residence, educating visitors about the beautiful traditional Miami ribbonwork he creates. With his background in the study and recovery of the Miami language, Scott was a key member of the team that developed the ongoing exhibition Mihtoheesoni: The People's Place that opened in 2002. Featuring art and cultural items of the Miami, Potawatomi and Delaware tribes, the exhibit traces their histories in Indiana.

As curator, Dr. Shoemaker has been deeply involved in planning the upcoming redesign and reinstallation of the museum's Native American galleries, scheduled for 2022. It will include a focus on the Indigenous peoples of the Great Lakes region, highlighting outstanding objects from the Richard Pohrt Jr. collection, an acquisition Shoemaker helped arrange in 2019. In many settings, Shoemaker educated the public about Native peoples who are the original inhabitants of Indiana and whose cultures are vibrant today.

In light of all of Shoemaker's contributions, the Eiteljorg staff and board were sorry to see him leave in December but excited for his new opportunity. His new role is with Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, as program officer in Native arts and culture — a position endowed by a gift from Thomas G. and Susan C. Hoback.  In that role Shoemaker curated important exhibitions of Native American art, including those of Hopi carvings and woven baskets of numerous cultures across North America. He developed collections, cultivated relationships with collectors and donors, and consulted with Native nations about the museum's exhibitions of their artworks and cultural objects.

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As curator, Dr. Shoemaker has been deeply involved in planning the upcoming redesign and reinstallation of the museum's Native American galleries, scheduled for 2022. It will include a focus on the Indigenous peoples of the Great Lakes region, highlighting outstanding objects from the Richard Pohrt Jr. collection, an acquisition Shoemaker helped arrange in 2019. In many settings, Shoemaker educated the public about Native peoples who are the original inhabitants of Indiana and whose cultures are vibrant today.

In light of all of Shoemaker's contributions, the Eiteljorg staff and board were sorry to see him leave in December but excited for his new opportunity. His new role is with Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, as program officer in Native arts and culture — a position endowed by a gift from Thomas G. and Susan C. Hoback.  In that role Shoemaker curated important exhibitions of Native American art, including those of Hopi carvings and woven baskets of numerous cultures across North America. He developed collections, cultivated relationships with collectors and donors, and consulted with Native nations about the museum's exhibitions of their artworks and cultural objects.

But Scott's connection to the Eiteljorg dates back more than 23 years, when as a young artist and culture bearer for the Miami Nation, he served as an artist in residence, educating visitors about the beautiful traditional Miami ribbonwork he creates. With his background in the study and recovery of the Miami language, Scott was a key member of the team that developed the ongoing exhibition Mihtoheesoni: The People's Place that opened in 2002. Featuring art and cultural items of the Miami, Potawatomi and Delaware tribes, the exhibit traces their histories in Indiana.
Hyacinth Rucker managed website, social media and online efforts

Digital marketing is as important as ever for the Eiteljorg in reaching the museum’s audiences — visitors, members and supporters — about exhibitions, programs and events. Hyacinth Rucker has been instrumental in that ever-evolving process.

During seven-and-a-half years with the museum’s marketing and communications department, most recently as digital marketing manager, Hyacinth was in charge of managing the Eiteljorg’s social media platforms, as well as creating and distributing its weekly e-newsletter to members and general subscribers.

In 2018, Hyacinth led a project to upgrade the website Eiteljorg.org to make it more navigable, aesthetically appealing and user-friendly on mobile devices. She also led the redesign of a related webpage, quest.eiteljorg.org and created a new website, contemporaryartfellowship.eiteljorg.org. During the 2020 temporary shutdown, she led creation of the EiteljorgAtHome online content with the help of the museum’s digital task force, which she chaired. In 2020, thanks to Hyacinth’s efforts, Eiteljorg.org won the Award of Honor for best website from the Public Relations Society of America — Hoosier Chapter.

A graduate of University of Missouri-Columbia with a degree in broadcast journalism, Hyacinth also cultivated the Eiteljorg’s relationships with social media influencers. In January, Hyacinth left the museum to focus on her husband of 14 years and their three boys. She has been an enthusiastic and outgoing colleague whose contributions to the museum will be long remembered.

Cassandra Sanborn led membership initiative

Eiteljorg members who joined the museum or upgraded their memberships during the past two-and-a-half years have interacted with Cassandra Sanborn. As the museum’s membership/donor engagement manager, Cassandra expanded the membership base and worked with the Eagle Society, a highly involved group of Eiteljorg members. Cassandra created stewardship events for all to enjoy, and during the 2019-20 season of Jingle Rails, she led an effort that successfully recruited hundreds of new members.

With a background in pro bono legal services, Cassandra came to the museum each day with a positive attitude, professionalism, respect for her colleagues and a willingness to help anyone who needed it. In January, Cassandra left the Eiteljorg to join Exodus Refugee Immigration Inc. as director of development, and the museum wishes her all the best in this next step in her career.

Board recognizes Caryn Anderson for inspiration, dedication and hard work

Happy trails to Susan Lewis, who has managed museum’s finances

After nearly 23 years managing the Eiteljorg’s finances, Susan M. Lewis, museum vice president and chief financial officer, will retire in mid-April 2021.

Susan started at the museum in June 1998 and brought with her a set of skills with amazing attention to detail, CPA credentials and a passion for not only her position but also for the museum and its financial stability.

During her tenure, Susan tirelessly worked to create and maintain annual budgets and has been the liaison with the museum’s finance, investment, human resource councils as well as the museum’s endowment and bond committees. She has been instrumental in keeping the museum’s finances accurate and controlled for many years. During the difficult spring of 2020, she moved decisively to speedily apply for grant opportunities for the museum. Her husband, Mike, is a regular Eiteljorg volunteer.

In 2009, Susan Lewis was an honoree for the Indianapolis Business Journal CFO of the year and was commended for her dedication and oversight of all areas of the museum’s finances. In addition to the accounting department, Susan also oversees human resources and technology departments, leading with consistency and support.

The Eiteljorg wishes Susan Lewis a happy retirement.
COMING IN THE JUNE ISSUE

VIRTUAL
INDIAN MARKET & FESTIVAL
JUNE

The 29th annual Eiteljorg Museum Indian Market and Festival, one of the nation’s top Native American art markets, is going virtual in 2021. The virtual market will run for two weeks in June and feature Native American artists from across the United States and Canada. There will of course be, first and foremost, shopping! Please check our website Eiteljorg.org/IndianMarketandFestival for all the details. The Virtual Indian Market and Festival also will include performances such as Native American dance, music, cultural presentations and art-making demonstrations.

16TH ANNUAL
QUEST FOR THE WEST®
ART SHOW AND SALE
OPENING WEEKEND SEP 10 & 11
EXHIBIT OPEN SEP 12-OCT 10

Beautiful paintings and sculptures – along with miniature works – by 50 top Western American artists will be available for purchase during the Eiteljorg’s exciting weekend art sale. Academy Award-winning actor Wes Studi (Cherokee) is the scheduled special guest speaker. Don’t miss the monthlong exhibition of Quest for the West® art, plus a related exhibition showcasing the previous 15 years’ winners of the Harrison Eiteljorg Purchase Prize, which are now part of the Eiteljorg collection. For reservations, contact Kay Hinds at khinds@eiteljorg.com or 317.275.1341.

Sponsorships for Eiteljorg exhibitions and programs are available. Contact Susan St. Angelo at 317.275.1333 or sstangelo@eiteljorg.com.

Stay connected with the Eiteljorg on social media and at eiteljorg.org. You can also sign up for our weekly e-newsletter at eiteljorg.org.

For general information about the Eiteljorg Museum, call 317.636.9378.