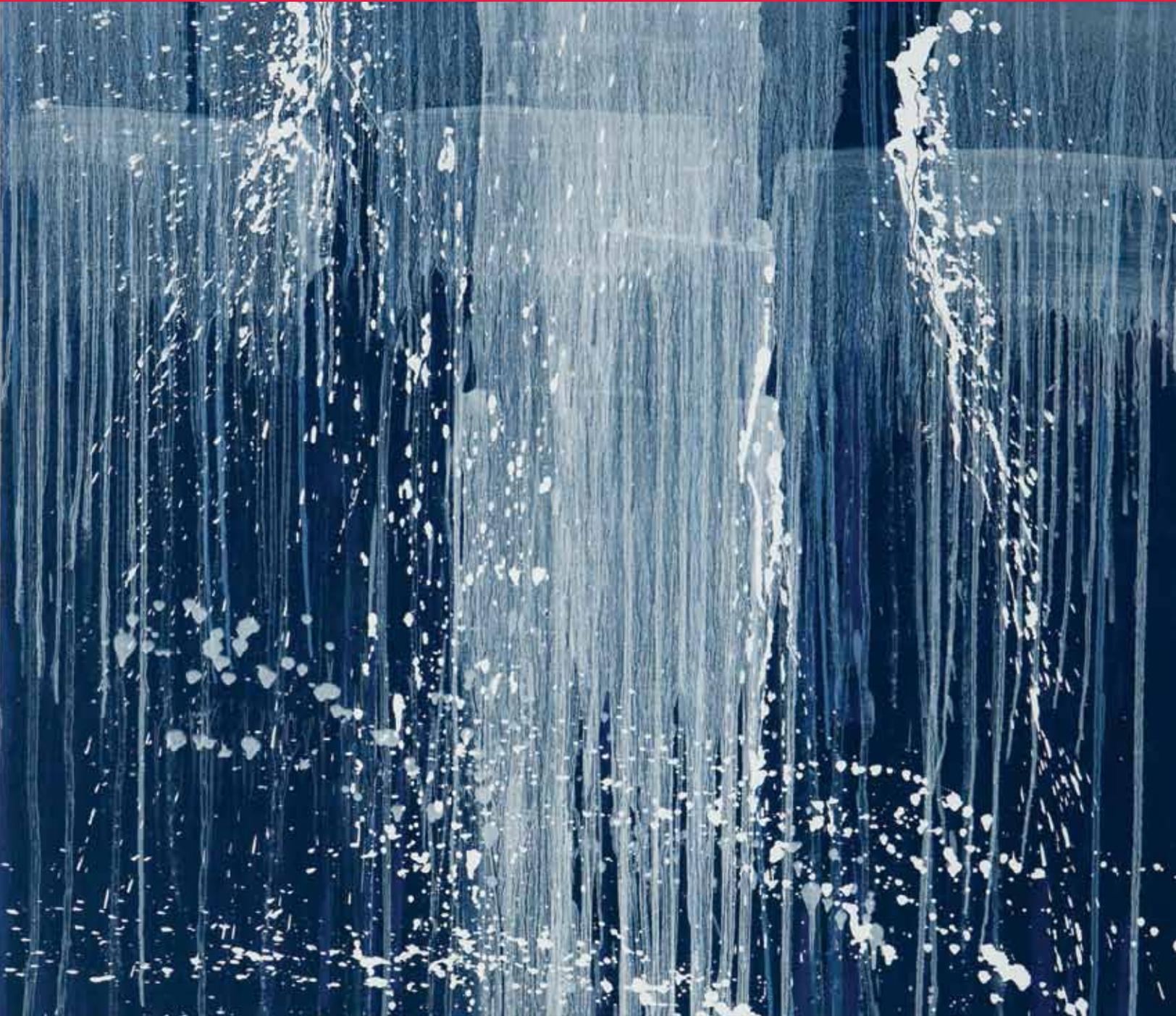


# ARTwords

SPRING 2012 Volume 17 | Number 2



**DAVID OWSLEY  
MUSEUM OF ART**

**BALL  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

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Museum of Art in Muncie, Indiana

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**Blue, 2004** (Detail)

Pat Steir

Silkscreen

Purchase:

Ball Brothers Foundation Legacy

Endowment for the Museum of Art

## From the Director



these museums, and maybe the art museums at Harvard, had an imprinting effect, for although Owsley came to a career in museums and art history relatively late, he has been without peer as an indefatigable collector and champion of this museum.

In addition to Mr. Owsley's encouragement of this museum's development, he has also been a generous benefactor of the Dallas Museum of Art, where there is a suite of galleries for Southeast Asian art named in his honor. But the breadth of his interests can be best seen at Ball State University where his curiosity about the world's art is made manifest in acquisitions ranging from ancient Chinese ceramics to contemporary paintings and drawings. He is the rare collector who is potentially interested in everything.

On October 6, we shared Mr. Owsley's enthusiasm for the museum with about 150 guests, mostly his cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends from all parts of the country, at a party given in his honor. Putting the Ball State University Museum of Art in context, University of Chicago historian Neil Harris spoke on the emergence of art museums in academic settings in America. Ball State University President Jo Ann M. Gora and Hollis Hughes, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, presented Owsley with encomia and accolades on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

The name change to the David Owsley Museum of Art is a very important event in this museum's history, now in its 76th year. It not only acknowledges Mr. Owsley's past generous deeds, but commits the museum to his excellent standards as a connoisseur across a broad swath of the world's cultural heritage, or, in other words, the world of human experience—which is what universities are all about.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Peter F. Blume".

Peter F. Blume

You have probably noticed that ARTWords has a new look. This is to go with our new name, the David Owsley Museum of Art. The name change was approved by the trustees of Ball State University at their meeting last July to honor a man who has been a constant in the museum's growth and development for more than forty years. David Owsley is the son of Lucy Ball Owsley and Alvin Owsley, and the grandson of Frank C. Ball, who leveraged the gallery in the Fine Arts Building into existence in 1935. Mr. Owsley attended Burris Academy before attending Philips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, which is home to another great American museum attached to a school. Apparently



David Owsley

# Museum renamed David Owsley Museum of Art

## Art museum named in honor of longtime benefactor

Ball State University recently named the David Owsley Museum of Art to honor the generosity, leadership, and service shown by this longtime benefactor to the museum. Owsley is the son of Alvin and Lucy Ball Owsley and the grandson of Frank C. Ball. Frank Ball was instrumental in the construction of the art museum in the 1930s.

Director Peter Blume says Owsley began making gifts to the museum in the 1960s, and since then has provided more than 2,300 works of art to the collection. “His role is a bit unusual,” Blume says. “Not only is he a donor, he’s also a collaborator. He’s guided the development of the collection for a very long time.”

Still, Blume says Owsley never dictates any purchases or pushes his own agenda. “He’s never forced his own tastes on the museum,” Blume says. “He always asks if we are interested in a purchase.”

Blume compares Owsley to something of an unofficial New York agent for the museum, one with the training to know what to look for, whether he is visiting the galleries on Madison Avenue or scouring a junk shop. “I’ve enjoyed my productive relationships with Peter Blume and his predecessor, Alain Joyaux,” Owsley said. “Over the years, they have been very receptive to my ideas, and I’ve worked with them to build upon their ideas. It has been an extremely fruitful partnership that I can see continuing for many years.”

Ball State President Jo Ann M. Gora praised Owsley for his tireless work to build the university’s collection of art. “Mr. Owsley has certainly enriched our world with his many contributions that fill the museum,” Gora said. “His dedication to this museum, our campus, and higher education in general is proof of his commitment that so many members of the Ball family have shown to the museum in its more than 75 years of existence.”

Owsley is also being honored for his work to enlarge the museum as a result of a successful fundraising campaign. He plans to bequeath \$5 million to the museum as an endowment together with nearly 90 percent of the works in his extensive art collection.

Upon completion of the expansion, museum exhibition space will increase to 25,000 square feet—about 50 percent more gallery space than it currently occupies. Construction is expected to be completed in 2013.

Through February 26

## Recent Acquisitions

### Modern and Contemporary Prints

The patient progress of building a collection is ongoing. Sometimes works of art enter the collection after years of stalking and sometimes they come as a complete surprise as an unexpected gift or bequest.

The prints in this selection have all been acquired since 2007.

Representing the archival collection of the late Arthur Deshaies are three prints that date back to 1959. Deshaies was one of the last great innovators working independently of commercial publishers that changed the making and marketing of prints in the 1960s. Another print, by the great David Dreisbach, was made in 1970. Both of

these gifts have come to the museum as a result of the dedication and generosity of Ned and Gloria Griner. Two portfolios recently given to the museum by Ball State professor David Johnson, contain works by the same artists—the first was made in 1990, the second was made in 2010. A selection of these is included to demonstrate that printmaking is alive and flourishing in academic situations across the country in spite of a tsunami of electronic image-making in these same decades.

Most of the prints included in this selection post-date 2002. Several are politically engaged addressing human rights, animal rights, or environmental issues; others are more formally conceived. The purpose of this exhibition is to present a variety of acquisitions in the field of contemporary art, immediate in their urgency to address, without sentimentality, contemporary issues.



***All Children Must be Accompanied by Adults, 1970***

David Dreisbach  
intaglio

Purchase:

The gift of Ned H. and Gloria Griner

# CALENDAR of EVENTS

spring

## Save the Date for ALLIANCE DAY TRIP

Members of the public are invited to enjoy a day away with David Owsley Museum of Art Alliance members and friends on Wednesday, May 9.

At 10:30 am introduce yourself to the many women who call the Indianapolis Museum of Art home, and discover the important contributions they made to the history of art as you enjoy Her-story: Women Artists@IMA.

At noon, enjoy lunch with members of the Indianapolis Museum of Art Alliance and compare notes about art in our communities.

In the afternoon, explore the grounds, including Lilly House and 100 Acres, and view some of the most significant outdoor art in the country.

The fee includes lunch and tour. Transportation is individually arranged.

- Alliance members: \$50
- David Owsley Museum of Art Friends members: \$65
- Non members: \$90

## JANUARY

11 Wednesday | Noon

### Alliance Luncheon & Program \*

#### *The Arts of Hobby Wars*

Michael M. O'Hara, the Sursa Distinguished Professor of Fine Arts and the Associate Dean for the College of Fine Arts, traces the history of his involvement in the "Hobby Wars," a series of articles and letters to the editor that appeared in the student newspaper the *Daily News* that outraged students in the arts when their work was characterized as "merely a hobby."  
*Brown Study Room*

12 Thursday | 3:30 pm

### Docent Informational Meeting

Prospective volunteers are invited to hear from current docents about the fun of being a tour leader at the David Owsley Museum of Art. Information will be provided to sign-up for weekly training. See the volunteer application form in the Get Involved section at [bsu.edu/artmuseum](http://bsu.edu/artmuseum).

*Brown Study Room | Refreshments will be served.*

16 Monday

Museum closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

21 Saturday | 2:30 pm

### Tour Time: The Collectors

Explore Ball State University and Muncie history with a docent as you learn about the great collectors and donors who shaped the museum. *Meet in Sculpture Court*

29 Sunday | 2:30 pm

### Expert Art: *What is an American?*

A panel of Ball State University experts analyze the museum's recent acquisition, Jaune Quick-to-See-Smith's *What is an American?* within the context of this enduring question.

*Brown Study Room | Refreshments follow the program*

## FEBRUARY

8 Wednesday | Noon

### Alliance Luncheon & Program\*

#### *Haiku Economics*

Cecil Bohanon, Professor of Economics, innovates by showing how art, poetry, and economics can be integrated in an introductory college level class. Examples showing the blend will be presented along with student feedback. *Brown Study Room*

14 Tuesday | Noon

### Art High at Noon: *Love in the Galleries*

Join a docent to view *Vertumnus Wooing Pomona*, by Jean-François de Troy (1717-1723) and compare it to *Stele of Shiva and Uma*, Indian (1100-1199 CE). *Meet in Sculpture Court*

18 Saturday | 2:30 pm

### Tour Time: The Collectors

Explore Ball State University and Muncie history with a docent as you learn about the great collectors and donors who shaped the museum. *Meet in Sculpture Court*

26 Sunday | 2:30 pm.

### First Person

Ball State University professor and art historian Dr. Natalie Phillips interviews an artist, to be announced from the *Recent Acquisitions* exhibition  
*Brown Study Room*

28 Tuesday | Noon

### Art High at Noon:

#### *New Pre-Colombian Sculpture*

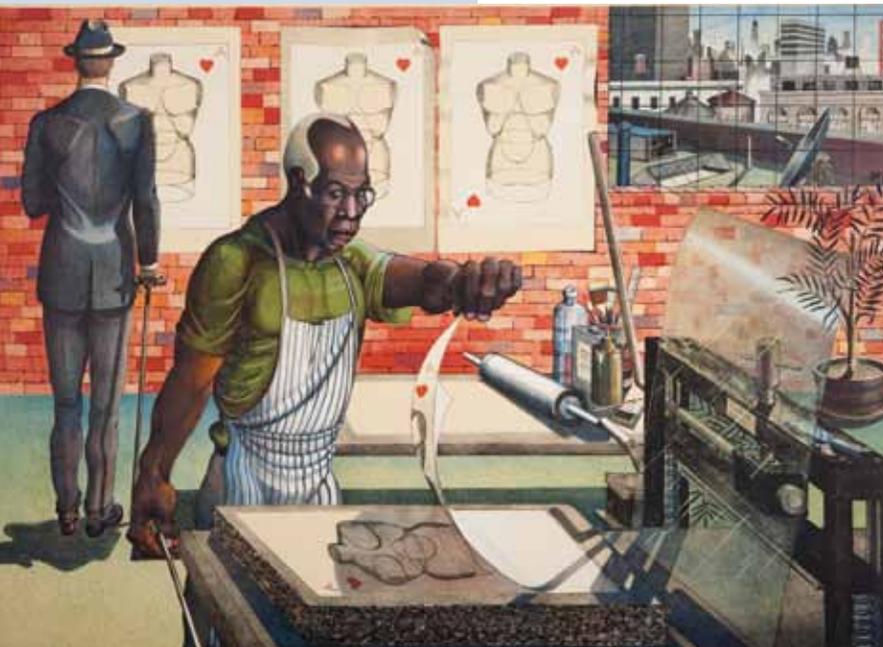
Join a docent to view and compare *Head of Huehuetotl*, *The Aged Fire God*, Mexican (550/950 CE) with the *Standing Warrior Displaying a Trophy Head*, Costa Rican (1000-1550 CE). *Meet in Sculpture Court*

## Fridays at the Museum

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Sketching in the Galleries

Meditation in the Museum



**Blackburn, 2011**

Ron Adams

Lithograph

Purchase:

Friends of the Museum

# CALENDAR of EVENTS

spring

## MARCH

3 Saturday | 9 am - Noon

### Teacher Training:

#### **Visual Thinking Strategies—An Introduction**

Teachers are invited to learn how to use Visual Thinking Strategies, an art-based discussion method valued for promoting language and critical thinking skills. Teachers in all disciplines are welcome. Curator of Education Tania Said, who is a Qualified Visual Thinking Strategies coach and trainer, will lead the training. *Brown Study Room*

Registration is required by Friday, February 24. Cost is \$20 per person. Call 765.285.3371 for more information and to register.

*In collaboration with Burriss Laboratory School, Ball State University*

*Continental breakfast will be provided.*

9 Friday | 9 am - 11 am

### Parent Field Trip

In partnership with Great Achievers and the Muncie Public Library, parents of South View Elementary School students, other community parents, and caregivers will learn what makes a good family museum visit. *Brown Study Room*

Call (765) 285-3371 for information and to register. Free with a refundable deposit of \$5  
*Continental breakfast will be provided.*

13 Tuesday | Noon

### Art High at Noon: **Portraiture**

Join a docent to view and compare recent acquisition *Portrait of Francis Basset*, by Sir Joshua Reynolds (1777) with *Portrait of Anne Eliza Allston*, by Gilbert Stuart (1804/5). *Meet in Sculpture Court*

14 Wednesday | Noon

### Alliance Luncheon & Program \*

#### **Women of the Revolution: Images by**

**and of Women During the French Revolution**  
Cheryl Snay, PhD, Curator of European Art, Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame, discusses eighteenth century art from both the Snite Museum and the David Owsley Museum *Brown Study Room*

15 Thursday | 2:30 pm

### Tour Time: **The Collectors**

Explore Ball State University and Muncie history with a docent as you learn about the great collectors and donors who shaped the museum. *Meet in Sculpture Court*

25 Sunday | 2:30 pm

### Expert Art: **The Aging Body**

Photographers and age experts converge to discuss and analyze the recent acquisition and provocative photograph *Frieze, No. 4*, by John Coplan, 1994. *Brown Study Room*

27 Tuesday | Noon

### Art High at Noon: **Carved in Stone**

Join a docent to view and compare *Christ the Redeemer Depicted as Zeus*, by Giovanni Angelo Montorsoli (1550) with *Prosperpine*, by Hiram Powers (1844-49) *Meet in Sculpture Court*

### **American Guardian, 2007**

Roger Shimomura

Lithograph printed in colors

Purchase:

Ball Brothers Foundation Legacy Endowment for the Museum of Art



## APRIL

11 Wednesday | Noon

### Alliance Luncheon & Program \*

#### **Religious Art of Spain**

Jenny Kirsten Ataoguz, assistant professor of art history, Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, discusses the Spanish Crucifix and its historical, social, and cultural context

*Brown Study Room*

17 Tuesday | Noon

### Art High at Noon: **Political Prints**

Join a docent to view and compare recent print acquisitions that are politically engaging—Roger Shimomura's *American Guardian* (2007) and Art Hazlewood's *Beast of Hatred* (2007)—on view in the Brown Study Room. *Meet in the Sculpture Court*

21 Saturday | 2:30 pm

### Tour Time: **The Collectors**

Explore Ball State University and Muncie history with a docent as you learn about the great collectors and donors who shaped the museum. *Meet in the Sculpture Court*

29 Sunday | 2:30 pm

### Reel Time: **Downside UP**

With 80 percent of its downtown buildings closed, North Adams, Massachusetts, united blue-collar locals with art world luminaries to transform economic failure into America's largest center for contemporary art, MASS MoCA. A film by North Adams native Nancy Kelly, *Downside UP*, is about the tentative, dangerous notion of hope in a city widely viewed as hopeless. (2002, 56 minutes) *Brown Study Room*

*In partnership with the Muncie Arts and Culture Council*

All programs are free unless otherwise noted. Programs are subject to change without notice.

The cost to join the David Owsley Museum of Art Alliance is \$15 for Friends members, and starts at \$40 for non-members.

Please call 765.285.5242 for additional information.

Drop-in tours, including Art High at Noon and Tour Time, are limited to 15 people. Tour sign-up may be required to accommodate visitors. We thank you for your understanding.

All tours and public programs, except for exhibition previews and Friday with Friends, are eligible for participation in the Art Card, a frequent visitor and free gift program.

Please call 765.285.5242 for additional information.

\* Prospective Alliance members free; Alliance members \$10 plus \$5 for lunch.



Davira S. Taragin

# An interview with Davira S. Taragin

The David Owsley Museum of Art will be expanding in the coming year, and that expansion will more than double the exhibition space for the decorative arts and design holdings. In anticipation of its future reinstatement, the museum has engaged Davira S. Taragin to evaluate the decorative arts and design collection. Taragin is working with the museum staff to define the strengths and future growth of the decorative arts and design holdings.

Taragin graduated from Barnard College and holds a master's degree in Art History and Museum Studies from George Washington University. She's worked at the Detroit Institute of Art, the Toledo Museum of Art, and as Director of Exhibitions and Programs at the Racine Art (Wisconsin) Museum.

Here, Taragin answers a few questions about her experiences on the project.

## **First, talk a bit about the difference between “design” and “decorative arts.”**

These terms have been evolving, and there have been differences over the centuries. From the eighteenth century to the nineteenth, for example, decorative arts, which was originally concerned with function, changed. When the great exhibitions like the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London in 1851 began, the works were no longer created for the tabletop or for functional purposes, but for exhibition purposes, to show the skill of the maker.

What started off as a concern with function became a concern with both function and display. Over the centuries, it expanded from usage in the home to usage in the office place; now we've moved it even further, into cyberspace.

## **How would you characterize the museum's collection of decorative arts?**

It's not a cookie cutter collection. I can think of other really strong decorative arts collections in the country, and it's not following the formula of these other collections. It has a unique taste about it.

I saw a statement on the Internet that Indiana is a center for Modernism, and that very much applies here, because it is a very modern collection. While there are some good eighteenth century ceramics and metalwork, the core of the collection really starts at the latter part of the nineteenth century and goes forward. It's particularly strong in the 1920s through the end of the Modern Movement in 1960.

## **Can you offer any examples of outstanding finds from the collection?**

The furniture from the 1930s to 1960, particularly American, is extremely strong. Many of the icons of mass-produced furniture design are represented.

There are very few museums in this country that have Eliel Saarinen furniture. I was going through the records and all of a sudden I noticed an Eliel Saarinen chair. Saarinen designed the A.C. Wermuth family home in Fort Wayne, and he and his wife Loja did the furnishings. The museum has one of the chairs that was in the

continued

continued **An interview with Davira S. Taragin**

living room of the Wermuth residence; it has the original fabric that Loja Saarinen designed and wove for them. Museums just don't have that kind of thing. Of course Cranbrook and the Metropolitan Museum in New York have Saarinen designs. In fact, the Met has the mate to this chair. It's just unbelievable.

Another great find is due to David Owsley. Kem Weber was an émigré designer who brought the Modernist movement to the US. I was going through the files and I noticed there is a Kem Weber chair, one of the tubular designs done by Lloyd Manufacturing. Most museums have his "airline" chair, which was a plywood and upholstered chair done the same year. But the most exciting thing is this chair was owned by Frank Ball. It was in the Ball vacation house in Michigan; David Owsley knew what it was and rescued it. That was a real find.

**After finding all of these great works, do you have a sense of how you would like the collection to be installed in the new Decorative Arts galleries?**

I thought about doing a chronological presentation. The museum is unveiling the collection and allowing its depth to be seen for the first time. Until now there have only been highlights brought out in one space, or selections integrated into the permanent collections galleries.

I thought this would be a great time to show the collection chronologically, particularly its masterpieces. I don't think people know what the museum has. But when I met with faculty, one of the professors suggested using the human body as the focal point, and that the decorative arts are created for either nourishment, shelter, or display. And that is something I'm thinking about. I still have to see more of the collection to determine if this will work, or to see if there is some way of combining both of those approaches to help people understand what decorative arts are and what design is.

**How would you describe the experience of working on this project?**

This is a dream project. It's a discovery process and a lot of detective work. The museum staff is fantastic, the collection is unbelievable, and it's very exciting to find a collection like this that has been growing and building.

All I have to do is bring the objects out and let the works talk to each other.



***Armchair, 1943***

Kem Weber

Manufactured by Lloyd Loom Products

Chrome-plated steel and leather

Lent by David T. Owsley



SPRING 2012  
Volume 17 | Number 2

**Museum Hours**

Monday–Friday  
9 am–4:30 pm

Saturday & Sunday  
1:30 pm–4:30 pm

765.285.5242

Free Admission

[www.bsu.edu/artmuseum](http://www.bsu.edu/artmuseum)

Parking in the McKinley Avenue garage between Riverside and University Avenues

A newsletter for the Friends of the



Muncie, IN 47306

## In this Issue

In this issue we take note of the naming of the museum in honor of longtime benefactor David Owsley. Davira S. Taragin answers our questions about design, decorative arts, and all the great finds in the collection. Join Alliance members for a great day trip to the IMA. PLUS...Notes from the Director, our Calendar of Events, and much more.



## New in the Galleries

# Canaletto

# Al Dolo

Giovanni Antonio Canal, known as Canaletto, is better known for his paintings than for his etchings. But this Venetian artist was able to capture eighteenth century Venice in either medium, and in a way few artists of the time were attempting. Rather than only depicting grand monuments, Canaletto captured the everyday vista as well. Dolo is a town near Venice. This is a scene of a working river, the Riviera del Brenta.

“Canaletto was one of the great printmakers of the eighteenth century,” says Director Peter Blume. “He was quite original in the making of his plates, and he did it so briefly. We believe this print may be one of his last.”

***Al Dolo, 1743***

Canaletto  
Etching  
Purchase:  
75th Anniversary Gala Fund  
and Museum of Art Alliance