

Volunteers In Art Newsletter

Chester Arnold and Fletcher Benton California Originals

Beginning on August 14th, the third floor of the Museum will house the work of Chester Arnold and Fletcher Benton, two truly original California artists. Chester Arnold is familiar to us at the Museum -- his painting *On Earth as It Is in Heaven* has been a talking piece for museum goers, both old and young, since it became a part of our collection. Fletcher Benton is a sculptor and painter who works in geometric forms, producing large and small metal sculptures as well as watercolors. What is exciting about this show is that the artist and Museum staff are installing Benton's studio on the third floor -- an incredible chance to see how an artist thinks and works!

CHESTER ARNOLD

Chester Arnold was born in Santa Monica, California, in 1952. His father worked in Germany for many years and life in that country had a great influence on Arnold's artistic development. He had private instructors, and even took a course by mail from the famous Artists Correspondence School -- the one on the matchbooks! He absorbed the art of the expressionist Max Beckmann, as well as that of Albrecht Altdorfer, Pieter Brueghel, and Caspar David Friedrich. After his family returned to the United States, Arnold did one painting a day for many years, exploring different styles until he found "my own language". He studied art at the College of Marin and received an MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute.

The language he found has produced a body of work which is flawlessly executed and aesthetically beautiful, even though it often depicts objects which are not beautiful. His paintings always start a dialogue and Arnold is pleased by that. "To have shows in museums, where you're having a visual conversation with a much larger audience than you've had before....I love to feel that my painting communicates with my fellow man."

Arnold has said that he came to the realization that he is a storyteller, "...and I love so many different things that they have to be in the work." (Jan/Feb *North Bay Bohemian*) There are *lots* of things in his work, most often the detritus of our lives --- tires, papers, books, just *stuff*. An exercise that he does with his students at the College



Chester Arnold, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 1997. Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art.

of Marin involves drawing every object they can remember. One critic wrote that "it is hard to imagine an artist who can paint trash with more wit and charm."

Arnold feels that his materials must be authentic, and therefore prepares them himself as the European masters did -- the pigments, the linens and the stretchers.

The result of these highly developed skills -- the preparation of materials, a stunning grasp of landscape, and the meticulous portrayal of the objects of our lives -- is work which is always beautiful and always engages the viewer in its story. It is the story of our encounters with our environment. It is an especially fitting subject for the Nevada Museum of Art.

One of Arnold's students wrote in his blog that "Arnold's work is like a hurricane in slow motion. When it hits you, you get it...a weirdly interesting combination of lush classical painting techniques and biting social criticism." (Steinberg Farmer Report 2007)

The show will be here until October 17th. On September 11, Arnold will be here for a dialogue with *San Francisco Chronicle* art critic Kenneth Baker. And our own Ann Wolfe and Colin Robertson have put together a book to accompany the show.

FLETCHER BENTON

Fletcher Benton was born in Ohio in 1931, but has spent his entire career in the San Francisco Bay area. He was not comfortable with the New York art scene and found the right fit and freedom in California. In a 1989 interview he mentioned the things he feels were important in his early artistic development -- a big new box of crayons, the smell of oil paint and the shop of an old man who repaired farm equipment and painted it in bright primary colors. Benton earned an MFA from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. When he came to San Francisco he painted signs for a living and exhibited his paintings in local coffeehouses. In sign painting he enjoyed the primary colors, but also became fascinated with letters, and saw them as variations on geometric forms. He regards geometric forms as basic parts that he uses to create his art. He likens the forms to piano keys and their combinations to the composition of music. In 1978 he began to experiment with kinetic sculpture. (He was so successful that he is still known primarily as a kinetic artist, even though he stopped doing kinetic art years ago.) He said that he had been "looking for a way to express my painting in another way, so I was using motion for this."



Fletcher Benton, *Folded Square Alphabet G*, 2004. Painted steel, 12 x 12 x 12 inches. © 2010 Fletcher Benton/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Benton works always with geometric forms, producing large and small metal sculptures, all perfectly balanced and all immensely pleasing to the eye from any angle. He paints some with bright colors, applies patinas on some and polishes others. He also does precise, lovely watercolors with the same geometric forms.

Benton appears to be a man truly fulfilled by his art. He told his students at San Jose State College, "If you do not have a love affair...I mean an active love affair with your work, that is so exotic and exciting that you know it

will sustain you for the rest of your life, you should never become an artist."

He enjoys the process of fabrication in his studio and does not send out his work to be produced by others from models. He is especially fond of steel: "Steel is forever. It's a heavy metal that can be abused. You can do damn near anything you want to steel. And you can go back and fix it. It's a marvelous metal." (Oral History Interview, 1989, Smithsonian)

Now we at the Nevada Museum of Art will be able to see Benton's studio and his tools and his work. It is especially significant because Benton himself worked with the Museum staff to design this installation.

K. Durham

Pablo Picasso A Display of Sweet Music

Cubism is a form of abstraction -- of taking away, separating, stripping down, rearranging three-dimensional elements on a two-dimensional canvas.

The title of this painting is quite accurate. Here, indeed, are a number of stringed and wind instruments and a bowl and a pedestal and a nice assortment of fresh fruit. Picasso put them there, all in plain view. Your job is to find them and, by doing so, share the delightful visual vocabulary of this most important 20th century painter. Picasso believed that all forms could be reduced to cylinders, spheres and cones. He once said, "I paint forms as I think them."

Joan Elder



Pablo Picasso, *Musical Instruments and Fruit Bowl on a Pedestal*, Fall 1913. Oil on canvas, 39 1/2 x 32 inches. Private Collection. © 2010 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Docent's Choice

Lewis Baltz: In the Desert



Lewis Baltz, *Night Construction, Reno*, from the *Nevada* portfolio, 1977. Gelatin silver print, 8 x 10 inches. Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art, The Altered Landscape, Carol Franc Buck Collection

Among the treasures in the Nevada Museum of Art's permanent collection is a series of black and white photographs by the internationally acclaimed artist, Lewis Baltz. Many of these images of particular interest to local residents are now on show in the Altered Landscape Gallery -- selections from two of his series "Near Reno" and "Nevada" -- created between 1977 and 1986.

Baltz is credited as a pioneer in a form of landscape photography that first received international recognition in 1975 when an exhibit opened at the International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House in Rochester, NY called "New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape". It featured the works of Baltz and seven other young American photographers. Also included were images from the Germans Bernd and Hilla Becher, some of whose many masterful photos of obsolete, post-industrial structures were exhibited at the Nevada Museum of Art last year.

These were not images in the tradition of Ansel Adams and Edward Weston. These were stripped down, stark -- no frills, no emotion, no opinion. They never depicted the ideal beauty of nature untouched; they plainly showed how man has altered nature to its detriment. The high contrast silver gelatin prints seem almost topographic in their simplicity and the name New Topographics

continues to describe and define the genre.

After the accolades and commissions resulting from the Eastman exhibit, Baltz returned to Nevada to continue his work and the results appear in the current exhibit in our Altered Landscape Gallery, *Lewis Baltz: In the Desert*.

Most photos of the destruction of the land -- whether careless or deliberate -- usually leave this docent angered or revolted. Not so in the works now on display. There is an odd serenity in Baltz's work, though certainly not because of their content. There is still that ever-present and probably inevitable human presence. It is the straightforward, unadorned beauty of the photographs themselves, perfectly executed, printed by a master, objects of extraordinary beauty despite their theme.

You may be interested to learn that the original "New Topographics" exhibit was recreated last year for a large-scale exhibition at the Center for Creative Photography in Tucson to be followed by an international tour. Though it is some 35 years since the initial exhibit in Rochester, the images still resonate.

Joan Elder

Lewis Baltz's *In the Desert* is currently on display in the Altered Landscape Gallery.

Museum News

Dates & Updates

- **Second Saturdays are Free.** Thanks to the Nightingale Family Foundation, admission to the Museum is free every second Saturday thru Dec. 2010.
- The next **Art Break** is scheduled for Saturday, August 28th at 11:30 AM. This docent-led tour for volunteers only will examine several of the Museum's newest exhibits. Lunch and discussion to follow.
- **First Thursday** will feature the Mojo Green Project and Reno Bike Project celebrating "Hot August Bikes". Thursday, August 5th. 5-7PM
- **Jazz on the Roof** welcomes Nelson Rangell and the 17 piece Reno Jazz Orchestra. Friday, August 27th at 7 PM. Admission is \$30, \$25 for Museum and Reno Jazz Orchestra members. Pre-ordered meals and a cash bar available from Café Musée.
- **Museum Store Summer Sale.** Wednesday, August 11th, 10AM-5PM. Selected sales items discounted up to 40%.
- **Museum Trunk Sale.** August 11th-22nd. During regular Museum hours.
- **Chester Arnold and Fletcher Benton exhibits** *On Earth as It Is in Heaven* and *The Artist's Studio* open August 14th in the Feature Galleries.
- **Natural Conflict: Video and Photography from Israel.** Seven Israeli artists explore ongoing Israeli society issues. Opens August 27th in the Feature Gallery North.
- **26th Annual Taste for Art.** Friday, August 20th, 6-9PM. Admission \$75/\$65 for Museum members. Proceeds to benefit the Museum's education and exhibition programs.



Volunteer Art Break

Volunteers, You're invited!

Bring a friend and join us Saturday, August 28th, 11:30 AM at the Museum's front desk as we assemble for a docent led tour of the Museum's newest exhibits. Afterwards meet fellow volunteers to discuss the exhibits while enjoying lunch or refreshments at Café Musée.



Join the Nevada Museum of Art for the hottest art party in town featuring premium wines and drinks, succulent cuisine and swinging music ...otherwise known as the 26th Annual *Taste for Art* fundraiser. And, oh yeah, the galleries will be open too.

Wine tasting has been the hallmark of *Taste for Art* and the 2010 edition will be no exception. Curtis Worrall, owner, Whispering Vine Wine Co. has been instrumental in securing participation from Silver Oak, Pahlmeyer, Duckhorn, Sbragia, Four Vines and Ferrari-Carano to name a few. More than 25 wineries will be represented alongside almost 20 restaurants.

This year, the event diversifies the tasting options by including a host martini bar and beer station to accompany the touch of the grape and address the many different preferences of our guests. The dazzling array of libations will be more than matched by superb edibles. Charlie Palmer Group, Cheese Board & Wine Cellar, Moody's Bistro and Men Wielding Fire are a few of the food regulars who step up annually to plate distinctive culinary fare.

The feast for the eyes comes from the Nevada Museum of Art featuring exhibitions from Chester Arnold, Fletcher Benton, Lewis Baltz and Pablo Picasso. Tickling the auditory senses for *Taste for Art* will be live bands whose buoyant music will be resonating throughout the building.

All *Taste for Art* proceeds help provide art education and exhibition programming to the benefit of thousands of northern Nevada K-12 school children and visitors every year. In addition, *Taste for Art* is a Green and Carbon Free event, courtesy of the Nevada Mining Association. For each ticket sold a tree is planted in Haiti to assist in the rebuilding of the country.

Taste For Art is sponsored by IGT, McDonald Carano Wilson LLP and Morrey Distributing. Additional support by The Charlie Palmer Group.

If you would like to volunteer for this event, please contact Rosalind at rosalind.bedell@nevadaart.org.

Welcome New Staff Members

Jes Stewart

Director of Operations

Born in L.A. but raised in the Reno/Sparks area since the age of 3, Jes considers himself a native.

After high school Jes Stewart spent nine years in the US Navy assigned to a Patrol/Anti Submarine Squadron and exploring the world including Sicily, Crete, Germany, England and Iceland. While serving in Desert Shield/Desert Storm he was stationed in Fallon and San Diego, then reassigned to the South Pacific during the Gulf War.

Upon leaving the Navy, he returned to Reno as a Deputy with the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. There he was attached to the Homeless Assistance Program, the RAVEN Helicopter Program and worked as a patrol officer. In addition, he attended college courses in Constitutional Law and Conversational Spanish.

Eight years later he left the Sheriff's Office to refocus his career in private security at Securitas Security Services. He was then contracted from Securitas Security to Pfizer Pharmaceuticals as their Head of Security for their local distribution center. While at Pfizer, he completed courses from Cornell University in Human Resource Management and FEMA in Emergency Incident Command Systems (ICS-100). After several years with Pfizer he returned to Securitas as the Reno Operations Manager and Scheduler, responsible for 250 officers and scheduling approximately 6,500 hours per week in security services. Nearly 3 years later he joins us at the Museum.

Jes says of his new position at the Museum, "I am truly thankful to be here and although it is very challenging, I enjoy every day."

Heidi Loeb

Executive Assistant

to the Director/Special Projects
Manager

Previously, Heidi Loeb served as a Trustee of the Museum. She is resigning her position on the Board to accept this new assignment.

Heidi brings a great deal of experience to her new position. Most recently, she was the managing director at The Resort at Red Hawk. Prior, she served as chief executive officer for the Wingfield Nevada Group in Sparks. Other experience includes owner of Doubletakes Photography Studio in Greenwich, CT; vice president of real estate for Fleet National Bank in Stamford, CT and vice president of real estate for National Westminster Bank in White Plains, NY. She received her bachelors of science in finance from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA.

Heidi has worked with many Reno-based community organizations including the American Heart Association, Temple Sinai where she serves as an at-large board member, Committee to Aid Abused Women Golf Tournament, Big Brothers Big Sisters and the Nevada Women's Fund as a board member.

Our Museum will benefit enormously from Heidi's experience, work ethic, strong community standing in Reno and knowledge of our business model. We're fortunate to have someone with such diverse skills join our staff.

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New Artists
New Venue

THE VOLUNTEERS IN ART OF THE
NEVADA MUSEUM OF ART
ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE 29TH ANNUAL

**ARTS & FLOWERS
LUNCHEON**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11 • 2010
ATLANTIS CASINO RESORT SPA
10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. (lunch served at 12:15 p.m.)

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Volunteers are still needed for this event. If you would like to help contact Rosalind at rosalind.bedell@nevadaart.org.

Nevada Museum of Art Staff

David Walker, Executive Director and CEO, ext. 229

Scott Bates, A/V Technician, ext. 113
Rosalind Bedell, Associate Director of
Advancement and Volunteer Programs, ext. 252
Jackie Clay, Gift Shop Manager, ext. 106
Linda Dierks, Vice President of Advancement, ext. 332
Arlene Feola, Controller, ext. 231
Erik Flippo, Designer, ext. 263
Sara Frantz, Registrar, ext. 258
Bob Gabrielli, Director of Corporations, Foundations
and Gov't Relations, ext. 234
Nancy Hansford, Sales Assistant, ext. 107
Jes Stewart, Director of Operations
and Human Resources, ext. 114
Connie Howard, Grant Writer, ext. 230
Jen Ishimatsu, E.L. Cord Museum School Dir., ext. 260
Sara Kennedy, Mgr. Special Events/Rental Prg., ext. 225
Katie Lewis, Curatorial Asst./Exhib. Coord., ext. 259
Heidi Loeb, Exec. Asst. to the Director/Special Projects
Manager, ext. 235

Chris Martin, Preparator, ext. 256
Rachel Milon, Director of Comm. and Marketing, ext. 228
Claire Munoz, School Services and Outreach Mgr., ext. 253
Amy Oppio, Deputy Director, ext. 251
Colin Robertson, Curator of Education, ext. 254
Amanda Rookey, Director of Individual Giving &
Membership Programs, ext. 232
Julie Tausch, Membership Coordinator, ext. 265
Kaleb Temple, Support Services Manager
Ann Wolfe, Curator of Exhibitions & Collections, ext. 255

Admissions Desk, ext. 100
Café Musée, ext. 147
Gift Shop, ext. 107
Founders Room, ext. 317
Library, ext. 204
Security Office, ext. 113

Nevada Museum of Art Phone Number 775-329-3333

This newsletter is produced by Cami Welsh-Griffith. Gosia Clark creates the website www.nmavolunteersinart.org.
Your comments and suggestions are welcome.
Please contact us at contact@nmavolunteersinart.org.

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