How does one design a museum? Very carefully, as the saying goes. Museums are very complex things. When successful they are an integral part of the fabric of a community, and they are a primary educational tool for all ages. They also can be lovely in their complexity and in mathematics too, for that matter, their value arises from the complexity and in mathematics too, for that matter, their value arises from the way they invade us and help us to understand ourselves.

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How can we have good security and yet make art accessible? All this within a context that to the casual observer is perceived as quite natural and that seems so very interesting. Simple? Like the magician. Complex? Very.

The Tweed Museum is currently undergoing improvement and, with the UMD School of Fine Arts, it is participating in a design process intended to improve the museum and expand its resources. Future issues of this newsletter will provide updates.
I met Warrington Colescott in 1960 when Dean Meeker, friend and colleague from the Department of Art at the University of Wisconsin, made the introduction. I have visited with Warrington and his wife Frances Myers at their home and studio in Hollandale, Wisconsin many times during the past twenty years. These visits have given me the opportunity to see in depth the artwork created during his pre-war college days drawing for the Pelican newspaper at the University of California in Berkeley through his more contemporary work produced this past decade. His early works were cartoons expressing his concerns about fascism as well as everyday college life. Later, after returning from military service, he adopted an abstract expressionist style of printmaking and painting. He abandoned abstraction in the 1960’s. Returning from sabbaticals in England, Warrington turned to satire. His emphasis has been to poke humor at politicians, race, religious orthodoxy, warfare, and the government and taxes. Warrington’s goal is communicating ideas visually and demanding that the viewer dialogue with the painting and make their own interpretation based on art history and society's commercial, social, and cultural milieu.

Warrington is Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Along with Alfred Sessler and Dean Meeker, he helped develop one of the finest printmaking education programs in the United States. In addition, he has authored or co-authored numerous articles about the history of artistic printmaking at the University of Wisconsin. Warrington has engaged and endured debate and criticism due to the controversial themes of his visual creations. His more than half century of artistic satire has indeed been stimulating. Boring, he is not. Enjoy the show!

THE ARTISTIC SATIRE OF WARRINGTON COLESCOTT: DR. ROBERT LEFF

Figurative style, with ties to Paul Manship and Constantin Brancusi and Elie Nadelman’s action and drama in three dimensions. Also, with the museum’s physical retrofitting, the Tweed’s online site and content is having its own renovation. Featured Works has taken the primary place as a permanent and ongoing virtual exhibit. The Collections section offers images and background on more artworks in the Museum’s care. The website with its social media adjuncts allows the museum to open its galleries 24/7 to display the visual arts of our region to the entire world. I hope you can visit the Tweed Museum web page and Facebook to see what we are working on to keep the museum a part of the art community now.

VAULT REDESIGN

By Anneliese Verhoeven, Preparator

While the Tweed Museum has been experiencing some changes to its main gallery spaces as a result of an HVAC construction project, the most drastic changes are taking place in one of the most important areas inside the Museum: the art vault. This art storage vault houses approximately 1,500 works from the Tweed’s permanent collection which includes paintings, ceramics, sculpture, and works of mixed media.

Prior to the start of construction, Tweed personnel (with the assistance of a fine art moving company) transported all artwork from the vault to the Museum’s other collections storage area on campus. This emptying of the vault, a massive undertaking in itself, has provided the Tweed a rare opportunity to redesign a space which has been essentially unchanged since the Museum’s inception and also to invest in modernized storage equipment.

These updates will not only make the vault more spatially economical, but will also include some cosmetic changes, such as the sealing/painting of walls and installing new lighting. Ultimately, this vault redesign will serve to enhance environmental conditions surrounding the artwork while improving safety and ease of access.

Not only did the University of Minnesota president and regents realize the potential of accepting and institutionalizing the gift in 1950, but they realized that the Tweed Gallery to the academic and cultural development of the University as a whole. The Museum was recognized by officials and the public alike as a cultural literacy in recognition of the immigrant and Native communities.

In subsequent years, thanks to additional financial gifts, the Tweed Gallery would grow to anchor the artistic legacy of upper Minnesota and provide educational services to students, scholars and the public. Sixty-five years hence, the Museum continues to operate by its founder’s vision, by using its now 10,000 piece collection to promote life-long learning, scholarship, preservation, interconnected and cultural literacy in recognition of the immigrant and Native communities.

Today the Tweed Museum of Art serves a vast public as well as the statewide University system. The Museum supports K-12 education, trains young people for professional careers, and provides solace and entertainment for free to all who may visit. Over the years, the collection and programming has developed with the generous support of families and individuals from Duluth and around the state, as well as from the artists and cultural citizens of the community, who have donated artwork, time, and resources to keep the Museum current and meaningful.

THE TWEEED GIFT SHOP: KATHY SANDSTEDT

Happy Spring to everyone! The Tweed Store has had a bit of spring refreshing. We have painted over the wallpaper, placed a new door on our storage room, and had a few coats of wax put on our floors. We are decked out with greeting cards, art gifts, and beautiful, new spring scarves. We have a wonderful selection of Michael Michaud’s botanical jewelry also carried by the Smithsonian, along with other area and national jewelry artists.

Stop in and see the changes!

DIRECTOR’S VIEW: KEN BLOOM

Envisioning an enlightened community with a museum that would preserve their artistic treasures for future generations, while sharing responsibilities with an academic institution, is the way Alice Tweed Tuohy originally imagined the UMD gallery that would become the Tweed Museum of Art. Alice’s perspective in 1950 was most exceptional for its generosity and far-sightedness. Her influence was felt not only because she was able to help make such a vision come true, but because the value of the art collection that she and her husband George had amassed would lend stature to Duluth and UMD as home to important European and American artworks.

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Photo: Brian Nihouse
I met Warrington Colescott in 1990 when Dean Meeker, friend and colleague from the Department of Art at the University of Wisconsin, made the introduction. I have visited with Warrington and his wife Frances Myers at their home and studio in Hollansdale, Wisconsin many times during the past twenty years.

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THE PRESIDENT’S REPORT: BRUCE HANSEN

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What is involved? How does one accommodate staff, visitors, social functions, educational tools and so many other activities? How best to present exhibitions and so many other activities? How does one design a museum? Very.

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Non profit Organization
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Duluth MN

THE MUSEUM of ART

1201 Ordean Court
University of Minnesota Duluth
Duluth, MN 55812-2496
Phone: 218-726-6222
Fax: 218-726-8503
E-mail: tweed@d.umn.edu
Web: www.d.umn.edu/tma

MUSEUM OF ART
This is a series of four to five minute gallery talks on works from the Tweed Museum Permanent Collection visible in a video format on the museum website. This is a way to keep the museum “open” while the galleries are closed for a renovation of climate control systems. With the help of Christine Storm (Communications), Mike Cousins (Senior Graphic Designer/Photographer) and Anneliese Verhoeven (Preparator), we make a short film every week that gives the visitor a history of the featured work and my personal thoughts on it, along with an essay on that piece.

The first eight works were completed by February 9th, and they include recent acquisitions and several significant historic paintings from the collection. In the following weeks we will look at artists from the Duluth and Northeastern Minnesota area who make the art culture here so vibrant and memorable. A list of ten artists in consideration, but this will expand into the spring and will feature artists who have long connections to Minnesota and to the School of Fine Arts at UMD.

Ruth Duckworth’s small porcelain-sculpture Untitled/Sphere and Blade from 2001 was my choice for the first video, and it comes from the Resurfaced and Reforged: Evolution in Studio Ceramics exhibit from this past year. The definitive book on Duckworth’s work is available from the School of Art Library. Jo-Lauria and Tony Birks has the sculpture pictured on the front cover as it represents Duckworth’s inventive formal concerns and her mastery of the craft of clay.

Two paintings that are essentially portraits - Big Al (Allen) Carter’s Sweep from 2001 and Philip Evergood’s Pittsburgh Family from 1944 - followed in this series of featured work. Both could be called “social comment” paintings as they celebrate and honor our ancestry and American dreams.

A bronze sculpture by Pati Warashima from 2006 titled Bonded Flight was filmed in February. This is a new work in the collection and a wonderful and energetic - almost buoyant example of Warashina’s