On June 11th, the Advisory Board of the Tweed Museum of Art gathered in a downtown Duluth boardroom with facilitator Tracy Mesterheim and staff members Ken Bloom and development officer Rob Hofmann to review and update the Tweed’s strategic plan. The 2013-2016 strategic plan included the museum’s vision, to become valued and promoted as our region’s destination art museum; and its mission, to bring art and people of our communities together for delight, to discover and to learn.

OUR MISSION
To bring art and people of our communities together for delight, to discover and to learn.

OUR VISION
To become valued and promoted as our region’s destination art museum.

INTERVIEW: JEFFREY T. LARSON

Jeffrey T. Larson’s first solo exhibition of thirty oil paintings, Domestic Space, is on display through September 18th. Meanwhile, Larson is renovating the former Italian bluestone St. Peter’s church to open a new art school this fall. Tweed Advisory Board Vice-President Sharon Mollerus spoke with Larson between his contractor visits.

M: People at the opening were interested in the fact that you were born in Two Harbors. What is your connection with the Northland?

L: I was born there as my father’s first job was with the taconite industry. We moved around for the next five years, and then we settled in the Western suburbs of the Twin Cities. However, as a child we often went camping on the North Shore and in the Boundary Waters. My wife and I were glad to get out of the Cities later, and we moved to Maple, Wisconsin.

M: How did you get started as an artist, and what were your main influences?

L: My mom always had paper around, and she would paint in the living room. I was the class artist. In high school, I started taking night classes at the Atelier Lack and was accepted the following year as one of five students. The late Richard Lack taught the studio craftsmanship of painting, practically a lost art from the Renaissance. My son Brock was always an artist, like the apple dropped straight down. As for my influences, I always return to Rembrandt, Vermeer, Sorolla, but there is something to learn from everybody.

M: Can you speak about your process in painting and your choice of subjects?

L: My first focus is on things that catch my eye and to ask myself why I am interested in them. I see something beautiful, or artistic, and I take notes. The picture is not copying, but involves an intense editing process to convey what captured me. I strip away everything that doesn’t create that. The subject matter is what I love, because that is what I am better at. I have painted my family countless times.
Jeffrey Larson Interview continued...

L: The eclectic community that thrives in the Mesabi is a model for other communities. The days of rich ore are gone. Range isn’t what it used to be. And there’s the truth that the Range is being tested. Minnesota is ready for new opportunities in the arts, tourism, and high-tech centers. It’s evolving, with new opportunities, programming, administration, and basic research, to mention teaching in museum studies, has established solid credentials which, along with exceptional artistic and innovative skills, are characterized by a balance of practical training and advanced interdisciplinary scholarship.

M: How did this exhibit with the Tweed come about?
L: I believe it came from the board members who were fans of my work. Ken Bloom and board member Pat Buras came to visit my studio a few years ago.

M: Can you tell the story of the featured piece you painted of your daughter, Sophie Rose?
L: I wanted to draw Sophie at four years old, she was so sweet, and we tried all kinds of dresses and nothing looked good. She got sick of it and sat and slumped. Then I found my subject, with her like that.

M: Can you say something about the school you are opening in Duluth?
L: There is a resurgence of people who want to appren- tice in realism, even if they go on to paint in other styles. Ours will be one of a few dozen schools in the world to offer classical training. St. Peter’s is the perfect location with the windows facing north and the high ceilings.

Jeffrey Larson, Domestic Space

M: After your Master’s was completed, Ms. White worked as Curator for the new-built Squaxin Island Tribe’s Museum, Library and Research Center, where she developed museum policies and exhibits and worked with tribal artists in the Pacific Northwest. After Seattle, Ms. White returned to Lac Courte Oreilles to serve at the Tribal Cultural Center prior to entering the University of Minnesota American Studies program, where she earned a Ph.D. in 2013.

Jeffrey T. Larson

Boyd Christensen

American (1938–2015)

Presented in the Alice Tweed Tuohy Gallery, accompanying the col- lation-based exhibition Reframing Ophealia, is a memorial vignette of four sculptural works by Boyd Christensen. In 1964, young sculptor Boyd Christensen was hired by UMD to set up its new sculpture studio and bronze-casting foundry. From 1964–1976, Boyd was Associate Professor of Sculpture at UMD. In 1970, on a sabbatical he took his young family to Europe to study “Public Sculpture” in Scandinavia and Italy. On his return, Boyd was commissioned to create a public sculpture and fountain for a newly park in downtown Superior. The sculptures are now in front of the Superior Library.

In 1978, he left UMD to pursue a design business, Inner Spaces, and produced a series of products including the Inner Cube, a small porcelain modular piece. A partnership with two other ceramists focused on ceramic wall concepts for architectural spaces. Boyd then designed and installed a wall in the new UMD Business Building. In 1984, Boyd was commissioned to create a wall mural for UC Irvine.

VANCE GELLERT: IRON COUNTRY

In the 1870s, a pickaxe hit the ground in search of gold. A vein was struck, but it swerved forth the blood earth hematite, the rich ore of Minnesota’s massive iron range. The girdant was roused from its slumber, Mesabi (Sleeping Giant) is the name the Ojibwe gave to the Laurentian Divide, an uplifting of colliding tectonics that brought the vast deposits of iron to the surface of north-eastern Minnesota. From here came the steel to build the girders of its sky scraping buildings, the rails and iron horses that ran its length, and the guns, ships and more that won its two world wars. The iron Country, its name the Ojibwe gave to the Laurentian Divide, an uplifting of colliding tectonics that brought the vast deposits of iron to the surface of north-eastern Minnesota. From here came the steel to build the girders of its sky scraping buildings, the rails and iron horses that ran its length, and the guns, ships and more that won its two world wars.

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Voices of interpretive perspective on the overall dimension of Museum programming to include under-represented and indigenous artists and to expand the range of interpretive perspective on collection objects.

THE STAFF OF THE TWEED MUSEUM HAS BEEN ORGANIZING AND RUNNING ITS PROGRAMS FOR OVER TWO YEARS WITH THE HELP OF GUEST CURATORS. THE ADDITION OF DR. WHITE TO THE STAFF WILL PROVIDE A GREATER DEGREE OF OPERATIONAL CONTINUITY AND INVIGORATE THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL MUSEUM PROGRAMMING TO INCLUDE UNDER-REPRESENTED AND INDIGENOUS ARTISTS AND TO EXPAND THE RANGE OF INTERPRETIVE PERSPECTIVE ON COLLECTION OBJECTS.

We are so thankful for the reopening of the Museum Store and anticipate a wonderful summer with many visitors to the store! With our new exhibits open, we have catalogs from the Jeffrey T. Larson Domestic Space exhibition, as well as Larson giclees and Larson card packs for sale in the museum store along with many other fun items. If you haven’t been in to see the exhibits, you really must! They are exceptional! There have been a few minor improvements in the store and, of course, we have new merchandise coming in all the time. Don’t forget to visit us this summer: “Come Shop the Fun.”
In the 170s, a pickaxe hit the ground in search of gold. A vein was struck, but it swerved forth the blood earth hematite, the rich ore of Minnesota’s massive iron range. The giant was roused from its slumber. The Ojibwe, a gathering to live the sweat, were no longer at peace. The days of rich ore are gone. The eclectic community that lived on the Range isn’t what it used to be. And there’s the truth that the spirit of the Range that captivated so many now remains is depressed. I went to find out – what is this place?

While it was the visual environment that caught my attention, it is the generous people of the Range that captivated me. Forty-three nationalities mixing: in the 1920s, there was as many on the Range as in New York City. That provides a rich cultural tapestry. There’s the food - pasties, porketta and pasta – brought by the Welsh, Italians and Croatians; and there’s the music, dance, ceremonies, faith, all brought over to preserve and cherish. There’s the Native American perspective. The Ojibwe had come for the food that grows on water – wild rice – and watched as the white man took all the meat and fish and gathered to live the sweat. What remains is depressed. I went to find out – what is this place?

And there’s the truth that the Range isn’t what it was. The days of rich ore are gone. The eclectic community that gathered to live the sweat, tears, and joys of the Range is being tested. Mining continues, but it’s much different. The halcyon years are over; now it’s low grade taconite and hematite that require high-tech processing which employs a highly educated workforce that is less than a tenth of what it was. There’s the contentious proposed copper nickel mining with its potential for both jobs and pollution. But things are evolving with new opportunities in the arts, tourism, paper, support industries, and high-tech centers. It’s a grand, sprawling story that iron country tells of a uniquely beautiful landscape and a proud, resilient people.

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M: Can you say something about the school you are opening in Duluth?
L: There is a resurgence of people who want to appren-tece in realism, even if they go on to paint in other styles. Ours will be one of only a few dozen schools in the world to offer classical training. St. Peter’s is the perfect location with the windows facing north and the high ceilings.

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GRAND RE-OPENING

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Our mission is to bring art and people of our communities together for delight, to discover and to learn.

Our vision is to become valued and promoted as our region’s destination art museum.

By the end of the retreat the board had agreed on three new goals to move forward including the establishment of a new fund to benefit the Tweed, and to move the Tweed towards accreditation by the American Association of Museums.

By the end of the retreat, the board felt that while there is still some work to be done on some goals, much has been accomplished—most importantly, progress on the digitization of the collection.

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