

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Museum Contact: Renate Raymond

425.519.0752 or renater@bellevuearts.org

June 29, 2006

(historical photos also available)

**Bellevue Arts Museum announces the
60th Anniversary of the Bellevue Arts and Crafts Fair-
A Celebration of Art, Artists and Community Spirit**

**Friday, July 28 /Saturday, July 29/Sunday, July 30, 2006
Friday and Saturday 9:30 AM-9:30 PM and Sunday 9:30 AM-6:00 PM**

Location: Bellevue Square and Bellevue Arts Museum

Bellevue , WA- Bellevue Arts Museum is pleased to announce the 60th Anniversary Bellevue Arts and Crafts Fair, presented by NW Realtors for the Arts, a three-day art festival at Bellevue Square and the award winning Kidsfair presented by The Seattle Times at Bellevue Arts Museum is scheduled for Friday, July 28 through Sunday, July 30. The Fair is produced by Bellevue Arts Museum and all proceeds benefit the Museum's educational programs and exhibitions.

It 1946 was an exciting year for the small community of Bellevue, just outside Seattle, as they planned and launched the first arts and crafts festival (then known as the Pacific Northwest Arts and Crafts Fair). The fair was a grassroots effort to showcase Northwest artists and the first Fair drew over 20,000. Today more than 325,000 visitors come to the Fair and enjoy the 325 artists booths, art demonstrations, Kidsfair, performing arts, delicious food and much more.

Highlights:

- Bellevue Arts Museum is the sole beneficiary of the Bellevue Arts & Crafts Fair proceeds
- NW Realtors for the Arts presents 325 Juried Artist Booths and featuring 90 new Fair artists
- The Seattle Times presents Kidsfair in Bellevue Arts Museum-offering hands-on activities and entertainment for families
- The Boeing Company sponsors free admission to the Bellevue Arts Museum galleries all three days of the Fair
- *Chalk it Up at Bellevue Arts & Crafts Fair* presented by Comcast, a fun an opportunity to create brightly colored chalk drawings on NE 6th Avenue.
- Roving live entertainment including face painting, musicians, jugglers, stilt walkers, clowns and giant puppets
- Traditional fair foods provided by various nonprofit organizations

- Each year 10 individual artists are chosen to receive the Carol Duke Artist Award and receive \$1,000 each

According to Michael Monroe, Executive Director for Bellevue Arts Museum, more than 325,000 people attended to the Fair in 2005 and revenue from art sales totaled more than \$1.66 million—an all time high. In addition, Kidsfair, organized by Bellevue Arts Museum docents, drew more than 12,500 children and parents over the three-day event. Take the path from the artists’ booths at Bellevue Square through the mall and to the Kidsfair at Bellevue Arts Museum.

“This year, we chose the tagline ‘Be Inspired’ to represent how the community feels about the Bellevue Arts and Crafts Fair,” said Monroe. “We are delighted to continue the inspiration with the addition of 90 new artists.”

The Bellevue Arts and Crafts Fair is unique as it is the only fair in the Northwest where the artists are hand selected by a jury of art professionals. Jurors for this year’s show include Joann Edwards, co-founder and Executive Director of the San Francisco Museum of Craft + Design; Hal Nelson, Director of the Long Beach Museum of Art, and Michael Monroe, Executive Director and Chief Curator of Bellevue Arts Museum.

Beginning with their vision in 1946 with the founding of the Fair, the Freeman family has been instrumental to the success of Bellevue Arts Museum and building a vibrant Eastside arts community.

“It is clear to me from the record-breaking numbers at the Bellevue Arts and Crafts Fair in 2005 that this community loves art,” said Kemper Freeman, president and founder of Kemper Development Co. “The community has nurtured, supported and enjoyed this Fair for 60 years and it has only improved with each year that passes. The Fair is another example of our local community working together and providing a gathering place to enjoy art and fine craft.”

In celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Fair, Bellevue Arts Museum decided to make a dramatic change by deciding to eliminate the artist commission fee. In the past, the Fair offered low booth fees and a percentage commission from the artist sales. Now, in order to attract new artists, reduce administrative expenses and to elevate the Bellevue Arts and Crafts Fair to the status of other key national fairs, 100% of the art sales will go directly to the artist.

Bellevue Arts and Crafts Fair Sponsors:

NW Realtors for the Arts
 Bellevue Square
 The Seattle Times
 Clear Channel
 KOMO Television
 Warm 106.9 Radio
 Smooth Jazz Radio
 KING Classical FM Radio

Microsoft Corporation
 Rotary Offset Press
 Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Washington
 Overlake Hospital Medical Center
 GLY Construction
 Comcast
 The Boeing Company
 Bellevue Arts Museum Board of Trustees

Bellevue Arts & Crafts Fair Patron Preview Party

60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

6:30 - 9:30 pm

Reception/Early Admission for Gold/Diamond level guests at 5:30 pm

Bellevue Arts Museum

Guests will have the exclusive opportunity to preview and purchase award-winning art that will be featured at the Fair. Join us for an evening of festivities to benefit Bellevue Arts Museum.

For ticket prices and more information please call (425) 519-0745 or email alicem@bellevuearts.org

Bellevue Arts & Craft Fair Jurors

Joann Edwards- is co-founder and Executive Director of the San Francisco Museum of Craft+Design, a new museum celebrating the ingenuity of contemporary craft and design which opened in 2004. From 1984 to 2004 Edwards co-owned two contemporary art galleries in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Michael Monroe-is the Executive Director and Chief Curator of Bellevue Arts Museum. He was with the Smithsonian Institution's Renwick Gallery for over 23 years, the last ten as Curator-in-Charge. He also served as Executive Director of the American Craft Council and taught design for the State University of New York.

Hal Nelson –is the director of the Long Beach Museum of Art and has been since 1989 and has been responsible for reinvigorating the Museum's commitment to contemporary craft since opening its expanded oceanfront facilities in 2000. Nelson has organized exhibitions featuring turned wood and added numerous pieces to the Museum's permanent collection.

Bellevue Arts Museum

Bellevue Arts Museum is the Pacific Northwest's center for the exploration of the fine art of craft and design. An emphasis is placed on regional craft artists as part of the national and international conversation on fine craft and design. Bellevue Arts Museum is located at 510 Bellevue Way NE, Bellevue, WA 98004. The Museum's main information line is 425.519.0770 and website is www.bellevuearts.org

For More Information: Renate Raymond, Bellevue Arts Museum, 425.519.0754 or renater@bellevuearts.org

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