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BELLEVUE ARTS MUSEUM

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Michael Monroe honored with prominent “Award of Distinction for Contributions to the Field of Craft” by American Craft Council

Bellevue, WA – Michael Monroe, Director of Curatorial Affairs at **Bellevue Arts Museum (BAM)**, has been honored with the prestigious **Award of Distinction for Contributions to the Field of Craft** by the **American Craft Council**. The award “recognizes an organization, institution, corporation or individual who has made significant contributions to the field of craft with a minimum of 25 years of service,” according to a recent press release by the American Craft Council, and “honors those who have demonstrated outstanding artistic achievement, leadership and service in the craft field.”

“I’m delighted and deeply honored to be the recipient of the 2009 Award of Distinction from the American Craft Council,” Monroe states. “The American Craft Council has been a driving force in both the traditional and studio craft movements, and I’m proud to have been – and continue to be – part of introducing craft and craft artists to new audiences.”

An eminent figure in the world of craft, Michael Monroe has served as independent curator, noted lecturer, author and juror for over 35 years. He joined **Bellevue Arts Museum** in 2005 as Executive Director/Chief Curator and transitioned into the role of Director of Curatorial Affairs in 2008. Under his leadership, the Museum has become a leader in the national conversation on art, craft and design as well as a center of artistic activity and excellence on the Eastside welcoming over 50,000 visitors each year.

Prior to his tenure at **BAM**, Monroe was associated with the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Renwick Gallery, which collects and presents exhibitions that feature the creative achievements of craft artists and designers in the United States. Monroe served as curator from 1974, and in 1986, he became curator-in-charge, a position he held until 1995. During his tenure he was invited by President William Clinton and Hillary Rodham Clinton to organize a collection for the White House in commemoration of the *Year of American Craft*. In 1995 he began a three year term as Executive Director of the American Craft Council and was inducted into its College of Fellows as an Honorary Fellow.

Monroe received a Master of Fine Arts degree in 1971 from Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, after graduating with a BS degree in art education from the University of Wisconsin in 1967. He has won numerous awards, among them the Smithsonian Institution Outstanding Employee Award (1978, 1984, 1989, 1995) and the NICHE Lifetime Achievement Award for Craft (1996). He was also selected as an Honorary Fellow at The American Craft Council College of Fellows (1995).

About Bellevue Arts Museum:

Bellevue Arts Museum is the Pacific Northwest's center for the exploration of art, craft and design. A leading arts center on the Eastside, **BAM** celebrates regional, national and international artists working in a broad range of craft media, including ceramics, fiber, metal, wood and glass. The Museum also offers a unique array of free or low-cost educational programs such as artist demonstrations, lectures and workshops as well as a variety of engaging and fun hands-on kids activities. www.bellevuearts.org