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BELLEVUE ARTS MUSEUM

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Contact: Tanja Baumann, Director of Marketing & PR
425.519.0759 or tanjab@bellevuearts.org

Bellevue Arts Museum announces transition plan for expanded leadership

Bellevue, WA - Michael Monroe, Executive Director and Chief Curator of Bellevue Arts Museum, announced today that he will increasingly focus on the curatorial aspects of the Museum and transition into the role of Director of Curatorial Affairs. The Board of Trustees has launched a search for an Interim Executive Director to oversee the financial and other administrative aspects of the organization with plans to hire a permanent Executive Director in the next 8 - 12 months. Monroe will continue to serve dual roles until an Interim Executive Director is in place, at which time he will reduce his hours and shift his focus exclusively to curatorial matters.

Monroe is an influential figure in contemporary craft with over 35 years of expertise and has served as the Museum's Executive Director and Chief Curator since 2004. When hired, Monroe committed to serving dual roles for three but no longer than five years. "I'm very proud of what we have achieved in the past four years," states Monroe. "The community has given us the support we need to ensure the organization's long-term success. I am pleased we are now in a position to bring on new administrative leadership and look forward to continuing my curatorial role."

"Michael Monroe has been an exceptional leader for the Museum," Susan Edelheit, President of the Board of Trustees, states. "We are in a great position to make this transition and we are thrilled to be able to search for an Executive Director while Michael continues to do his outstanding work directing the curatorial department of the Museum."

Under the leadership of Monroe, the Museum has experienced steady growth since opening with a revitalized mission on arts, craft and design in 2005. The Museum has presented 37 world-class exhibitions by international and local artists as well as over 275 low-cost or free educational programs attracting over 200,000 visitors. The 62 year-old Bellevue Arts Museum ArtsFair, a three-day arts festival held in July, draws over 350,000 people every year. The Museum has also recently received a generous award of \$2 million from the City of Bellevue, as well as over \$480,000 from the prestigious Institute of Museum and Library Services, in addition to other large grants from local corporations and foundations. This year's Patron Party, the Museum's annual fundraising event, netted over \$400,000 – the highest amount raised to date.

The Board of Trustees is currently interviewing candidates for the Interim Executive Director position and expects the position to be filled by October 1. A permanent Executive Director is expected to be in place in 2009.

About Bellevue Arts Museum

Bellevue Arts Museum is the Pacific Northwest's center for the exploration of art, craft and design through exhibition, educational programs and partnerships, emphasizing the work of regional artists. For more information about Bellevue Arts Museum, please visit www.bellevuearts.org.

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