

## P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Bellevue Arts Museum to Open the Premier of *Thomas Mann: Storm Cycle, An Artist Responds to Hurricane Katrina***

Themes of the heart and devastation told through assemblage  
opens February 17, 2006

Bellevue, WA - Bellevue Arts Museum presents the premier showing of the exhibition *Thomas Mann: Storm Cycle, An Artist Responds to Hurricane Katrina* set to open to the public on February 17 and run through May 21, 2006. The exhibition has been organized by Bellevue Arts Museum.

New Orleans artist Thomas Mann created *Storm Cycle* - an exhibition of the heart - depicting his interpretation of Hurricane Katrina. Twenty, three-dimensional panels with titles as direct as *Will it Float?*, *Markings No. 1: I Will Shoot Your Sorry Ass*, *Local Hero* and *Angel* are branded both as a heartfelt aftershock diary and an implacable documentary of the devastated emotional and material landscapes left behind by the hurricane. Each of the panels has been created from debris gathered in the streets of New Orleans post-Katrina and reference shattered walls, abandoned pets, rescue boats landing on roofs and ghostly presences. Each panel also houses a removable wearable jewelry object, taking the shape of brooches and pins and incorporating photos depicting the artist's hometown scene. The panels are accompanied by narratives written by Thomas Mann describing his emotions and the reason for each one's inclusion in the exhibition.

"Most of the time I look at the role of being an artist with a joyful acceptance as my personal mission as a human being. But sometimes, being an artist can also be a burden and curse. No matter the situation, be it an incredible ecstatic event or a terrible misfortune, the most likely response I'll have is that of being the observer,

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the information gatherer, the researcher. Creating *Storm Cycle* was one of the most heartwarming events of a very intense two months filled with anguish, tears, relief and acceptance,” states Thomas Mann.

“We are extremely pleased to be the opening venue for this important exhibition,” states Museum Director Michael Monroe. “Thomas Mann has given us a unique opportunity to see the impact on and devastation of New Orleans through his eyes and through his art. This exhibition offers the community an opportunity to participate in the dialog that Thomas Mann has begun not only through its viewing but also through programming planned around the exhibition,” continued Monroe.

Subjects offered for the community program will include artists as chroniclers of social turmoil and disasters, personal observations by Northwest volunteers to the Gulf Coast, discussions of preparedness and a time of remembrance.

Thomas Mann is dedicating this exhibition to a continuing public awareness of the plight of New Orleans. He feels this show is an emissary of the recovery efforts for his city and to that end is helping to bring awareness of ways to help that rebuilding through request to charitable organization assisting in the recovery of the Gulf Coast.

Thomas Mann has been an active participant in the contemporary American craft movement for the past thirty years as an artist, gallery owner and lecturer. He describes himself as an artist working in the medium of jewelry and sculpture. The primary design vocabulary which he employs in the making of jewelry objects combines industrial aesthetics and materials with evocative romantic themes and imagery.

This exhibition will be accompanied by another new exhibition *Maureen McCabe: Shadow Boxes, Assembled Tales of Fate, Magic, and Wit* also opening on February 17 and running through May 21, 2006, and two continuing exhibits *David Chatt: Two Hands, Twenty Years and a Billion Beads* which has been extended to February 19, 2006 and *Taking Shape: The Pilchuck Glass School in the '70s* which has been extended to April 23, 2006.

## Related Programming

Thursday, March 16, 2005

Thomas Mann Lecture

New Orleans jewelry artist Thomas Mann always thought he'd be in town when the "big one" hit and he and his staff of 14 were prepared for the four previous storm threats over the past 3 years. However, when Hurricane Katrina hit – he watched it all on CNN. Mann will give a slide lecture about how one artist is managing the effects of the most devastating storm ever to strike the US and his response through his work in sculpture and jewelry.

6:30 pm in the Museum Auditorium

\$3 for members / \$5 for non-members

Friday, March 17

A Slide Lecture by Maureen McCabe

"A Touch of Fey"

Entering Maureen McCabe's magical and witty world is akin to going down the proverbial rabbit hole. You adjust your sense of scale and free yourself for an imaginative leap into a wonderland of profound mystery and amusing anecdote.

Crafted in the form of a performance piece, "A Touch of Fey" will conjure the central themes of McCabe's art and illustrate their underlying messages. In her art, everything has been carefully selected and arranged; the area inside her boxes become an entire world in which games are played and mysteries unfold.

6:30 pm in the Museum Auditorium

\$3 for members / \$5 for non-members

Friday, March 17 and

Saturday, March 18

Thomas Mann 2-Day Workshop

Found Object Sandwich

This is a rare opportunity to learn from one of the leading assemblage jewelry artists working today. Join us for a 2-day workshop offering the opportunity to explore the design concepts and fabrication techniques employed in an assemblage approach to jewelry making. Students will create their own found and fabricated jewelry object, employing metals, plastics and found materials. Mann will discuss technique and design and will assist the participants in the fabrication of their own creations.

9:30 am-4:30 pm each day

Museum 3rd Floor Classroom

\$250 per student

For more information and reservations call (425) 519-0750

Friday, April 7

Lauren McCroskey - Preservationist, 4Culture Historic Preservation Advisory Committee member Lauren McCroskey will lead a conversation with Northwest citizens who also gave of their time and expertise following the hurricane disaster. Lauren worked with the Army Corp of Engineers in New Orleans evaluating structures for preservation. Lauren's messages to friends and colleagues here at home were moving and insightful. She will share her thoughts and observations as well extraordinary images taken during her time in the ravaged area.

6:30 pm

Museum Auditorium

Free to the Public

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Bellevue Arts Museum is located at 510 Bellevue Way NE, Bellevue, WA 98004. The Museum is at the corner of Bellevue Way NE and NE 6<sup>th</sup>, south of Lincoln Square and directly across the street from Bellevue Square Shopping Center. Admission is \$7.00 for adults, \$5.00 for seniors 62 +, Children 6 years and younger are FREE.

**Bellevue Arts Museum hours of operation:**

Tuesday	10 am - 5:30 pm
Wednesday	10 am - 5:30 pm
Thursday	10 am - 5:30 pm
Friday	10 am - 9:00 pm
Saturday	10 am - 5:30 pm
Sunday	11 am - 5:30 pm
Monday	Closed

Bellevue Arts Museum website: [www.bellevuearts.org](http://www.bellevuearts.org)

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.

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