

A STANDING PROFESSIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MIDWEST MUSEUMS (AMM)

From the Chair - Sarah Humes

Association of Midwest Museums Conference Wrap-Up

Even while battling high humidity and temperatures in the upper 90s the annual Association of Midwest Museums in-person conference was a success! The conference was held July 26-July 29 in Indianapolis. The theme of this year's conference was "Braking Point" and there were many sessions, workshops, and events that pertained to the collections management field.

The Midwest Registrars Committee was well represented at the conference as many members presented on various collection management and curatorial topics. The MRC annual business meeting and lunch were held at Social Cantina with approximately 18 members attending. We all decided that tacos can make just about any day better!

At the meeting, Sebastián Encina and Anne Young provided a brief update on the dissolution of the Collections Stewardship Professional Network of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). This restructuring was done to help improve volunteer opportunities by increasing diversity and providing volunteer projects for members that require a smaller time commitment. MRC members voted to amend the MRC by-laws to remove the affiliation with the Collections Stewardship Professional Network of the AAM due to the dissolution of the organization. The MRC is in the beginning stages of looking at other potential partnerships and affiliations with organizations like ARCs (Association of Registrars & Collection Specialists). The MRC continues its strong relationship and affiliation with the Association of Midwest Museums.

The call for nominations for MRC board members will go out this spring. Please reach out to any board member if you are interested in running for a position. We are more than happy to talk through our duties with you! The MRC is also in the early stages of looking at the possibility of becoming a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The meeting ended with collection book giveaways to Nikita Werner, Jocelyn Krueger, and Maggie Gorski. The 2024 conference will be held in Columbus, Ohio July 31-August 3, 2024. I can't wait to see everyone there!



Left - MRC Annual Meeting and Lunch

Right - Opening night at Crown Hill Cemetery



SHARE YOUR NEWS!!!

Do you have exhibitions, events, acquisitions, or other news to share? We would love to hear about it!! Make life for your State Rep a little easier by submitting a news story, interesting tidbit, or update for the next issue of the MRC Courier. Listings for each state and contact information can be found at the end of the Courier.

What is MRC?

Voting membership in the Midwest Registrars Committee is open to those museum professionals who support the objectives of the MRC, who reside in the Midwest region (including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin), and who hold positions such as registrar, collections manager, curator, volunteer, administrator, conservator, corporate registrar, or student.

A non-voting membership is available for individuals who are associated with for-profit organizations such as shipping companies, customs brokers, insurance firms, and other suppliers of materials and services, and individuals who reside outside of the Midwest region. The membership period covers the calendar year (from January 1 through December 31). Annual dues are \$10.00 per year. For more information on the Midwest Registrars Committee or to join MRC, visit <http://midwestregistrars.org/>



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News From The Midwest

MICHIGAN

Grand Rapids Public Museum, Sarah Humes

Grand Rapids Public Museum Closes Egypt Exhibit & Enacts New Human Remains Policy

On October 8, 2023, the Grand Rapids Public Museum permanently closed its longstanding "Egypt: Be Curious" exhibit in adherence to the GRPM's new policies around human remains and culturally sensitive material.

The "Egypt: Be Curious" exhibit contained the mummified remains of Nakhte-Bastet-Iru and over 80 ancient Egyptian artifacts that were gifted to the Museum by Grand Rapids philanthropist Edward Lowe in 1909. According to certificates gifted alongside these artifacts, Lowe purchased the remains and coffin from an antique dealer in Cairo.

Nakhte-Bastet-Iru was the daughter of a priest in the great temple of Amon at Karnak, Djed-Khonsu-Iuf-Ankh. Her father was the Steward of the Sacred Boat and Opener of the Doors of Heaven. She belonged to a wealthy and important family, based on her own title which implies ownership of property, her father's titles, the high quality of her coffin and cartonnage, and the care with which she was mummified.

With the GRPM's new human remains policy, the Museum will no longer collect, study, or exhibit human remains or culturally sensitive materials without the consent of the deceased, their descendants, or the appropriate communities of origin. Museum staff are working to repatriate culturally sensitive material to their nation of origin.

Collections and exhibit staff worked together to carefully remove Nakhte-Bastet-Iru and the objects from the exhibition space. Using custom-built crates staff transported her along with her coffin and other objects to the Museum's climate-controlled storage facility while the museum works towards either repatriation or obtaining consent from the Egyptian government.

Collections and Exhibits staff work to deinstall the Egypt: Be Curious exhibit at the Grand Rapids Public Museum





The museum, which has a wide-ranging collection totaling around 60,000 items, is currently undergoing a large-scale project in collections storage. As a result, many larger objects which are rarely exhibited are available to view, including the Museum's vast furniture collection that spans over 200 years of history.

Each of these pieces has a unique story to tell, from one-of-a-kind items to mass-produced pieces made by local and international craftspeople and manufacturers. Learn more about these stories and the museum's collection in this special exhibit.

MINNESOTA

The Minneapolis Institute of Art

The Minneapolis Institute of Art is pleased to announce that we have hired seven new colleagues in the Registration Department from late 2022-2023:

Kara Furman, Registrar for Exhibitions
Erin Bouchard, Fine Art Cataloguer
Ariana Santana Flores, Art Storage Technician
Christian Beis, Assistant Preparator
Cameron Jarvis, Assistant Preparator
Donna Meyer, Assistant Preparator
Rebecca Shearier, Collections Manager

Interviews are underway now for a Collections Management Database Specialist. That position should be filled by late fall.

We are very pleased to welcome our new staff members!

Volunteer with MRC Be a State Representative!

If you are an MRC member in **Missouri**, volunteer to be your state's representative! State reps plan at least one state or regional event per year, help recruit new MRC members, reach out to their state's membership to ask for articles and news for the Courier newsletter twice a year, and write one short blog post a year. The requirements are flexible and aren't very time-consuming. State reps are volunteer positions—there isn't a specific amount of time you're expected to serve in the role, and you are not required to find a replacement if you would like to step down. Being a state rep is a great way to get to know and connect colleagues at different institutions and an easy way to be involved with the MRC. If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer, please contact Leslie Ory Lewellen, MRC Vice-chair, at lory@artsimia.org, or any MRC Board member.

Chazen Museum of Art, Andrea Selbig

New Acquisition: Lifting the Veil by Sanford Biggers



Left - Sanford Biggers, Lifting the Veil, 2023, marble, antique quilt, mixed media

Right - Thomas Ball, Emancipation Group, 1873, marble



When artist Sanford Biggers visited the Chazen Museum of Art at the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 2019, he had a jarring encounter with Thomas Ball’s Emancipation Group (1873), a four-foot marble sculpture that sat atop a pedestal in the gallery. Although familiar to Biggers, the depiction of an impeccably dressed Abraham Lincoln heroically towering over a partially-clothed freedman incited a visceral reaction that day. His response to that moment instigated the subsequent two years of the re:manicipation project which includes a new sculpture, Lifting the Veil, that strips Lincoln of his saviorhood and turns it over to Frederick Douglass, a freedman, abolitionist, author and public figure who had a complex relationship with the president.

“Lifting the Veil asserts the wisdom, power and foresight of Frederick Douglass, an African American pillar of our history, and gives the Chazen Museum of Art the privilege of recontextualizing a challenging work that reflects our American past and, in many ways, addresses today’s social and racial injustices,” said Amy Gilman, the Chazen Museum of Art’s director. “The murder of George Floyd in 2020 and the subsequent removal of monuments across the country, including Thomas Ball’s Emancipation Memorial in Boston, triggered a heightened sense of urgency for us to address Emancipation Group’s place in our collection and the Museum’s role in confronting contentious works on view.”

Lifting the Veil was accessioned into the Chazen’s permanent collection in 2023 and can be viewed on the Chazen’s third floor mezzanine alongside the Emancipation Group.

Upcoming Exhibitions:

Insistent Presence: Contemporary African Art from the Chazen Collection, Sep 5-Dec 23, 2023

This exhibition presents forty-five works of sculpture, painting, ceramics, printmaking, and photography by twenty-four contemporary artists living and working on the African continent and in the diaspora. The work comprises new acquisitions made possible by a significant five-year gift from the Straus Family Foundation. Insistent Presence examines how artists have reimagined the human figure as a lens to pose questions about social and political histories, contested identities, and the possible future of how we relate to one another.

Art of Enterprise: Israhel van Meckenem's 15th-Century Print Workshop, Dec. 18, 2023-Mar 24, 2024
The exhibition will be the first in the United States to present new research about the role Israhel van Meckenem (German, 1440/1445-1503) played in developing printmaking as a fine art and will feature more than 60 objects that place his important engravings alongside images he copied from his contemporaries, including Master ES, Martin Schongauer and Albrecht Dürer.

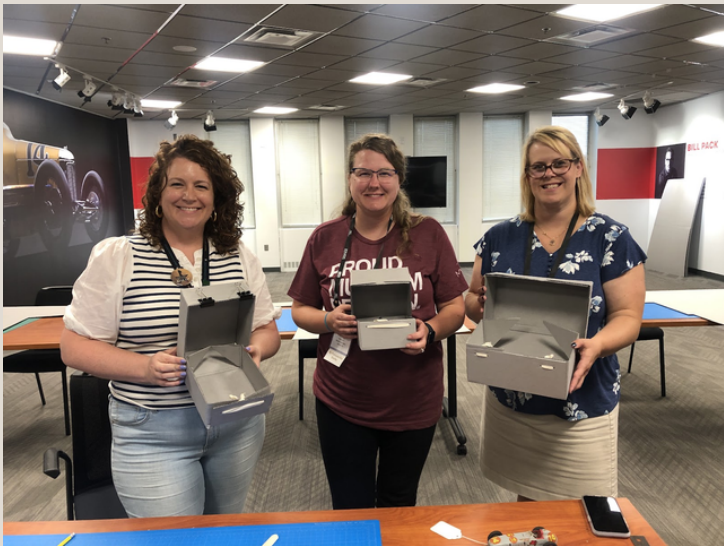


Box Making Workshop

At the AMM 2023 conference, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum hosted a workshop on custom-box building. Attendees used their measuring, cutting, and math skills to create custom artifact storage boxes. Attendees even got a behind-the-scenes tour of the various storage areas at the Museum. The Museum is currently embarking on a capital campaign that will include improved collection storage spaces to ensure the collection is preserved for years to come.



Box making workshop at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum.



The finished products of the box making workshop

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AGENDA: 2023 Annual Business Meeting

Midwest Registrars Committee

AMM Annual Meeting, Indianapolis, IN

July 27, 2023

I. Welcome & Thank You

Sarah Humes, Chair

- A. Masterpiece International - Lunch & Business Meeting Sponsor
- B. A2 Art Storage & Services, Dietl International, & Guardian Fine Art Services - Travel Stipends & MRC State Event Support

II. New Business

- A. Dissolution of CSAAM
- B. Voting of Bylaws Revision

Sebastián Encina, Nominations Chair
Sarah Humes, Chair

III. Vice Chair Report

Leslie Ory Lewellen, Vice Chair

- A. Travel Stipends
- B. State Reps

IV. Membership Report

Submitted by Brittany Williams, Secretary

V. Treasurer's Report

Christy Kincaid, Treasurer

- A. Overall Budget
- B. State Event Support

It's Time To Renew Your MRC Membership!

**SCAN TO RENEW
FOR 2024 TODAY**



Midwest Registrars Committee 2023 Membership Form – Join or Renew!

The Midwest Registrars Committee formed in 1978 to provide a forum for the exchange of information and methods among museum collections professionals and registrars in the Midwest region. The MRC fulfills this objective by promoting an atmosphere of mutual aid and cooperation and by promoting professional practices to benefit colleagues, the museum community, and members. The MRC is affiliated with the Collections Stewardship Professional Network of the American Alliance of Museums (CS-AAM) and the Association of Midwest Museums (AMM).

Who can join? Voting membership in the Midwest Registrars Committee is open to those museum personnel who support the objectives of the MRC and who reside in the Midwest region, including:

- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Ohio
- Wisconsin

You don't have to be a registrar! Collection managers, registrars, curators, volunteers, administrators, conservators, corporate registrars, students, or other collections care professionals are encouraged to join.

A **non-voting membership** is available for individuals who are associated with for-profit organizations such as shipping companies, customs brokers, insurance firms, and other suppliers of materials and services, and individuals who reside outside of the Midwest region.

Benefits of membership

- Subscription to The Courier, MRC's e-newsletter published twice each year
- Access to funding assistance to host state workshops, meet and greets, etc.
- Professional networking opportunities
- Travel stipends to attend annual AMM Conference
- Access to annual membership directory

Help Make a Difference!

Your active participation ensures the ongoing success of the MRC programs and activities.

Please check the areas in which you would like to get involved:

State representative
Newsletter
Programs/annual meeting
Fundraising
Membership

Membership Information

Date: _____

Name: _____

Pronouns: _____

Position: _____

Organization: _____

Physical Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Please mark one:

- ☐ New (voting \$10)
- ☐ Renewal (voting \$10)
- ☐ New (non-voting \$10)
- ☐ Renewal (non-voting \$10)

Membership Fees

Annual dues are \$10.00 per year. The membership period covers the calendar year (January 1 - December 31). There are multiple ways to join or renew.

1. BY MAIL

- Complete and mail this form along with your dues to the MRC Treasurer
- Make checks payable to: Midwest Registrars Committee
- Mail to: Christy Kincaid, MRC Treasurer
286 22nd St N
Springfield, MI 49037

2. ONLINE

STEP ONE – Complete Your Information

- Visit www.midwestregistrars.org
- Click the Membership Join/Renew tab
- Fill out the Registration Form – don't forget to click SUBMIT!
- If you need an invoice for your dues payment, make a note of this in the form
- Your registration is not complete until we receive your membership dues!

STEP TWO – Submit Payment

- Click the Buy Now button to pay online via PayPal
- OR – mail a check to the MRC Treasurer (contact info above)

You **MUST** complete both parts for your membership to be active (information AND payment).

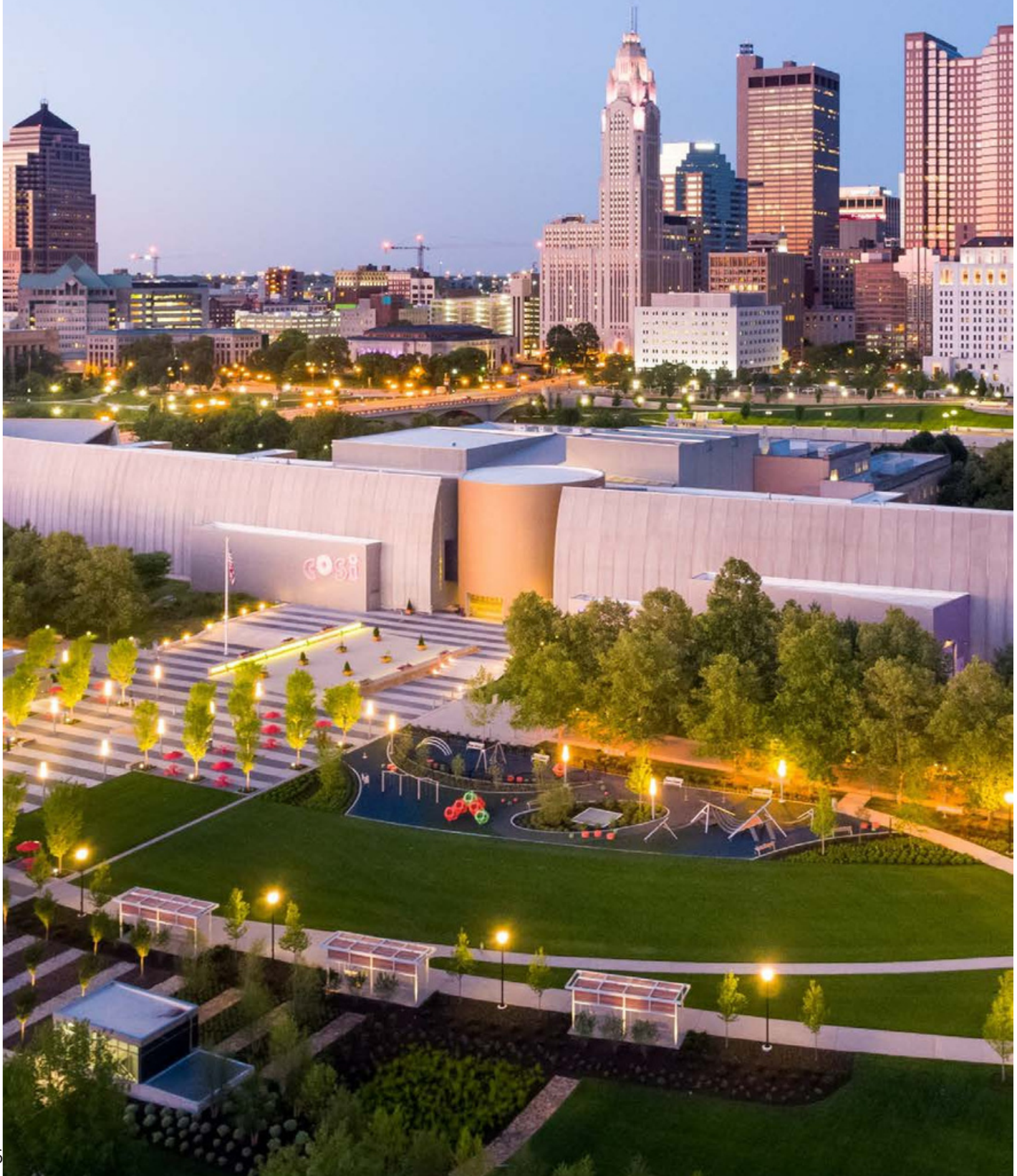
Questions? Please contact MRC Secretary and Membership Chair, Brittany Williams
Williamsb44@michigan.gov

Save the date!



AMM 2024 Conference

July 31-August 3 | Columbus, OH



Midwest Registrars Committee

Contact Us!

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DEVELOPMENT

Position available! Please contact MRC Chair Sarah Humes for more information on how you can help!

NOMINATIONS

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NEWSLETTER

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MINNESOTA

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MISSOURI

Position available! Please contact MRC Vice-Chair Leslie Ory Lewellen for more information on how you can help!

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