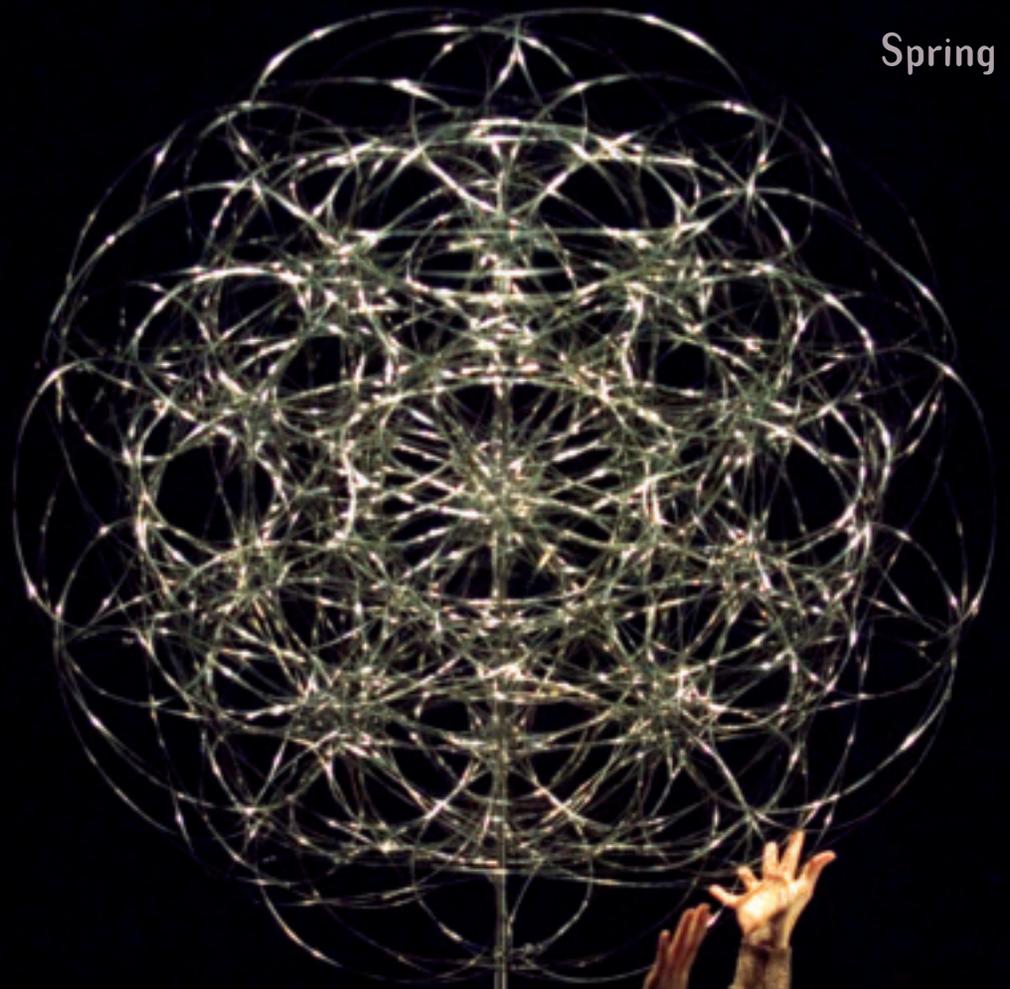




# MAINE ARTS MAGAZINE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MAINE ARTS COMMISSION



Spring 2008

## On the Cover:

(Top Left)

*Situate*, a Percent for Art installation by Aaron Stephan

(Middle Left)

A representation of Jatayu, or Garuda, as a Wayang Golek "three-dimensional puppet", used in Ramayana stories.

(Photo Mike Dana)

(Bottom Left)

*Contentious Crows II* by Susan Amons from the Arts in the Capitol program.

(Photo Jay York)

(Main Photo)

Karen Montanaro, the Maine Arts Commission 2008 Performing Arts Fellow, performs her new mime-dance, *The Struggle to Be*. (Photo Aaron Flacke)

(Last page color)

*Night Herons with Double Waterfall*

Susan Amons

2007

Monotype diptych with pastel, 44" x 60"

(Photo Jay York)

(Back Page Color)

*New State Rising*

Michael Shaughnessy

2007

Wood, Twine and Hay

From the Bates Museum of Art Green

Horizons Exhibition

(Photo Luc Demers)

(Inside cover)

A project from the Maine Arts Commission's new education program increases cultural awareness using Indonesian shadow puppets. This puppet portrays Jatayu the mythical king of the birds. Jatayu rescues Sinta from the evil demon Rahwana in the Ramayana story.

(Photo Mike Dana)



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## A Message From John M. Rohman, Chair

I write this letter while looking out on a Maine winter day adorned with large accumulations of fresh crisp snow, the likes of which I have not seen in recent years. This spectacle convinces me that it is the four seasons and especially the winter cold that in large part makes us the prepared, capable individuals we are.

Clearly, these strengths spill over to our artists and to the quality of the Maine Arts Commission staff and commission members. As you perhaps already know, during the last portion of 2007 we were involved in a state audit that unveiled fiscal management recommendations that I am very pleased to report have been implemented.

Another very noteworthy news item has been our transition of the Maine Arts Commission leadership. It has been my real pleasure to work with Alden C. Wilson for nearly ten years. His dedication to the agency and more importantly to the artists and citizens of Maine has been tremendous. Alden, at the time of his retirement, was the longest serving director of any state arts agency. As president of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies I am fortunate to have come to know the directors of many other state arts agencies. There are many quality leaders in the country and Alden has been viewed as "cream of the crop." His leadership made a significant impact in the cost cutting time period of the early nineties as well as the organization of the cultural agencies for New Century Community program funding.

The good news is we are not missing a beat when we welcome Donna McNeil as our new director. Her unwavering support for Maine's artists is well documented. As I have said on many occasions, Donna has "fire in the belly" for quality art, and her appointment has been greeted with enthusiasm and respect from both the artist community and her agency co-workers.

As we usher in the next iteration of the Maine Arts Commission, I suggest the key words will be quality and communication. We intend to support, as we have in the past, quality Maine art and artists in all corners of the state. In 2008, we will be achieving our goals with significant amounts of communication as well. I suspect you have noticed greater news coverage, but we also, with our statewide workshops, hope you will benefit from more face-to-face time as well.

I am very proud to be part of a group that will continue to a greater level in 2008.

John M. Rohman  
Chair



John Rohman,  
photographed by Ken D'Errico

## Letter from Donna McNeil, Director

Greetings Friends:

After thirty three years of service to the cultural sector of Maine, Alden C. Wilson has moved to the desert paradise of Palm Springs, California, his 'place in the sun.' Alden's leadership garnered national recognition for Maine. His work with the creative economy initiative received the Innovation award from the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies. The implementation of Discovery Research, a cultural assessment tool for communities, became a respected national model. The formation of the Cultural Affairs Council has been praised by the Pew Foundation, the Kennedy Center, the Urban Institute and others as a model for government, and in 2006 the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies/National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) National Accessibility Leadership Award came to Maine, recognizing our leadership in bringing the benefits of culture to all people.

Alden was there when the first grant was given to the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance which now receives national attention and respect including a \$400,000 award from the Ford Foundation. Alden was there when the Percent for Art law, which is about to celebrate thirty years of placing art in Maine's public realm, was enacted, and Alden was there during the censorship battles at the NEA ensuring continued support for Maine's individual artists. For these initiatives and so many more I take this opportunity to thank Alden C. Wilson for his leadership.

I begin my new duties with great joy and with the support and confidence of my colleagues nationwide. I will continue to rely on the wonderful folks who selflessly lend their expertise in the field to their service as commission members, a capable hardworking staff, the dedicated wunderkinds who administer Maine's extraordinary arts institutions and organizations, my beloved Maine artists and all of us who take away the benefits of creativity as an audience.

I trust that my lifetime of involvement with the arts from maker to administrator will serve me well as I embrace new skills required of state and national government. It is my sole purpose to secure a place of respect for the artist in society. Please join me as we move forward together with renewed energy and commitment to make life in Maine resplendent with all forms of creativity, as we build on our partnerships with business, education and government, as we continue our national leadership role through courage and innovation and as we reap the benefits of this beautiful place that catalyzes all that is noble within us.

Donna McNeil  
Director



Donna McNeil, photographed by Shoshannah White

# Arts in Education Program Evolves After Ten Years of Partnership in Arts and Learning

THE MAINE ARTS COMMISSION is seeing early and positive results from the ten pilot sites chosen for the first year of the new Arts in Education in the Community Grant program. The new program offers a grant of \$10,000 that assists schools, arts institutions and community arts organizations in conjunction with Maine artists to develop arts in education programs that support and expand full access to learning in and through the arts for pre-K-12 students. The program moves beyond funding only classroom based activities and additionally supports planning for arts access, investigation and integration.

The Denmark Arts Center, one of the ten sites chosen, is offering a unique residency that provides an opportunity for students in western Maine to increase their awareness of other cultures through the arts.

The Denmark Arts Center's project focuses on both the study of shadow puppet creation based on relevant stories, and



**Left:** Hanoman, the white monkey seen here as a wayang kulit or "shadow puppet" appears in the Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, often fighting with the giant Rawanna in the eternal battle between good and evil. (Photo Mike Dana)

shared performances with elementary students as both puppeteers and audience. The Denmark Arts Center will host a performance by Figures of Speech Theatre's "Asian Tales," and an exhibit of Indonesian shadow puppets from the collection of Mari Hook.

Mari Hook, Director of the Denmark Arts Center, explains, "I collected puppets not only to learn about the history of the art form, but to see how the tradition is being passed on to future generations of artists. I'm very happy to be passing along my collection to Figures of Speech Theatre — what better guardians of their heritage than John and Carol Farrell, whose knowledge and talents can introduce a new puppet tradition in Maine, and in the process illuminate the culture and artistry of the Indonesian islands and the richness of their shadow world."

Figures of Speech Theatre's Ian Bannon will lead the classroom workshops, while Mike Dana, Denmark Arts Center's Artist-in-Residence, has photographed the complete puppet collection, and will create a film showing both the depth of the project and the responses of students, teachers and artists to the project.

The North Haven Community School (NHCS) also received the Arts in Education in the Community Grant. Lisa Shields, Arts Coordinator for the school explains, "A grant to NHCS brought a focus on the Art and Culture of Native American People of Maine. Two artists-in-residence spent a total



**Above:** The four Panakawan, or "clever clowns", are among the most beloved characters in both Hindu and Javanese epics. They are recent introductions to the epics and often comment humorously on the political imbroglios of the day. (Photo Mike Dana)



of three weeks at our K-12 school, also incorporating community events during their residencies. Barry Dana, former Chief of the Penobscot Nation, is currently a cultural leader and spokesperson for indigenous issues, including toxic waste pollution of the Penobscot Nation's traditional fishing grounds. Barry worked with all K-12 students over a two-week period, teaching them how to build a shelter; identify local medicinal plants; stalk animals; and make fire, ropes and baskets. Eleventh-grade student Kelsi Ruffolo was very sad when he left, 'It was like losing a dad. He was very cool, in terms of native knowledge and expressing his feelings. This program opened my eyes to how alike Indians and white people are.'"

Lisa Shields continues the story, "Barry also led a discussion and question and answer session for the community during an evening session. Allen Sockabasin spent a week on North Haven, also working with every K-12 student, with pre-school students, and with the community. Allen is a member of the Passamaquoddy tribe who grew up in an isolated community surrounded by his people and speaking solely Passamaquoddy. As an author of two books, 'Thanks to the Animals' for children, and

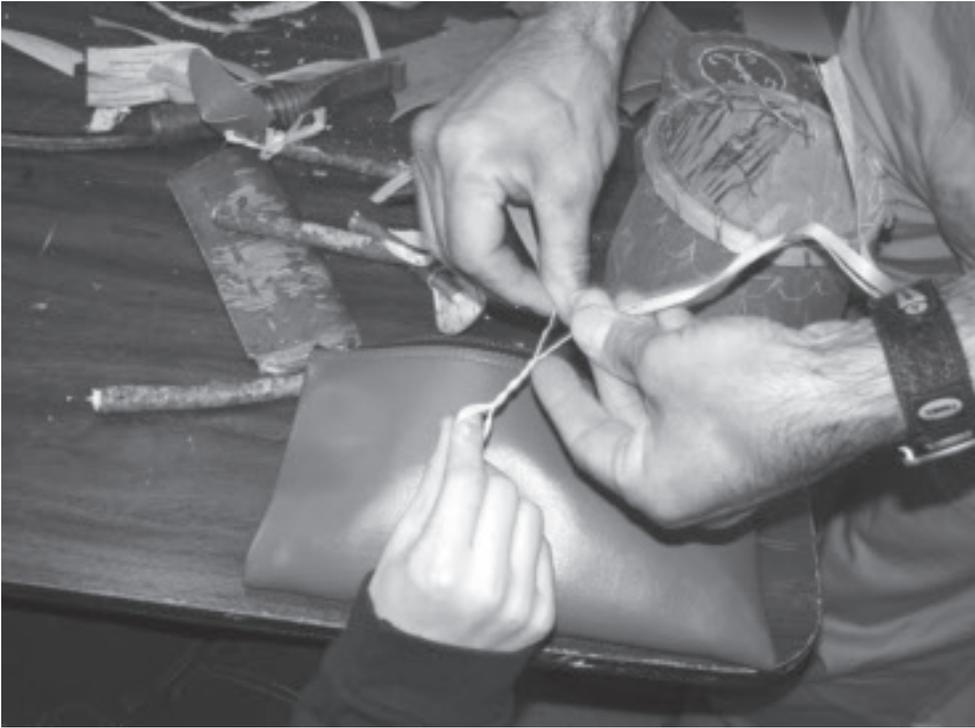
'An Upriver Passamaquoddy,' Allen focuses on the preservation of language as integral to the preservation of culture, enhancing this message through singing and playing guitar. Gina MacDonald, a fourth-grader, said that the stuff that Barry Dana did not tell her, Allen did. This message was a valuable part of the two residencies: not only did the two members of different tribal nations complement each other, they offered two very different perspectives on a variety of issues. One of the lessons learned, according to Keith Eaton, NHCS American Studies teacher, was about 'varying perspectives within Maine's Native American community. Not all members are in agreement about pressing concerns.' Evaluations from both staff and students for both residencies indicated every single one of us learned something as a result of this grant."

The other Arts in Education in the Community Grants were awarded to Bangor Symphony Orchestra, Bangor; PCA Great Performances, Portland; East End School, Portland; Mt. Desert Island High School, Bar Harbor; MSAD 33, Frenchville; L/A Arts, Lewiston; and MSAD 67, Lincoln. **MAC**



**Above:** Gabe McKenzie, Craig Waterman and Ashley Hooper working on a basket with Allen Sockabasin (not pictured)  
**Left:** Ashley Hodder works on a birchbark basket

The Maine Arts Commission's Arts in Education in the Community grant program is now open to competitive applications. The deadline is May 23, 2008.



**Above:** Barry Dana assists a student twist juniper fiber during the spoon-making project.  
**Right:** Barry Dana watches while Leta Hallowell, Ashley Hooper and Anthony Murphy practice quiet stalking.



# Poetry Out Loud

**THE MAINE ARTS COMMISSION** in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation is presenting the third year of *Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest*. The success of this program in Maine has grown rapidly. Seven schools participated in the first year, fourteen in the second, and in 2008 an amazing thirty nine high schools will compete to select this year's state champion.

The *Poetry Out Loud* program seeks to foster the next generation of literary readers by capitalizing on the latest trends in poetry recitation and performance. It builds on the resurgence of poetry as an oral art form, as seen in the slam poetry movement and the immense popularity of rap music among youth. *Poetry Out Loud* invites the dynamic aspects of slam poetry, spoken word and theater into the English class. Through *Poetry Out Loud*, students can master public speaking skills, build self-confidence and learn about their literary heritage.

The 2008 competition is currently underway at the school level with students being selected to compete in the state's semi finals. The southern semi-finals take place at Portland Stage, Portland, February 25, between 2 and 6 p.m. The northern semi-finals are at the Penobscot Theatre in Bangor February 28, again between 2 and 6 p.m. Winners of the semi-final competitions will move on to the state final at Bates College in Lewiston, on March 8, where this year's state champion will be selected. Members of the public are encouraged to attend these free events and enjoy the amazing talents of Maine's high school students.

Each winner at the state level receives \$200 and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC, to compete for the National Championship. The state winner's school receives a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books. One runner-up in each state receives \$100, with \$200 for their school library. The *Poetry Out Loud* National Champion receives a \$20,000 college scholarship.

For the last two years a student from Erskine Academy in South China has represented Maine at the National Final; the 2007 Maine champion was Kate Reynolds with Kenny Francouer from Biddeford as runner up.

**“You may be interested to know that the humanities department adopted Poetry Out Loud into the whole curriculum, so every Maine Central Institute student (all 500+ of them) is memorizing a poem from Poetry Out Loud for English. We’ve made it a fifth component of our prize speaking program. Poetry is bouncing off the walls here, and our students are very excited about this project.”**

— Deb Rozeboom, Maine Central Institute

MAC



**Left and Above:** State Champion Kate Reynolds and Runner-up Kenny Francouer at the 2007 state finals. State Finalists gather on stage at the 2007 *Poetry Out Loud* Competition. (Photo Ken D'Errico)

# A Report on Maine's Cultural Conferences

THE MAINE ARTS COMMISSION played a large part in the production of three major arts themed conferences towards the end of 2007. The first was a community arts conference in Lewiston, the second was an arts education gathering in Rockport, and the last was a creative economy conference that took place in Maine's midcoast region.



**Left:** Answering a Question in Clay during the "At the Creative Center" conference. (Photo Argy Nestor)  
**Above:** A session with Peter and Mary Alice Amidon called Teaching Traditional Dance and Singing Games during the "At The Creative Center" conference. (Photo Argy Nestor)



## Crossroads for Community Arts, Community Arts Conference

One hundred and forty community arts leaders from Maine gathered in Lewiston in October, for "Crossroads for Community Arts: Strategies for Success on the Road Ahead." From all over Maine, artists, administrators, board members, volunteers and staff of museums, performing arts centers, and arts organizations gathered to learn, share and plan for the future.

Linda Nelson of Opera House Arts in Stonington wore many hats for this conference, among them the facilitator of the wrap-up session.

Linda recalls, "As I helped Anne Katz to set the stage for the conference, I was pleased to look up into the audience and see such diversity in age. Young artists and community leaders sat beside long-time advocates for the arts in Maine communities. I met educators, potters, writers, performers, social workers, executive directors and people starting up new arts organizations throughout Maine. I was thrilled to see so many people were inspired enough to stay for the wrap-up session and hammer out next steps for the

community arts in Maine. This session generated excellent ideas, specific actions and additional leaders to keep the effort of organizing for community arts moving. Few of us involved in the conference could have asked for more.”

## A Declaration of Community Arts in Maine

Here are the highlights of action steps and ideas generated at the community arts conference.

- **We will acknowledge everyone as an artist, whatever his/her work/art.**
- **We will gather information on the power of community arts in Maine, and use this information to advocate for the arts at the local, state and national levels.**
- **We will support the businesses that support us. We will think globally act locally.**
- **We will support each other and celebrate each other’s work and accomplishments.**
- **We will make Maine an international art destination, while focusing on rural arts centers.**
- **We will nurture young people to take our places in the arts; we will support**

**statewide educational alliances; and we will encourage new voices to make the arts in Maine a diverse and secure aspect of our state culture.**

- **We will continue to organize, and to form partnerships with for-profit businesses as well as other statewide arts organizations.**
- **We will realize we are not alone.**
- **We will use the arts to make the world a better place.**

**“The day energized all of us and I see the conference as a beginning of exciting work in community arts in Maine.”**

— Harriet Mosher, Director of  
Five Rivers Arts Alliance

**Right:** Lucy Sargeant (left) and Amy Odom (right) during a session called Answering a Question in Clay during the “At The Creative Center” conference. (Photo Argy Nestor)



## At the Creative Center, Arts Education Conference

— Argy Nestor, Visual and Performing Arts Specialist,  
Maine Department of Education

In October three hundred educators, artists and community supporters gathered at the Samoset Resort in Rockport, for “At the Creative Center: the Arts in Maine Schools,” the first statewide arts education conference in Maine in more than ten years.

Presenters from throughout New England offered over 40 workshops on a variety of arts education topics. The welcome included Maine’s First Lady, Karen Baldacci and Commissioner of Education, Susan Gendron. Keynote speakers included Connecticut’s Arts Consultant Scott Shuler, artist Eric Hopkins and arts education consultant, Dennie Palmer Wolf.

The enthusiastic responses of those who attended the conference, as well as the fact that 200 additional educators wanted to attend but were unable to due to lack of space, clearly indicated the need for professional development for arts educators. The goals of the conference were: to empower arts teachers; provide opportunities for all educators to improve teaching and learning by focusing on the importance of the arts and creativity in education; provide information on critical issues (Maine Learning Results, advocacy and regionalization) and their impact on arts education; expand opportunities to reflect on arts education practices to influence the future; explore connections between arts education and the community; and to facilitate cross pollination among and between disciplines. It was clear from evaluation comments that the conference achieved the goals and expectations of attendees.

Remember to bring your legislators to the Hall of Flags, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., March 10, 2008, for Arts Advocacy Day at the State Capitol Building.

## Juice, Creative Economy Conference

— Oliver Wilder, Former Director of the  
Center for Maine Contemporary Art

On November 16 and 17, 2007, over 400 people gathered in Rockland and Camden at “*Juice: Powering the Creative Economy—Maine’s Action Summit.*”



Participants came from 87 communities across Maine and beyond, representing over 290 businesses and organizations. Attendees got connected, got inspired and got to work setting goals and next steps to make sure creativity and innovation are at the forefront of Maine’s economic future.

The conference began on the 16th with a rousing keynote address by Andrew Zolli, curator of Pop!Tech, that reminded Juice participants that they have to “cut through the noise” of countless products and brands by simplifying, by innovating and by developing human networks.

On the 17th, participants rolled up their sleeves and dove into 36 different 90-minute workshop sessions. All of the sessions helped connect and unify people around priority goals and actions.

Some of the goals and actions that emerged at the conference included the creation of regional creative economy groups; attracting and retaining creative workers; marketing the state as an arts destination and strengthening arts education.

Conference evaluations made it clear that Juice participants emerged feeling energized, connected, and determined to carry through the intentions that had arisen in the course of the conference. Through their ongoing commitment, Juice will become more than an event: it will be a spark and a continuing current of ideas and action that help make Maine as creative, and successful as we intend it to be. **MAC**

# Statewide Artists Workshops



FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS the staff of the Maine Arts Commission has toured the state, meeting over 500 artists, sharing stories, explaining agency programs, presenting workshops, and receiving feedback on how the artists of Maine can be served more effectively.

Feedback from workshops last year has helped the agency improve this year's format. The afternoon will now be split into panel sessions that keep attendees together throughout. This will allow more time for the group to network and to benefit from each other's questions and knowledge.

There will be three panel presentations broken into categories of technology and marketing; public and contemporary art; and community, education and traditional art. While these panel



group sessions are taking place a separate 'grants doctor' will run throughout the afternoon giving attendees the chance to meet with our Senior Development Associate for one on one grant advice.

Attendees are encouraged to sign up in advance for the 'grant doctor,' and to bring with them grant applications that they are intending to submit.

All of the Maine Arts Commission's workshops are free to attend, and with the exception of the 'grants doctor,' need no advanced registration.

In an effort to reach the entire state, we are visiting seven locations this year.

For more information on this year's workshops, including maps, directions, workshop details, or information on special accommodations, please visit [www.mainearts.com](http://www.mainearts.com), or contact Darrell Bulmer at 207/287-6746, NexTalk user ID: darrell.bulmer, or [darrell.bulmer@maine.gov](mailto:darrell.bulmer@maine.gov). **MAC**

**Left:** The University of Maine Museum of Art in Bangor is one of this year's workshop venues.



**Left:** In 2008 the Abbe Museum celebrates its 80th year of promoting the understanding and appreciation of Maine Native American art, culture, history and archeology through exhibitions, events and educational programs. The museum is the venue for Maine Arts Commission workshops in August, 2008. (Photo Catherine Allen)

## THIS YEAR'S DATES AND LOCATIONS

Place	Date	Location
Portland	April 16, 2008	Portland Public Library
Bangor	May 14, 2008	University of Maine Museum of Art
Farmington	June 11, 2008	University of Maine
Ogunquit	July 23, 2008	Dunaway Center
Bar Harbor	August 5, 2008	Abbe Museum
Eastport	August 6, 2008	Eastport Arts Center
Presque Isle	September 24, 2008	University of Maine

Workshops run from 12:45 to 5:15 p.m.

# Virtual MAC

**ATTENTION ARTISTS, ARTS** organizations and creative entrepreneurs – the Maine Arts Commission is delivering an online collaboration venue.

MaineArts.com will continue to be the state’s official arts website; however, to help foster improved communications with our constituents, we are initiating online social networking. Our first step is the development of the Virtual MAC blog. Virtual MAC will be utilized as a place to discuss issues, share ideas and be an educational resource for the arts community. Agency staff will initiate a topic for conversation, monitor and contribute to the discussion, and categorize topics for ease of retrieval. A navigational page will familiarize visitors with the Virtual MAC blog.

The Maine Arts Commission is developing its blog in the same way that most artists would. Primarily our concern is a mix of usability, features and cost. The latter was easily solved by utilizing one of the internet’s many free blog hosting sites. The features we sought included a searchable calendar, RSS feeds, a search function and the ability to add images, video and audio.

In the near future, our efforts will expand Virtual MAC’s presence into other social networking arenas such as YouTube, MySpace and Facebook. This social networking presence will work in unison with the agency’s official website, MaineArts.com, which currently has visitors from more than 100 countries. The website has experienced over 48,000 page views from November 2007 to January 2008, coming from 12,000 unique visitors. Utilizing other online networking opportunities in addition to the official website will vastly increase the exposure of Maine’s great art and artists.

You will find the link to Virtual MAC on [mainearts.com](http://mainearts.com) or you may go directly to <http://virtualmac.edublogs.org/>.

MAC

## RSS Feed?

The term RSS is short for “Really Simple Syndication” or “Rich Site Summary.” It refers to the ability to syndicate website content as feeds to those wanting it.



## Blog?

The word blog is a short form of the term web log; an online journal with dated entries.

# 2008 Fellows Enrich Maine's Creative Legacy

— Donna McNeil

**THE INDIVIDUAL ARTIST FELLOWSHIP** awards are one of the largest individual artist awards delivered by a state arts agency. The \$13,000 award singles out excellence and has the ability to deliver significant creative time to an artist. For staff, the hundreds of submissions allow us to know the field better, to see the rich offerings of Maine's artists and to wish we had more dollars to support the amazing work going on in Maine. The review process brings experts from around the world to Maine, people whose encouragement could well change the life of any of the applicants. In fact, every review round becomes a catalyst for connections beyond the grant itself.

The 2008 recipients define aesthetic excellence. They illuminate the variety and depth of Maine's cultural life. They illustrate the way in which sense of place translates itself into a wide range of artistic offerings. There is not a lobster or lighthouse in sight, but there is Maine; its timber and fiber, its individualism; the hard fought, winter seasoned, do it yourself attitude; its fearlessness, its authenticity.

Jeffrey Thomson, Karen Montanaro and Sam Van Aken were meant to be ambassadors. They seem type cast for these roles they could never have foreseen. Each however, so elegantly represents their genre with dedication and humor. Each plays a role on the national stage. Each loves Maine. Their stories follow.

## Jeffrey Thomson, Literary Arts Fellow

Poet Jeffrey Thomson, of Farmington, is currently Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Maine Farmington. He received a Ph.D. in Creative Writing from the University of Missouri, a MA in English and Creative Writing also from the University of Missouri and a BA in English and Creative Writing from Bradley University, Illinois. He is the author of several books, most recently including *The Country of Lost Sons*, *Renovation and Blind Desire*. His published poems, creative nonfiction, critical essays, conference papers, book reviews and multimedia projects are voluminous.

Jeffrey's recent honors and awards include the 2006 Individual Creative Artists Fellowship from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the 2005 Literature Fellowship in Poetry from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Tennessee Williams Scholarship to the Sewanee Writers Conference in 2005.



Jeffrey was recognized by the Literary Arts Fellowship review panel: Major Jackson, Mimi White and Jim Kelly for his poem *Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge*. The panel described Jeffrey's Poetry as "thinking that becomes sensuous."

**"To be chosen for an award (especially one of this magnitude) by a group of one's peers is exceptionally gratifying. The Maine Arts Commission Individual Arts Fellowship has really given me both additional time to develop my writing but also a stature in the literary community that I didn't have before."**

— Jeffrey Thomson

## Karen Montanaro, Performing Arts Fellow

Karen Hurl Montanaro, of Casco, is a solo-performer, award-winning choreographer and innovator of “mime-dance” (the fusion of two classical art forms). Karen studied ballet with Madeline Cantarella Culp (Cantarella School of Dance), Andrea Stark (former director of the Ram Island Dance Company), and on scholarship with the Joffrey Ballet School. She danced professionally with the Ohio Ballet and the Darmstadt Opera Ballet in Germany. Upon returning to the United States, Karen danced principal roles with the Portland Ballet Company. For more than a decade,



Karen toured and taught internationally with mime master, Tony Montanaro. Karen is a teaching artist and offers residencies in movement, mime and dance in public and private schools throughout the United States.

The jurors for the fellowship in the performing arts, Simone Fontanelli, Buffy Miller and Janis Stevens were overwhelmingly moved by Karen’s work. Her submission reflected a clear manifestation of decades of devotion to the discipline, and evidence of continued growth exemplified in the culmination of a new art form which merges dance and mime.

Karen Montanaro says that receiving the 2008 Individual Artist Fellowship grant has been an invaluable boost to both her career and confidence. She has used the money to finance her newest, most innovative and also most expensive mime-dance entitled *The Struggle to Be*. Not only did the grant

money cover the production costs, it also allowed her to compensate some of the many professionals who volunteered their time, energy and expertise to this project, giving her great inner-satisfaction.

**Above:** Karen Montanaro  
**Left:** Jeffrey Thomson (Photo Jennifer Erickson)

Karen notes that one of the most valuable aspects of receiving this award is that it affirms her originality as she bridges the worlds of mime and dance. The grant has steeled Karen to continue pursuing innovations and daring to forge new paths. The great honor of the Maine Arts Commission endorsement helps keep her going.

**“As a 2008 Arts Fellow, I’ve been rewarded in many ways. My credibility has been raised enormously and I mention this award wherever I go.”**

— Karen Montanaro

**Right:** *Pony Ride* Reichstag, Berlin (Photos Patricia Brace)



Sam Van Aken’s most recent project is *High Lonesome*. It is a series of staged performances in Berlin, Germany, that took place in January, 2008. The performances spatially and temporally dislocate a cowboy as he lassos, plays harmonica and rides a horse.



The project uses the dislocation of B movie westerns as a metaphor for psychological and temporal dislocation. The original B Movies were often shot on vacant Biblical movie sets where you would see a palm tree in the background. Here the cowboy acts within somewhat famous and other not so famous movie sets throughout Berlin.

The completed *High Lonesome* project including the movie and sculptural works will be on exhibition at Tacheles Kunsthaus in Berlin, May, 2008, and will run concurrently with the Berlin Biennial.

## Sam Van Aken, Visual Arts Fellow



**Left:** *Lasso*  
Pergamon Museum,  
Berlin  
(Photos Patricia  
Brace)

Sam Van Aken, of Portland, arrived in Maine in 2001 to work at the University of Maine, Orono as an assistant professor of art teaching sculpture.

Presently an associate professor of Art at Syracuse University, Sam's heart and home remain in Maine where he insists the fishing is better.

Sam Van Aken received two BAs in Communication and Fine Arts from Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania, Masters level coursework at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Poznan, Poland and a MA in Fine Arts from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Sam was honored in 2005 by a solo installation at Colby College Currents2 program, and received a Maine Arts Commission Good Idea Grant. In 2006 he received the Association of International Critics of Art Exhibition Award. Also, in 2006, he was honored by the Dallas Video Art Festival, was visiting artist at the l'Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Arts de Cergy-Pointoise, France, and received a University of Maine Research and Development Grant. In 2007, he was artist in residence in Tacheles Art Center in Berlin, Germany and also received the jurors award for Outstanding Artistic Achievement, Best in Show at the Portland Museum of Art 2007 Biennial.

Sam says, "Let's see, the Maine Arts Commission Award has, made me better looking and more attractive to both sexes, made me grow 6' tall, and has given me larger biceps. Okay maybe that isn't that funny, but seriously, the award has been amazing in helping me realize two new projects, *High Lonesome*, a performance based work I am currently filming in Berlin and 'Pomologie,' a project that I am hoping will lead me to purchasing some land in Maine and starting a weird Dr. Moreau type farm.

"We salute our fine fellows and look forward to watching their careers advance."

— Donna McNeil

## Molly Neptune Parker is the 2007-2008 Traditional Arts Fellow



"I teach my children, I teach my grandchildren, and I am teaching my great grandchildren"

This year's Traditional Arts Fellow is a Passamaquoddy basketmaker who began making baskets when she was five years old, using the scraps that fell on the floor while her mother was working. "I don't know whether it was the ash—the way that it was so flexible, you can do anything with it, or whether it was something that I knew I'd do eventually, but I loved to make baskets from day one," says Molly Neptune Parker. It was something everyone in the family did—her mother, her grandmother, and every one of her aunts made the baskets, and she learned to make not only the fancy baskets, but creel baskets, pack baskets and laundry baskets as well. "I had so much interest in baskets that I didn't care who was making baskets, I was over at that house all the time, just to watch."

As a young mother she made baskets while watching her children swim at the beach, and it became a way to relax after working in an office all day.

**“I used to come home after a long, hard day’s work, and sit down and unwind, and start making baskets. It was relaxing and I guess that’s the reason I’ve made baskets all these years, because raising six to ten kids, you have to do something else other than just do housework, and work on the outside; you have to get something that you really enjoy doing. I don’t knit, I don’t sew. The only thing I enjoy doing is basketmaking.”**



of both economic benefits and community spirit. She thinks others will be motivated to try their hand at basketmaking, and some, like young Jeremy Frey, who is making a name for himself among the basketmakers, will be able to demonstrate basketmaking at the studio and serve as a role model for younger Passamaquoddy children.

Parker now serves as President of the Maine Indian Basketmakers Alliance (MIBA), and this isn’t the only award she has received recently. She also received a \$5,000 Community Spirit Award from the First People’s Fund



and an apprenticeship award from the New England Foundation for the Arts. “I see this as really long overdue recognition for our president, who is really one of the last generation who kept basketmaking alive,” says Theresa Secord, MIBA’s executive director, “She comes from a group of weavers who just never stopped making baskets.”

Parker plans to use the \$13,000 Traditional Arts Fellowship award to set up a studio in Indian Township where she can make baskets and teach others as well. She plans to invite other basketmakers to come to the studio and demonstrate. She hopes to provide opportunities to individuals or groups to come and learn how to make baskets, or just sit and watch. She anticipates opening the studio in June, and she expects the studio will have a positive impact on the community in terms

The baskets were always important to the Passamaquoddy, because they provided food, clothing, and most of what they needed to support their families. “I was always told by my mother, ‘if you can make baskets, you will never go hungry.’” And they remind Parker of the places and people she knew when she was growing up. She especially remembers her mother.

**“I was the one who prepared the materials for her, because she could no longer do it. The ash is so thick that it was almost impossible for her old, frail hands to split the ash, so I’d sit there and do it for her...and I’d done that for so many years for her, that at times when I’m sitting here by myself, I remember what it’s like to be with the elders that we have lost, because I went from house to house to learn to make baskets from different people, and learned how important it is to carry on the tradition.”**

Parker has accepted the award with a great deal of humility, while at the same time acknowledging the recognition for a job well done, demonstrating her tradition. “Nobody has ever done anything like that for me before, and I was so pleased when I got that—I mean I was speechless.” The Traditional Arts Fellowship award has allowed Parker to see herself in a new way. “To me an artist is someone who will sit down and paint, and stuff like that. I never really thought of myself as an artist until I got this award. Now I know what it’s like to receive something for the accomplishment you have done throughout your lifetime.” **MAC**

**Left and Above:** Sweetgrass baskets made by Molly Neptune Parker. (Photos courtesy of Molly Neptune Parker)

## 2007 Maine Artists Fellowship Award Showcase



**THE PENOBSCOT THEATRE** in Bangor was the venue for an evening of awards and celebration as the Maine Arts Commission's Fellowship Awardees took to the stage to entertain and educate a captivated audience. The evening began with exhilarating fiddle music from Traditional Arts Master, Greg Boardman and continued with Traditional Arts Fellow Molly Neptune Parker. Molly provided an awe inspiring demonstration of basketmaking

on the theatre's giant screen, and as she spoke the theatre's spotlights shone over a selection of her baskets and tools that were placed center stage throughout the evening.

**Above:** *The Struggle to Be* (Photo Donald Verger)

**Right:** Molly Neptune Parker demonstrates traditional basket making techniques (Photo courtesy of Molly Neptune Parker)

The pace quickened as Visual Arts Fellow Sam Van Aken brought his unique brand of charm and wit to the stage. A mixture of laughter and wonderment greeted Sam's visual arts mastery as he presented an overview of his latest projects.

Next on stage was Literary Arts Fellow Jeffrey Thomson who recited his poetry accompanied by

images of his selection. You could hear a pin drop as the audience hung on every word, the silence was only broken between poems as the audience showed its appreciation.

Intermission served only to build the anticipation for the last act of the night. Performing Arts Fellow Karen Montanaro performed her world premiere of *The Struggle to Be*. Karen's majestic fusion of mime and dance captivated the audience spurring a rapturous ovation, an ovation heightened only by the reemergence of all the evening's performers.

As an event honoring the Maine Arts Commissions Fellows, this was a tremendous success. In October of 2008 the Maine Arts Commission will again bring its Showcase to the Penobscot Theatre in Bangor. The event is free and open to the public and we look forward to meeting you all there.

**MAC**

**"It was an honor and privilege to premiere my newest mime-dance in the Award Showcase that took place in Bangor. It felt as if a red carpet was laid out for this to happen; I didn't have to worry about booking a theater or promoting myself."**

—Karen Montanaro



# Pass It On: Traditional Arts Apprenticeships

**BOATBUILDERS, FIDDLERS, AND A NATIVE AMERICAN SINGER** make up the 2008 class of Traditional Arts Masters who will train apprentices to continue their work. Boat builder John Connors was born in the Depression in Allagash, Maine, during a time when the log drives were a



major occupation on the St. John River. He learned the art of making river Batteaux from his grandfather in the 1940s, and joined the family boat shop in St. Francis, ME. Batteaux were long, shallow boats used by river drivers to guide the logs and break apart logjams on the river. In the early

19th century, the Connors family built various types of boats in Pictou, Nova Scotia, where John's great-great grandfather built dories for the Atlantic fishing trade. Before the logging companies stopped transporting logs on the Allagash and St. John Rivers, John worked seven successive river drives in Batteaux and wooden motorboats.

With his wealth of knowledge, John is known in the Allagash region as a raconteur and storyteller, with a repertoire of tales about the river drives. John will be assisted by Dave Wylie, who operates a boat shop in St. David, Maine. Together they will train 16-year-old Chace Jackson in the art of making a river Batteau. Connors and Wylie built a Batteau for the 2006 Acadian Festival, and Connors credits that Batteau with generating some interest in the history of the area.

“It keeps the tradition alive. The boat that we built for Madawaska seems to have awakened people about what really did happen. It was an important log-driving town.”



“It was a ride in that boat that piqued Jackson's interest in the Batteau”, said Connors. Jackson's father was a logger, and Jackson recently got valuable experience working as a curator for the Allagash historical society. Now he'll get a chance for some hands-on experience building a Batteau. “He's not going to watch me do that,” says Connors. “He's going to have to do most of the work, and he's eager to work at it.”

**Above Left:** Allagash Batteau Crew. (Photo Darlene Coltart)

**Far Left:** Apprentice Chace Jackson stands with Dave Wylie and John Connors as they receive recognition from Maine Arts Commission Chair, John Rohman.

**Left:** Don Roy



Our next grant recipient is Don Roy, who at the age of 15 was allowed to take one of his uncle's fiddles home with him to practice. Don's uncle is Lucien Mattheiu, a master fiddler.

Roy visited his uncle frequently, each time, learning a tune or two from him, and on weekends he would sit in on the music sessions at family gatherings. Roy learns most of his tunes by ear, though he can occasionally be found thumbing through written collections of fiddle tunes. He currently commands a large repertoire of Franco and Celtic tunes. He won

his first fiddle contest at the age of 16, and has claimed other awards since, including the Maine State Champion Fiddler in 1990, the Massachusetts State Champion in 1986, and the second and third place winner at the Northeast Fiddlers in Barre, Vermont in 1980 and 1982 respectively. He has performed at numerous festivals including the Folk Masters series at Wolf Trap, and the American Folk Festival in Bangor. Roy is also a teacher; he holds monthly “Fiddle-icious gatherings, teaching traditional tunes to as many as 50 people who turn up for the workshops. Roy credits the influence of his teachers for his mastery of the fiddle.



Don explains, “I’ve played a lot of Irish tunes, played quite a bit of Cape Breton stuff, but when I go back to the French Canadian stuff, the tunes that I learned as a kid, and play my favorite tunes, you can hear reflections of

**Above:** Greg Boardman explains his teaching methods.

**Right:** Watie Akins left demonstrates traditional songs to his apprentice James E. Neptune.

Lucien’s playing in there, and you can hear reflections of the people I learned the tunes from, Ben Guillemette, or Bill Darrah, or Gerry Robichaud. If I learned a tune from those people, you can hear the reflections.”

Now Roy has his own opportunity to teach an apprentice, 15-year-old Matthew Lamare, who comes from a family of Franco musicians.

The third Traditional Arts Master is also a fiddler.

Greg Boardman began his musical life as a rock n’ roll artist, but he soon found himself under the spell of the fiddle in 1970, and now teaches orchestra at Lewiston Public Schools. He learned many of his traditional tunes from master fiddlers Otto Soper of Orland and Simon St. Pierre of Smyrna Mills, as well as Ben Guillemette and Lucien Mattheu. Greg has performed extensively with the Northern Valley Boys, the Moosetones, the Ben Guillemette Ensemble and the Canterbury Dance Orchestra. He frequently performs in a quartet with his three sons.

Boardman’s apprentice, Jasmine Chick is a high school junior who plays and writes traditional fiddle tunes. Boardman says, “It’s a pleasure to work with an apprentice so motivated. The apprenticeship award allows him to ‘really hunker down’ and work with the apprentice on a one-to-one basis.” Performing together at a recent coffee house, they made sure the audience members appreciated the grant made by the Maine Arts Commission.

The last of the 2008 Traditional Arts Masters is none other than Watie Akins, a Penobscot elder, drummer and singer who makes his living as a civil engineer. His father was a musician and his mother, Little Elk, performed as a dancer and singer on stages in the United State and Europe. Watie has performed in pageants and stage performances as a drummer and singer since grammar school. He retired in 1997 and throughout his retirement has devoted his time to researching Penobscot



culture. He is particularly interested in recovering and preserving detailed aspects of Penobscot music and drumming that have been obscured by influences from Native American tribes farther west. Guided by the work of Natalie Curtis Burlin, who documented Native American music

in the 19th century, and his own singing and drumming experience, Akins is teaching Penobscot music to his apprentice, James Neptune. Neptune works at the Penobscot Nation museum as museum coordinator. Neptune is learning the pageant songs that Akins first heard 65 years ago. “I’m getting a big kick out of it,” says Akins, and even though they are using the work of Curtis Burlin as a reference, he is not adopting a museum approach to the music. “I don’t consider my culture dead. I’m still using my culture.” In fact, Akins is now thinking about going into the schools to sing with some of the younger children. “It seems like such a small thing, but it still strengthens the culture.” **MAC**

# An Overview of Maine Arts Commission Grants

THE MAINE ARTS COMMISSION provides grant support for artists, school districts, community organizations and art institutions through a variety of specialized grant programs. The agency draws on its state appropriation and federal funds through the National Endowment for the Arts, in addition to tapping into other public and private resources, to make awards across the entire state.

The following pages highlight some of the grant programs and awards from fiscal year 2008.

The ARTIST IN MAINE COMMUNITIES grant program assists arts organizations, schools and other community groups to develop collaborative projects that employ Maine artists and support artistic programs in Maine communities. Grants support broad reaching arts programs in schools, social service and disability organizations, tribal governments, municipalities and major arts institutions. Artists of all disciplines—contemporary and traditional—have been involved, providing Maine artists with a new source of income. Program guidelines were developed to incorporate a new concentration on the creative economy. Additionally, as the Maine Arts Commission moves beyond the creative economy and recognizes the centrality of the artist, the charge to work with professional artists, even in schools and social service agencies has become paramount to making a project fundable and successful.

Examples of projects from Lewiston, Stonington and Portland, illustrate the power of the focus on community, diversity, collaboration and innovation.

**Right** Andrea Bisceglia '09 and Molly Ladd '09 Student Synergy Project Urban Fruit Orchard (Photo Bates College Museum of Art)

## Bates College Museum of Art Lewiston \$7,500

Green Horizons was a multi-faceted exhibition that included site-specific community art projects in the Lewiston/Auburn area. The exhibition explored issues relating to the environment and sustainability.

The Bates College Museum of Art views itself as a new academic museum and cultural leader resisting commercialization. It is dedicated to introducing new ideas and questions about how art transcends and reflects history in our current times, and presenting art in our everyday lives outside the museum. To reach our goals, we chose an exhibition with a broad topic, the environment and sustainability. The themes also empowered the museum to solicit conceptual, time-based, and public art work, which were more dependent on process and community participation than objects that traditionally define museum exhibitions. We sought to participate in our community beyond the museum so that art becomes part of life, not just displayed on our museum walls.



Green Horizons was by design, a dynamic, community-based endeavor, involving multiple local non-profits: Bates College, Empowering Lewiston, Lewiston Housing Authority, Lots to Gardens, Maine College of Art, Museum L/A and the Stanton Bird Club with the Thorncrag Nature Sanctuary.

—Mark Bessire, Director, Bates College, Museum of Art

**Opera House Arts**  
**Stonington**  
**\$7,500**

Quarryography was a contemporary site specific community dance piece that used a quarry as the site and construction equipment as 'lead performers.'

Quarryography, with its giant puppet swinging merrily and colorfully above the ridged granite floor and before Deer Isle Thorofare; its community members gleefully choreographed in hats designed to signify milkweed pods; its strong, fearless dancers, in brightly colored tutus, swinging from the bucket of local contractor Rick Weed's excavator; and its young pre-professional dancers in pink square hats to signify Deer Isle's



uniquely hued granite, strongly highlighted the important local history of the magical Settlement Granite Quarry, and Island Heritage Trust's stewardship of it. Commissioned and produced by Opera House Arts in

collaboration with our local land conservation group, Island Heritage Trust, Quarryography was created by famed choreographer and director Alison Chase, the founding artistic director of Pilobolus Dance Theater. It featured original giant puppets, costumes, and choreography by Mia Kanazawa; and an original steel pan score by Nigel Chase, performed by the local Rock 'n Steel pan band. With more than 1,700 attendees including 53 artists and 200 children, this spectacular production strengthened the connections of community members and visitors to this natural place.

— Linda Nelson, Director, Opera House Arts

**Salt Institute for Documentary**  
**Studies**  
**Portland**  
**\$7,500**

The Malaga Island Radio and Photo Document was produced by photographer Kate Philbrick and radio producer Rob Rosenthal in collaboration with partner, WMPG-FM, the community radio station at the University of Southern Maine.

In 1912, the state of Maine evicted the 45 residents of Malaga Island, part of the town of Phippsburg, in mid-coast Maine. Some islanders found refuge with relatives and friends on the mainland. Many bounced from town to town, as unwelcome as they were on Malaga. Several islanders were compelled to live at the Maine Home for the Feeble Minded (now the Pineland Center in Pownal).



**Far Left:**

*Quarryography*  
"Three Dancers  
Swinging for  
Cableman"

(Photos courtesy  
Opera House Arts)

**Left:** Deuce of  
Spades postcard.

Postcards featuring  
images of the  
residents of Malaga  
were printed at the  
turn of the last  
century. This  
infamous postcard  
image was named  
"deuce of spades."  
(Photo courtesy of  
Maine State Archives)

**Right:** Image from a  
Maine Crafts  
Consortium Initiative

Once vacated, the state of Maine shipped the island school building to another island. Then, they relocated the island cemetery and the remains of 17 people to the cemetery at the Maine Home for the Feeble Minded. In short, the residents and their community disappeared.

The Malaga Island Radio and Photo Document will be:

- a half hour radio documentary featuring the voices of Malaga Island descendants, Phippsburg residents, and researchers uncovering the island's history,
- a photo and sound gallery installation at the Salt gallery that will travel to a handful of other galleries in the state, and
- a website storing text, photos, and audio for long-term, public access.

The Salt Institute for Documentary Studies project will bring the sad story of Malaga to further public attention through the documentary arts of radio and photography. The Malaga Island story is one of many

race-related events in Maine's history that, when brought into the open through the creative use of sound and imagery, offers an opportunity to consider and discuss historic and contemporary race relations in the state.

— Donna Galluzzo, Executive Director and Rob Rosenthal, Shunpike Audio

After a decade of experience with Maine's Discovery Research program, inventorying cultural assets and building local arts networks, the Maine Arts Commission developed the next appropriate program: **BUILDING CAPACITY IN MAINE'S CULTURAL COMMUNITIES.**

This new community arts development program focuses on sustainable capacity building for the community organizations that provide access to the arts, build public awareness and both support and encourage artists to produce and present the arts in Maine communities. The program seeks to strengthen local arts and cultural organizations through conventions, cultural planning, workshops, technical assistance and other developmental efforts.

These grants are not meant to merely provide organizational support, rather the example of a proposal funded in 2008 demonstrates the ability of this program to fund initiatives that have significant impact and can spark statewide, regional or even cross border enterprises.

### **The Maine Highlands Guild Dover Foxcroft \$10,000**

This grant supported the planning and development of the Maine Crafts Consortium with the goal of creating a single statewide agency providing both the services of The Guild and the Maine Crafts Association to the Maine craft artist community.

This new organization will be the leader of the Maine Craft Organizations Consortium, which is already spearheading the development of a Center for Maine Craft; embedding a craft curriculum in the community college system; formulating a national marketing plan that will further the identity of Maine craft artists both





**Left:** Image from  
a Maine Crafts  
Consortium Initiative

nationally and internationally; and raising the awareness of Maine-based craft artists as important contributors to the state's creative economy.

Culturally, this project encourages growth in Maine's craft community, which is a significant element in Maine's cultural tourism. Socially, the project provides craft artists with increased support from within their own community. Craft artists will be able to better identify and network with peers through resources such as a website blog, mentoring programs, regional meetings and social events. Economically, the project addresses financial stability and growth for two smaller arts organizations.

— Dr. Tracy Michaud Stutzman, Executive Director, Maine Highlands Guild

MAC

## American Masterpieces Visual Arts Projects

**THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS'** American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius program was developed to introduce Americans to the best of their cultural and artistic legacy through touring, local presentations and arts education programs. In turn these funds have allowed the Maine Arts Commission a means to support the states largest art museums and residency sites; a demographic underserved since the agency turned to community based project funding. A select number of major grants have been awarded over the past two years through the American Masterpieces Visual Arts Projects program. In fiscal year 2007, awards supported projects such as the 60th Anniversary of Skowhegan, a major reinstallation of the artist's work at the Farnsworth Art Museum and Wyeth Center; and the Maine in Print Project: Celebrating 200 Years of Printmaking in Maine the landmark, innovative series of exhibitions, education programs, and symposia presented collaboratively by more than 20 partners. In fiscal year 2008 funds supported a major exhibition of Todd Webb's photography at the University of Maine Museum of Art and Re-visioning Portland, a photographic project by Mark Klett undertaken by the Maine College of Art. In fiscal year 2009, grants will be available to major performing and literary organizations as well.

### **University of Maine Museum of Art**

#### **Bangor**

**\$24,550**

Todd Webb's, *Joy Without Measure* will include a captivating array of Webb's photographs, introducing his imaginative work to a new generation of students of photography across the state. The exhibition will also highlight the rich tapestry of his work for the people of Maine, who treasure his contributions as an American Master and value his work as an

innovative and beloved Maine artist who made major contributions to the development of American photography.

— Wally Mason, Former Director/Curator,  
University of Maine Museum of Art

**Maine College of Art  
Portland  
\$20,550**

In the Evans Hunt Gallery, the Institute of Contemporary Art presented, *Revisioning Portland*. The Maine College of Art invited renowned photographer Mark Klett to work with photography students



on this multi-faceted project. Klett traveled to Maine to personally mentor young artists in the production of new works for this exhibition. Together, the artists scoured through the collections of the Maine Historical Society, the Maine Historical Preservation Commission, the Portland Public Library and other local institutions to select historic images of Portland. Using these artifacts as a point of departure, they have made new works that capture the effects of passing time on Portland's landscape. The Exhibition will also feature a selection of photographs by Mark Klett produced specifically for this exhibition.

— Jessica Tomlinson, Director of Public Relations, and  
Lauren Fensterstock, Interim Director  
Institute of Contemporary Art at  
Maine College of Art

**Above:** Gallery at the  
University of Maine  
Museum of Art



**Above:** *Untitled*  
Brent Legere  
2007  
Historic Images  
Courtesy of Maine  
Historical Society

**CULTURAL FACILITIES ACCESSIBILITY** grants were awarded to assist new capital projects and renovations as well as technology projects and/or improvements. This unique opportunity, made possible by the Jobs for a Healthy Maine Bond developed to stimulate economic growth and job creation through investments in the Maine economy, allowed the Maine Arts Commission to fund capital upgrades that the agency could not legally fund otherwise. Now in its second year, this “bricks and mortar” and/or electrons or “tech bricks” funding provided a revenue source for professional, freestanding, Maine arts organizations to carry out physical and/or technology-related accessibility upgrades. Additional funds in the amount of \$30,000 were made available for fiscal year 2008 through the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies Leadership Accessibility Award presented to the Maine Arts Commission in January 2007. For example, Haystack Mountain School of Crafts on Deer Isle received \$10,000 to install an accessible bathroom that will meet requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act at the new Center for Community Programs on Deer

**Right:** View of Haystack School in Summer. (Photo Dennis and Diane Griggs)

Isle. This site will host a range of exhibits, such as the work of local and statewide groups, work from Haystack’s teen mentor programs, and that of Haystack faculty, as well as community-based residency projects that will bring professional artists to the area to develop new works in collaboration with local residents and area high school students. Two Maine theaters have installed assistive listening systems to improve the quality of the visits by their hearing impaired patrons and several grantees updated sound and lighting systems and introduced new technologies to artistic production values. Over the past 2 years, 19 grants have been made in 15 different communities, totaling \$183,000. **MAC**



**THE GOOD IDEA GRANT PROGRAM** fosters the growth of Maine's artists by supporting the creation of new work or professional development. The maximum award is \$1,500 and projects are often funded partially. For fiscal year 2008, there were 28 good idea grants awarded to Maine artists including Antonia Small and Cara Romano.

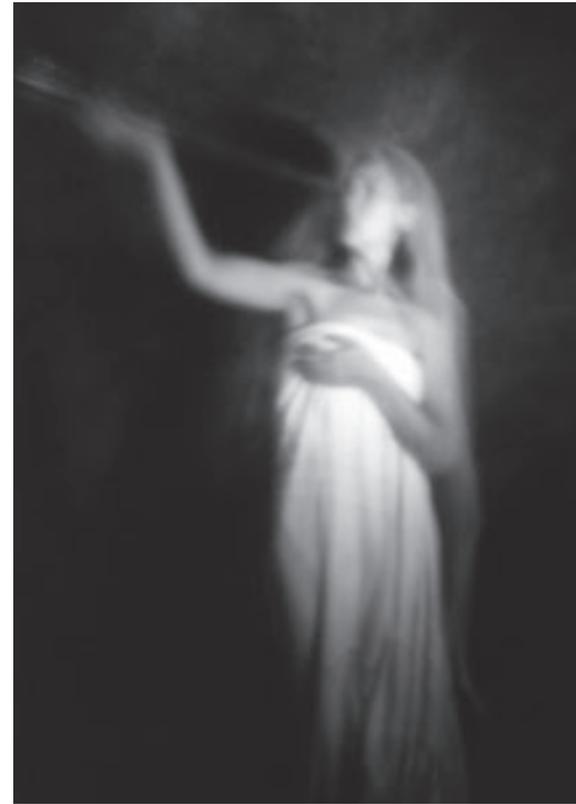
Antonia Small is a fine art photographer working in Port Clyde. She explains, "My photographs (a combination of collage, appropriation, and self-portraits) are made with a pinhole camera on 5"x7" large format film. I have begun this project, *Fair Isle*, about my time sailing aboard a replica of an 18th century British frigate. The large format negatives will be scanned and then printed at about 4'x5' – mounted and then coated in encaustic. I am always seeking ways to create strong aesthetic links within the craft choices I make. Encaustic, I've learned, was used to seal the hulls of ships before it was used as a painting medium. This historical fact, combined with how it creates an underwater look on the photographs, creates just the sort of feel I'd like the final works to have."

— Antonia Small, Port Clyde, grant \$970

Cara Romano finds it gratifying to be working in her chosen field and says, "I do not have adequate time for personal development as an artist. Needed is an opportunity to begin assimilating the historical context of contemporary American art jewelry. I hope to develop a comprehensive knowledge of 20th century jewelry designs as well as an understanding of how my ideas fit into the paradigms of the field and assist me in self criticism as well as offering guidance toward truly original concepts. Also on the 'to do' list is developing a means of synthesizing the enumerable jewelry processes that are available with my creative vision. The ultimate purpose of these studies is a cohesive body of work. One which is entirely driven by aesthetic content rather than the market forces which inform many of the companies design decisions."

— Cara Romano, Bar Harbor, grant \$1,000

**MAC**



**Top Left:** *Untitled – Self portrait*  
Antonia Small  
2004

Silver gelatin print  
16" x 20"

**Below Left:**

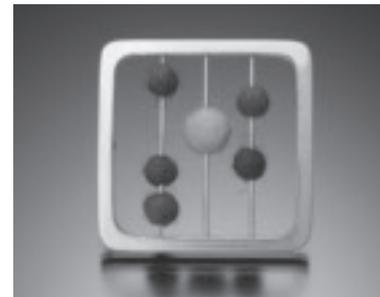
*Abacus Brooch*  
Cara Romano  
2006

Felted wool and  
sterling silver  
1.80" x 1.80" x .10"

**Below Right:**

*Riveted Rings*  
Cara Romano  
2007

Sterling Silver/  
18k gold  
.50" x .90" x .05"



For a complete listing of all Maine Arts Commission grant recipients, visit  
[www.mainearts.com](http://www.mainearts.com)

# Maine Arts Commission Grants Calendar Fiscal year 2009 and 2010

## Application Deadlines

### March 7, 2008

### March 13, 2009

#### AMERICAN MASTERPIECES:

Helps professional Maine arts organizations with annual operating budgets of \$500,000 or greater to present a major project such as an exhibition, performance or educational programs that feature American Masterpieces.

**ARTISTS IN MAINE COMMUNITIES:** Assists arts organizations, schools and other community groups to develop collaborative projects that employ Maine artists to benefit Maine communities, schools or families

#### CULTURAL FACILITIES ACCESSIBILITY:

Supports professional, freestanding, Maine arts organizations to assist new capital projects and renovations as well as technology projects and/or improvements. The Maine Arts Commission will provide funding for new construction, repairs or renovations of existing facilities owned and operated by a nonprofit Maine arts organization. Also supported is the repair, upgrade or replacement of capital technology equipment for a facility operated by a nonprofit, Maine arts organization.

### May 23, 2008

#### ARTS IN EDUCATION IN THE COMMUNITY:

(May 23, 2008 ONLY. Deadline will be December 12, 2008 for fiscal year 2009.) This grant assists schools, arts institutions and community arts organizations, in conjunction with Maine artists, to develop arts in education programs that support and expand full access to learning in and through the arts for pre-K-12 students. The intention of the grant is to fund programs — in both schools and in arts organizations — that provide meaningful arts in education experiences.

**June 27, 2008****June 26, 2009****INDIVIDUAL ARTIST FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM:**

This grant rewards artistic excellence, advances the careers of Maine artists, and promotes public awareness regarding the eminence of the creative sector in Maine.

**TRADITIONAL ARTS APPRENTICESHIP**

**PROGRAM:** This grant preserves valuable artistic traditions in Maine's communities. The program provides an opportunity for master traditional artists to pass on their skills to qualified apprentices.

**TRADITIONAL ARTIST FELLOWSHIP**

**PROGRAM:** This grants rewards artistic excellence, advances the careers of Maine artists and promotes public awareness regarding the eminence of the creative sector in Maine.

**December 14, 2007****December 12, 2008****ARTS IN EDUCATION IN THE COMMUNITY:**

(Beginning with fiscal year 2009.) This grant assists schools, arts institutions and community arts organizations, in conjunction with Maine artists, to develop arts in education programs that support and expand full access to learning in and through the arts for pre-K-12 students. The program, now in its pilot year, funds projects that provide meaningful arts in education experiences in both schools and in arts organizations.

**CAPACITY BUILDING IN MAINE'S CULTURAL**

**COMMUNITIES:** Designed as a capacity-building program for Maine local arts agencies, creative economy organizations and other community organizations that strengthen cultural organizations, artists, and the infrastructure that supports arts programming and services.

**SUSTAINING TRADITIONAL ARTS IN THE**

**COMMUNITY:** This program encourages communities to develop innovative ways to sustain traditional arts.

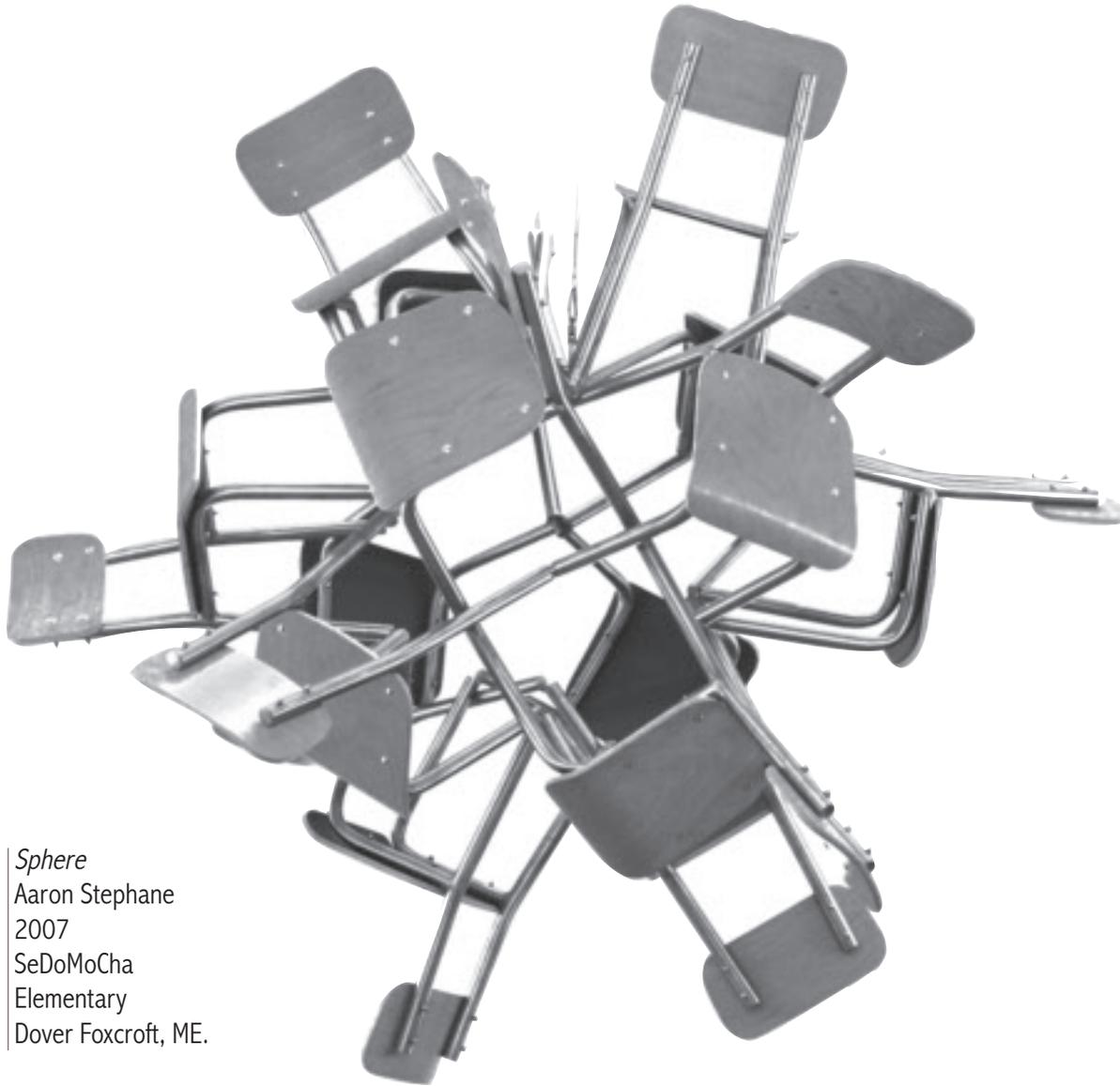
**Ongoing Deadlines****GOOD IDEA GRANT:**

(beginning June 27, 2008) Supports and fosters the growth of Maine's artists. The parameters of the grant are purposefully broad. They include any "good idea" that furthers an individual artist's creative endeavor(s).

**ARTS AND HUMANITIES GRANT:**

A small grant program to fund projects that include elements of both the arts and humanities. The program is jointly administered by the Maine Arts Commission and the Maine Humanities Council, with the Humanities Council serving as the lead agency.

MAC



*Sphere*  
Aaron Stephane  
2007  
SeDoMoCha  
Elementary  
Dover Foxcroft, ME.

# The Reshaping of Public Art in Maine

IN THE PAST, AMERICAN ARTS-SUPPORT often promoted “exclusive” events such as symphonies, operas, museum exhibitions and traditional theater. Public art also reflected this kind of classical expression in Romanesque

**Right:** A Detail of *The School by the River*  
Gordon Carlisle  
2007  
Washington  
Community College  
Calais, ME  
Enamel on wood  
and canvas



civic monuments and creations expressing traditional influences. In the 1960s the National Endowment for the Arts was established, and soon state art agencies were created to improve regional disbursement of arts funds. State arts organizations had better communication with constituents and soon recognized that many Americans were not appreciating the kind of art that was being funded. Regional arts agencies began to shift funding to improve support for projects with greater regional significance. An ongoing evolution within and between state arts agencies followed, changing the relationship

between organizations, artists, audiences and the general public.

In a 2004 Wallace Report entitled *State Arts Agencies at a Crossroads: The Search for Public Benefit*, Dr. Julia Lowell, an economist at the RAND Corporation, comments on the

schism between the kind of art that gets funded and the kind of art people appreciate. “[There is] a growing mismatch between the grant-making role and structure of many state art agencies and the cultural



and political realities they face. And even though many state art agencies are trying to reach beyond their traditional grantee constituencies, the perception – if not the fact – that state art agencies primarily serve artists and arts organizations rather than the broader public is yet to be overcome.” She goes on to cite positive steps taken by several agencies



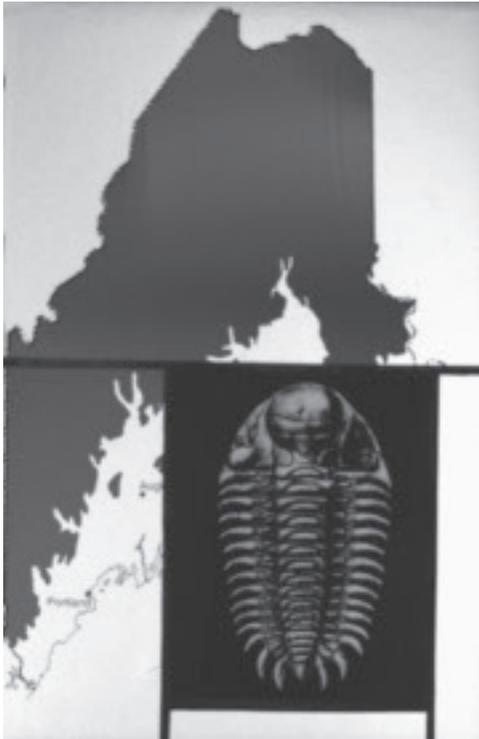
**Above:** Shoshannah White’s Percent for Art Commission is delicately installed at the Bioscience Research Wing at the University of Southern Maine in Portland.

**Left:** The artwork brings the internal workings of the facility to the external world. White’s installation works both with imagery based on the research being conducted in the Research Wing and with the architecture of the building.



including the Ohio Arts Council, "...condensing 24 previous core areas to five built around a particular desired outcome: sustainability, innovation and access, arts learning, individual creativity, and building capacity. Previously, grant eligibility was based on organization type; now it's based on the public benefit of the grant."

Lowell's observation about arts agencies seeking broader relevancy through public benefit is a sign of the times. It is a



manifestation of the increased awareness of interrelated networks. In Richard Florida's *Rise of the Creative Class* the "Creative Economy" paradigm is explored, relating arts to economics to several other factors in a network that leads to civic improvement. Lowell has a similar thesis, but focuses more on the

**Opposite Right:**

*Situate*

Aaron Stephane

2007

Farwell Elementary  
School

Lewiston, ME

Bronze

**Opposite Left:**

*Drawings in Space*

Jeff and Judy

LaBrasca

2007

MSAD#55, Sacopee  
Valley Middle School

Percent for Art  
Installation

Wood with  
clay pigment

**Left:** Window

Transom Detail

Nancy Gutkin O'Neil

2007

Glass, silkscreen,  
hand painting

Department of  
Conservation

Williams Building

Augusta, ME

roll of state agencies in the equation. Her conclusion is that innovation in operational mechanisms are necessary for arts agencies and artists to maintain relevance to the broader public. She cites how many agencies are beginning to view potential projects by not only financial need and the caliber of the project, but by how it will deliver something specific and beneficial to the general public. Her assertions imply that the disconnect between modern needs and traditional mechanisms of arts support can be remedied by greater consideration given to the public impact.

What this means to artists and art agencies, is that many of the mechanisms already in place for evaluating Public Art are spreading through other programs. This could be good news for artists familiar with the Public Art process and frustrating for artists unfamiliar with its workings. It doesn't help that Public Art programs are often poorly defined because of the broad definitions of both "art" and "public." However, a primary constituent to successful Public Art is the way creative partnerships and community collaborations are formed. This is not to say that Public Art should not be challenging or needs overwhelming approval for relevance, but rather community advocacy has always been important in creating and sustaining public work and that the benefit of public artwork will face detriment if a community feels alienated from it.

Maine is ahead of the National trend in assessing arts awards with public benefit as a criterion. Maine's Percent for Art program is one of the oldest in the country, and is rich with experience. The cooperation between different programs within the Maine Arts Commission has allowed other programs to gain from Public Art's venerability. The 2007 Schoodic Sculpture Symposium was an example of funding a project with great merit, not only in itself, but because it created relationships with international artists, the National Park Service, The Maine Arts Commission, Humanities Council, and local municipalities where sculptures were placed. The merit was not only in the creation of work, but the collaborative method in which the work was created. Of course, the Maine Arts Commission continues to support a wide variety of projects and will increase opportunities for many kinds of art projects. **MAC**

## Arts in the Capitol 2008

**THE ARTS IN THE CAPITOL PROGRAM** provides the people of Maine with a unique offering of art exhibitions in Maine's Capitol Complex in Augusta. The Maine Arts Commission oversees these exhibits that run throughout the year and the agency encourages people to come and experience some of the great contemporary art Maine has to offer.

All Arts in the Capitol events are self guided, free and open to the public. The first exhibit of 2008 is "Animal Prints," a selection of works from the "Biting and Scratching" exhibition, on loan from the Center for Maine Contemporary Art in Rockport. "Animal Prints" consists of works by Maine Printmakers Susan Amons and Keith Rendall and focuses on large scale prints that have animals as the subject matter. The Maine printmakers in this show share an interest in pushing the boundaries of traditional print techniques. The resulting woodcuts, etchings, and monotypes possess stunning beauty and boldness.

Future shows this year in the Capitol Complex begin in mid-March and will include works from Portland's Institute of Contemporary Art exhibit "Re-visioning Portland," by Mark Klett and Maine College of Art Photography students. The planned exhibition for June will have works from Lewiston's Bates Museum exhibit "Taking Different Trails: The Artists' Journey to Katahdin Lake," which explores a contemporary vision of conservation at Katahdin Lake.

For more information about the Arts in the Capitol program, visit [MaineArts.com](http://MaineArts.com), or contact:

Public Art Associate Kerstin Gilg  
207/287-6719

NexTalk user ID: [kerstin.gilg@maine.gov](mailto:kerstin.gilg@maine.gov).

**MAC**



**Below:** *Snow Geese Migration II*

Susan Amons

2003

Monotype w/Pastel

44" x 87"

(Photo Jay York)

**Far Left:** *Alligator Turtle*

Keith Rendall

2004/05

woodcut

48" x 32"



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## Commission Members

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 Rebecca Swanson Conrad, Vice Chair

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John M. Rohman, Bangor  
 Rebecca Swanson Conrad, Auburn  
 Rich Abramson, Redfield  
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 Noah Keteyian, Portland  
 Mark Miller, Lincoln  
 Mark C. Scally, East Millinocket  
 Owen Smith, Orono  
 Jessica Tomlinson, Portland

## The Maine Arts Commission Welcomes Two New Staff Members

### Kerstin Gilg, Public Art Associate



Kerstin joined the Maine Arts Commission in 2007 to oversee the administrative duties of the Public Arts program as the Public Art Associate. His responsibilities

include supervising the selection process for Percent for Art projects and managing the Arts in the Capitol program. Kerstin has a MA Degree in Interactive Telecommunication from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and a BA in Theater Arts from the University of Oregon. Kerstin previously lived in Santa Monica, California, and New York City where he worked on theater, television and art projects. Kerstin is currently a resident of Gardiner, where he is an active community member serving on several boards. Kerstin is very happy to be back in Maine and enjoys maintaining his house and gardens, attending cultural events, and advocating for artists and arts organizations throughout the state.

### Tina P. Mann, Office Manager



Tina joined the staff at the Maine Arts Commission in 2007 as office manager. Tina is a graduate of the University of Maine with a BA in both Business Administration, and

in Library Science and Information Technology. Her experience before joining the Maine Arts Commission staff includes work in the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Title Section of Motor Vehicles and library management. Tina lives in East Winthrop with her husband and two shih-tzus.

**“There is nothing more gratifying than knowing when I come to work each day that I am able to make a positive impact on the lives of Maine people, and that is what I have found in this position”.**

## Maine Arts Commission Automated Attendant Directory listing

Office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. To 5:00 p.m.

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Technology Associate
- Ext. 7 **Kerstin Gilg,**  
Public Art Associate
- Ext. 9 **Donna McNeil,**  
Director

887/887 – 3878 NexTalk/TTY

## Maine Arts Commission Meetings

Friday, March 14, 2008 – location TBA

Friday, June 20, 2008 – location TBA

Friday, October 10, 2008 – location TBA

## Executive Committee Meetings

2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Maine Arts Commission, Augusta

Thursday, April 10, 2008

Thursday, July 24, 2008

Thursday, September 18, 2008

Thursday, December 11, 2008

Thursday, February 12, 2009

## Committee Meetings

### Arts Accessibility Task Force

Friday, June 20, 2008

### Arts in Education Committee

Friday, June 20, 2008

Friday, January 23, 2009

### Community Arts Committee

Friday, June 20, 2008

Friday, January 23, 2009

### Traditional Arts Committee

Friday, January 23, 2009

### Community Relations/Public Information Committee

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Friday, June 20, 2008

### Contemporary Arts Committee

Friday, June 20, 2008

Friday, August 22, 2008

### Public Art Committee

Friday, June 20, 2008





**MISSION** The Maine Arts Commission shall encourage and stimulate public interest and participation in the cultural heritage and programs of our state; shall expand the state's cultural resources; and shall encourage and assist freedom of artistic expression for the well being of the arts, to meet the legitimate needs and aspirations of persons in all parts of the state.



Office Hours:  
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