

Weathering the Economic Downturn: Two Local Nonprofits Team Up

For immediate release. Please contact Caitlin Porter at 503-645-5353.

Last September, things weren't looking so good for Print Arts Northwest. The Portland-based organization of local print makers had seen costs associated with their swank Pearl District gallery steadily rise over the years, construction in the area was a constant inconvenience, and despite the foot traffic, sales weren't high enough to offset all the expenses.

PAN closed its doors, was forced to lay off its Executive Director, and the organization's large collection of artwork was moved into storage. The closure got some attention, but no new opportunities came to light until October, when PAN Interim Director Barbara Mason went to a Cultural Coalition of Washington County meeting.

"Sam [Shogren, Washington County Museum Executive Director] and I both serve as Cultural Coalition committee members," recalls Mason. "I walked into that meeting saying 'What are we going to do? We're losing our gallery,' and Sam walked in saying 'What are we going to do? We need a new exhibit on a modest budget.' It came together very naturally, because right now in the non-profit world it's about partnerships, finding a way to work together and share resources."

The result of that meeting was the WCM's Contemporary Printmaking exhibit, which ran from November 2008 to March 2009, highlighting work from 75 Northwestern artists. With the success of that exhibit, the two organizations realized that a formalized partnership was in everyone's best interest—a partnership that was ratified just two weeks ago on July 16th. The museum restructured the layout of their space, transforming what was once a lobby area into a gallery space for PAN. On their end, the artists went to work—curating an exciting series of 12 monthly art shows for their new space, helping the museum spice up their gift store, and introducing Third Thursday art openings with wine and refreshments.

But it isn't only fun for grown ups—PAN and WCM spent the spring working closely together on a pilot program of free Family Day events. With attendance of over 400 people, tall to small, it was immediately apparent that the new program would be popular in Washington County. From kite making to pioneer dress up, the Family Day events combine what each organization does best—art and history. The program has just received its first grant, a gift from the PGE Foundation, and PAN and WCM are set to kick off monthly free Family Days starting in September.

For Washington County residents, this partnership means more options, whether you're into art, history, or both.

"Our focus is, and always will be, history," affirms Shogren. "But a big part of our new and expanded vision for the museum is to expose Washington County residents to as many quality exhibits and programs as possible. Our partnership with PAN is a win-win situation, especially for county residents, because it only expands what we are able to offer—the museum is now home to history *and* art."

PAN's *New Member Show*, currently on display, is an illuminating cross-section of modern printmaking. From intaglio to solar plates—it showcases an array of techniques, and an even greater array of themes and styles. Featuring dynamic artwork from artists Daniel Jasa, Janet Marcavage, Gordon K. Sherman, and Bob

Sumner, the show closes August 15th to make way for Rebecca McCannell's marionette-inspired show *Invasions*, opening Thursday, August 20th.

Date & Time: Thursday, August 20th 5:30-8:00pm. PAN Art Openings are every Third Thursday at the museum.

Location: Washington County Museum (17677 NW Springville Road Portland, OR 97229) located on the campus of PCC Rock Creek.

Cost: PAN opening receptions are always free and open to the public. Parking is free with a visitors pass, available at the museum reception desk.

Attached Photos:

New PAN member Ruth Robbins with PAN artist Daniel Jasa, and his piece "A Moments Rest."

Barbara Mason and Sam Shogren in the new PAN gallery.

Ruth Robbins holds aloft her new acquisition, "A Moments Rest" by PAN artist Daniel Jasa at his exhibit opening.