

# PRESENTING GREAT ART: SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

## SPAIN IN THE AGE OF EXPLORATION 1492–1819

October 16, 2004–January 2, 2005

*Spain in the Age of Exploration 1492–1819* used masterpieces of art and science to narrate a fascinating account of Spain's engagement with the world beyond its borders over a period of three centuries. The exhibition was both a compelling history lesson and an introduction to the incomparably rich treasures of Spanish art. SAM is grateful to Luis Fernando Esteban, Honorary Vice Consul of Spain in Seattle, for all his help in realizing the exhibition.

SAM offered a wide range of public programs in conjunction with this exhibition. A day-long family festival and an armor exploration and try-on area provided hands-on experience for both children and adults. Adult public programming included public lectures, a Spanish cinema film series and a two-day symposium. Collaborating with nineteen different organizations, SAM offered community programming as diverse as Don Quixote at the Paramount Theatre and a guitar master class at Seattle Symphony's Soundbridge.

As part of a continuing effort to remove financial barriers to community participation with the museum, SAM collaborated with Starbucks to distribute two hundred free family passes. In addition, SAM distributed eight thousand free and discounted passes and other exhibition materials to a network of schools and community organizations. Visitor surveys taken during the exhibition suggest that SAM's efforts to reach the Latino community were well received, with Hispanics, Latinos and Chicanos visiting the museum in the largest numbers in five years.

*This exhibition was organized by the Seattle Art Museum in collaboration with Patrimonio Nacional, Spain, and supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.*

*Presenting Sponsors: Robert Lehman Foundation, Inc., and The Boeing Company*

*Sponsors: National Endowment for the Humanities, Iberia Airlines of Spain, Microsoft Corporation, Accenture, Starbucks Coffee Company, The Seattle Times, KING 5 Television and the Seattle Art Museum Supporters*

*Generous support provided by Samuel H. Kress Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Hispanic Employees at Microsoft, 4Culture King County Lodging Tax Fund and Kreielsheimer Foundation Exhibition Endowment*

*Additional support provided by: Spain's Ministries of Culture and of Foreign Affairs, Junta de Castilla y León, The Leona M. Geyer Charitable Trust and Contributors to the Annual Fund*

## BETWEEN PAST AND FUTURE NEW PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO FROM CHINA February 10–May 1, 2005

For the past two decades, China has been undergoing a remarkable transformation, one whose full extent is only now becoming visible. This exhibition, which brought together 130 works by sixty younger artists from mainland China, comprised a host of highly individual responses to the successive waves of change that have swept through China's economic, social and cultural life.

Lin Tianmiao, exhibition artist and one of China's most progressive women artists, visited SAM and spoke on her work and views of art in China today. Two gallery talks by SAM curators and local scholars Sasha Welland and Jim O'Donnell presented an in-depth look at the exhibition. In collaboration with the University of Washington, SAM sponsored a day-long symposium entitled "The Practice of Photography in China: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives." SAM partnered with Youth in Focus to feature youth-created, exhibition-inspired photographs that were displayed on the first-floor panels.

SAM distributed more than six thousand free and discounted passes to the community through mailings and participation in local cultural events, including the popular Chinese-American Lunar Year Event and the Seattle Center Festál series.

*This exhibition was organized by the International Center of Photography, New York, and the David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, in collaboration with the Asia Society, New York, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. The exhibition's presentation in Seattle was generously sponsored by The Seattle Times. Generous support provided by Davis Wright Tremaine, LLP, and the Max and Helen Gurvich Exhibition Endowment. Additional support provided by The Foster Foundation, The W.L.S. Spencer Foundation and Contributors to the Annual Fund.*

## ISAMU NOGUCHI—SCULPTURAL DESIGN presented by UBS June 9–September 5, 2005

*Isamu Noguchi—Sculptural Design* brought together examples of Noguchi's work in various mediums in an installation conceived and designed by theater and opera director and artist, Robert Wilson. The exhibition was the first full-scale museum presentation of Noguchi's work in Seattle, and included sculpture, furniture, lighting, set designs, fountains and architectural maquettes, as well as light, sound and video.

During a three-hour performance, Wilson provided a self-portrait of his creative process and spoke on his connection with Noguchi. Masayo Duus, writer of the first full-length biography of Noguchi, lectured on his life. Artists Gerry Tsutakawa and Eric Nelsen—both of whom knew Noguchi in Seattle and visited him at his studio in Japan—spoke on the impact of his work on arts in Seattle.

In an attempt to increase the museum's visibility and deepen its relationship with Seattle's Asian and Pacific Islander communities, the museum hosted a community outreach event that brought community members and leaders to the museum for presentations about the expansion projects and for a private viewing of the Noguchi exhibition. Nearly two thousand free and discounted passes were given to community representatives, and SAM mailed more than three thousand discounted passes to targeted members in its community network.

*This exhibition was organized by the Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein, Germany, in cooperation with the Isamu Noguchi Foundation Inc., New York. The exhibition design and visual concept by Robert Wilson were developed at the Watermill Center on Long Island, New York, in collaboration with Christian Wassmann. The Seattle presentation of this exhibition was made possible by the global financial services firm UBS. Media support provided by The Seattle Times. Additional support provided by the Seattle Art Museum Supporters, The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, 4Culture King County Lodging Tax Fund, Washington State Arts Commission and Contributors to the Annual Fund.*

## COLLECTION COUNTERPOINT

### SONG, STORY, SPEECH ORAL TRADITIONS OF PUGET SOUND'S FIRST PEOPLE

August 5, 2004–December 11, 2005

The songs, stories, oratory and works of art presented in *Song, Story, Speech: Oral Traditions of Puget Sound's First People* are aspects of encyclopedic cultural knowledge that comprise the ancestral teachings known in the Puget Salish language as *huchoseda*. The simple but powerful concept that intellect (*hec*) resides in the heart and not the mind provides a glimpse into the emotive power of words, songs and objects to preserve and transmit ancient beliefs.

*Song, Story, Speech* was one of the museum's featured exhibitions for families, teachers and school children last year. Native advisors and educators assisted the museum in reaching new audiences participating in a free family day, a teacher workshop and a very special Day of Honoring, an all-day event that recognized the contributions of twenty-seven Salish artists, culture specialists, storytellers, linguists and anthropologists.

*This exhibition was organized by the Seattle Art Museum. The Henry Luce Foundation provided the leadership grant for the exhibition. Additional support provided by The Leona M. Geyer Charitable Trust, the OneFamily Foundation, The Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation and Contributors to the Annual Fund.*

## COLLECTION INSIGHTS

### MODERN IN AMERICA July 8, 2004–January 2, 2006

*Modern in America* told a story of art made in the last one hundred years, focusing on strengths in the Seattle Art Museum's collection of painting, sculpture and photography. The installation began with the formative efforts on the part of American artists to "be modern" in the first two decades of the twentieth century and traced currents that continue in art of the present day.

### MODERN IN EUROPE November 5, 2004–April 17, 2005

The Seattle Art Museum was honored to present highlights of twentieth-century European painting from the collection of Gladys and Sam Rubinstein presented together with complementary paintings from SAM's collection. These remarkable works by artists from Chile, Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic), France, Germany, Russia, Spain and Switzerland demonstrated the range of artistic innovation that flourished in Paris, Munich and Berlin from the mid-1920s to World War II.

*The exhibitions Modern in Europe and Modern in America were organized by the Seattle Art Museum and generously supported by the Margery Friedlander Exhibition Endowment and Contributors to the Annual Fund.*

### DOCUMENTS NW TRANSFORMED BY FIRE SCULPTURE IN GLASS FROM THE COLLECTION OF BECKY & JACK BENAROYA November 5, 2004–June 12, 2005

*Transformed by Fire* presented a selection of more than two dozen contemporary works and a number of extraordinary art deco pieces from the early twentieth century. The exhibition surveyed some of the extraordinary ways sculptors use glass, a dramatic material with unique properties and abilities to gather in and then transmit, reflect or refract light.

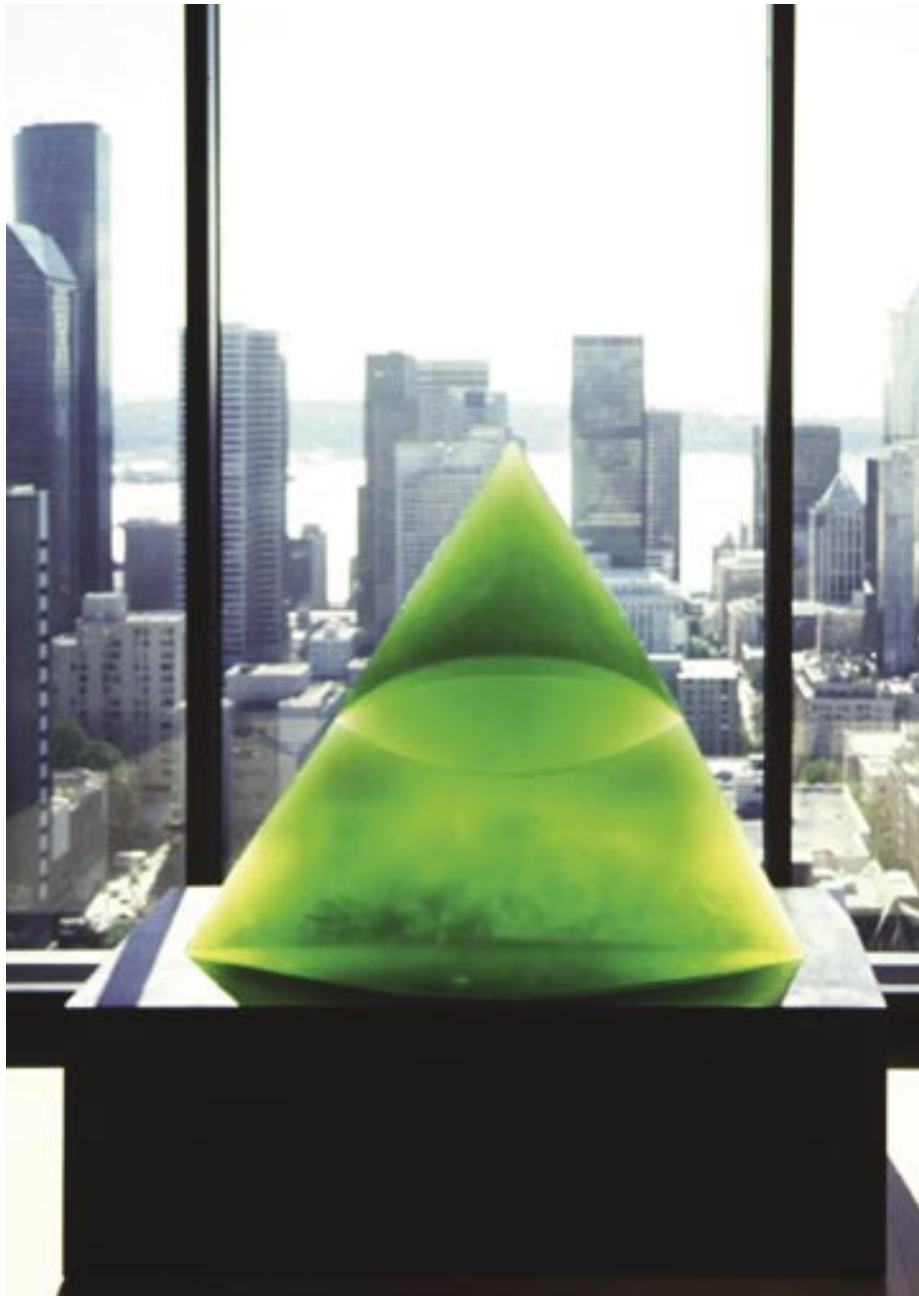
*From the Collection of Becky and Jack Benaroya. The Documents Northwest exhibition series is made possible through the ongoing generous support of PONCHO (Patrons of Northwest Civic, Cultural, and Charitable Organizations).*

### THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE'S "QUIETER SPIRIT" EARLY PAINTINGS BY FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH June 25, 2005–January 4, 2006

*The American Landscape's "Quieter Spirit"* was the first in a planned series of exhibitions of American art from the SAM collection. Frederic Church's *A Country Home* (1854) was the centerpiece of this exhibition which brought together key paintings from a formative five-year period between 1848 and 1853. One of the museum's most important American paintings, *A Country Home* represents a crowning achievement in the artist's early career.

## IN-FOCUS GALLERY TALKS

In-Focus gallery talks led by SAM docents were developed in response to visitor research that suggested that visitors would like more opportunities to interact with each other at the museum. The twenty-minute discussions are highly interactive and focus on one or two selected works, allowing the visitor to experience a work of art in depth. *Transformed by Fire* along with *The American Landscape's "Quieter Spirit": Early Paintings by Frederic Edwin Church* and *Africa in America* were featured exhibitions for In-Focus gallery talks. Visitors had the opportunity to learn not only from the docent leading the discussion but from each other, sharing their expertise and reactions to the works. After the discussions, visitors spent more time in the galleries exploring further works on their own, and using the docent as a resource to answer additional questions.




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## BUILDING AUDIENCES THROUGH EXHIBITIONS

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Special exhibitions from other institutions and those that include works of art from private collections make it possible for our visitors to see art not represented in SAM's collection. In our expanded downtown museum, we will have over ten thousand square feet of space devoted to special exhibitions. This will allow us to host large shows that were previously beyond our capacity, and will give us more space for educational programs and activities near the art, or complementary installations from our own collection. More space means a richer experience for our viewers.

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Frederic Edwin Church, American, 1826–1900, *A Country Home*, 1854, oil on canvas, 32 x 51 in., Gift of Mrs. Paul C. Carmichael, 65.80

Stanislav Libenský, and Jaroslava Brychtová, Czech Republic, 1921–2001; Czech Republic, born 1924, *Green Eye of the Pyramid-III*, 1993–94, kiln cast lead glass, polished, 33 x 40 x 8 in., Collection of Becky and Jack Benaroya, Photo: Claire Garoutte ©2004