From the Director

Bennington Museum is on an upward trajectory. We keep changing. We’re getting national attention for our shows and our attendance is growing. Here are four reasons to be involved with the Museum - as a regular attendee of exhibitions and events, or as a donor.

**We benefit the region and enrich your life.** We have sustained annual attendance of 22,000. We bring 13,700 visitors into the state each year, 600 from international origins. All have a direct impact on the local economy. For those who live here, we provide inspiration and real examples of thinking outside the box. We teach your children about art, history, and the importance of creative thinking. We make Bennington a better place for those looking to come for a day, week, lifetime, or to start or run a business.

**We surprise you.** Who knew that Milton Avery had a creative awakening in Vermont? That’s why we created *Milton Avery’s Vermont* (2016). That Grandma Moses approached the world with the inventive energy of a modern artist? That’s why we hung her paintings alongside works by Helen Frankenthaler and Andy Warhol in *Grandma Moses: American Modern* (2017).

**We challenge you to see yourself and your world in new ways.** The New Yorker magazine cartoonist Edward Koren nudges us to regard the end of human civilization in *Thinking About Extinction and Other Droll Things: Recent Prints and Drawings by Edward Koren* (on view now through September 9). Norman Rockwell drew on small-town Vermont values to teach the nation about freedom and civic responsibility, lessons still valid today. See a special pop-up show *Challenges 4 Freedom* (July 13-August 9).

**We have made this into a vital, active place that welcomes everyone.** You can come here for quiet walks on a woodland wildflower trail and lively camps for kids, offered in collaboration with Vermont Arts Exchange. We have a living tattoo event, concerts ranging from folk and bluegrass to Bach and Beethoven, and exhibitions ranging from local history to contemporary art.

With so many new and exciting events, exhibitions, and programs being offered by the Museum, it is easy to understand how we keep bringing visitors to our town. We have no intention of stopping, but look to have an even stronger impact in the future. Haven’t visited in a while? Now might just be the time. We look forward to welcoming you.

See you soon!

—Robert Wolterstorff, Executive Director
The days were dark as the Great Depression, which began with the stock crash of October, 1929, spread over the nation in the early 1930s. Nevertheless, this was a moment when the light of creativity burned brightly, as shown by this summer’s major exhibition, *Crash to Creativity: The New Deal in Vermont*, on view June 30 – November 4.

It has often been said that the Depression didn’t have much impact in Vermont. “Depression, what Depression?” was the quip. Vermont had always been a hard-scrabble place and the Depression just forced farmers and shop-keepers into a local barter-based economy. But in fact the state of Vermont was not spared. Many of those in towns, as well as those living on the land, saw their lives crumble.

*Crash to Creativity* sheds light on an important and still under-studied aspect of Vermont’s history, focusing on the role of the many Federal New Deal projects in fostering a culture of creativity and innovation in the Green Mountain State, from 1933 to 1943. The artists, architects, writers, construction workers, and civil employees whose work was funded through the New Deal helped to document the state’s history, record the conditions of contemporary life during the Depression and recovery, and build infrastructure that continues to benefit us today. “True to Bennington Museum’s strength, the show combines art and history in innovative ways. Powerful examples of Regionalist and Social Realist paintings headline the show, including two of my all-time favorites, Francis Colburn’s *Charley Smith and his Barn* and Ronald Slayton’s quietly optimistic *The Planter,*” says Bennington Museum Executive Director Robert Wolterstorff. “Both of these painters were on the official WPA payroll. But there is also some pretty astonishing early color photographs of the Vermont State Fair by Jack Delano funded by the Farm Security Administration, architectural drawings for a modernist ski lodge at Stowe, and a competition design for a Post Office mural project.” The show includes furniture created for State Park cabins made by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), letters and archival documents, and transcriptions of audio recordings documenting the everyday lives of Vermonters made by the Federal Writers Project.

Looking back from a contemporary perspective, we see the Depression in Vermont as another moment when art embraced the role of commenting on contemporary politics and society; but it was also a rare time when the federal government put its active support behind creativity. The work created during this fertile period lives on to delight and challenge us today.
CAMBIUM (Into the Woods): Works by Bill Botzow consists of eight watercolor/mixed media works on paper, most featuring unspoiled landscape imagery, along with a large scale multi-panel featuring bug trails that are created in the trees – life supporting life. A selection of Botzow’s wood sculptures, created from natural branches combined into wonderful sculpture forms is also on view. The artist states, “My path to thinking about the cambium layer in a tree comes by noticing, by paying attention to the growing forms we see all around us. Noticing, touching, gathering, ordering, responding has led to sculptures and drawings that I hope in some way honor that liveliest, hidden place where the creative grows.” Bill Botzow

Challenges 4 Freedom is curated by illustration expert Roger Reed. This special “pop-up” exhibition focuses on the delicate balance of individual liberty and community responsibility as reflected in Rockwell’s Four Freedoms. The exhibition features work by Arlington, VT illustrators as well as other celebrated artists. Sponsored by THE MILL and Dr. Joshua Sherman.

Crash to Creativity: The New Deal in Vermont focuses on the role of many government sponsored New Deal projects in fostering a culture of creativity and innovation among artists, writers, and civil workers in the Green Mountains, 1933-1943, and its impact on Vermont today. The exhibition features paintings by Ronald Slayton and Francis Colburn, as well as photographs, furniture from Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) cabins, archival documentation of New Deal projects such as letters, and transcriptions of audio recordings of Vermonters created by the Federal Writers Project. Supported by VPR. See page 7 for related events.

Thinking about Extinction and Other Droll Things: Recent Prints and Drawings by Edward Koren features recent etchings and lithographs by Vermont artist Edward Koren, who is best known for his iconic cartoons of furry humans published in The New Yorker. This summer’s show features a largely unknown body of prints, some fresh off the press and never before exhibited. Included in the selection of works are those featuring curious skeletal creatures in a landscape of ruined Gothic and Classical architecture partially inspired by Koren’s reading of The Sixth Extinction by Berkshire County resident Elizabeth Kolbert.

Attracting visitors from around the world, the 1863 Jane Stickel Quilt features 169 five-inch blocks, and is surrounded by a unique scalloped border. In all, it contains a remarkable 5,602 pieces. See page 7 for related events.
History – Rich and Deep

Bennington Museum’s library offers the region’s most comprehensive resources about the history and genealogy of New England and Vermont families. Many researchers, including students, scholars, family members, and those interested in history, come here to increase their understanding of — or to find — their ancestors or knowledge about this region. In every case the goal is far more than just a list of names and dates. The most interesting discoveries are what kinds of lives these people lived and what they accomplished in those lifetimes.

The library’s collection has particular emphasis on documents not found online, including books, vital records, newspapers, and other primary sources. For example, the “History-Biography” file contains information of regional relevance accumulated over many years. An index to that file, and the contents of the file itself, are available at our website. The library has additional files of family research and genealogical correspondence that have not been digitized but are available to view in person.

The Harwood Diaries, penned between 1805 and 1837, are available here and may soon be digitized. These provide rich details of early 19th-century agricultural life. Historic newspapers of the region, notably the Vermont Gazette 1783-1875 and State Banner 1841-1885, are now available online at the library through an agreement with Newsbank; they are searchable and printable. The library houses the most complete collection of material printed by Anthony Haswell, who was Bennington’s postmaster, printer, and newspaper publisher. Haswell was jailed by the United States government in 1799 and 1800 for merely publishing support of an editor who criticized President John Adams.

Over the months visitors have:
— searched for information and images to include in a book about the Cushman family and its famed “Colonial Creations” line of furniture, made in North Bennington
— asked for background on the Civil War surgeon Richard H. Greene, who was also the first black graduate of Yale, and is buried in the Bennington Centre Cemetery
— did ancestral research on Dr. Samuel Adams of Arlington, the loyalist who the Green Mountain Boys hoisted up on a chair outside the Catamount Tavern as punishment for his Tory activism

History is being uncovered every day. Surely you have been waiting for an excuse to join us in discovery.

— Tyler Resch, Librarian

News from the Trail…

This is the 10th year of the trail, and all of the work in creating it has been done by volunteers, including students from the Career Development Center, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, work crews from Bennington College and Southern Vermont College, the Berkshire Bank, and the Bennington Rotary Club, as well as a number of regular volunteers, some of them Master Gardeners. We couldn’t have asked or received better “hands-on” support to enhance this peaceful space.

This past May, a sculpture titled Crow was placed at the top of the Pine Loop Trail in the meadow. Created by North Bennington artist Joe Chirchirillo, this sculpture was created from metal rods, wheels, and old tools. It stands six feet high and is placed on a three foot base. Donated to Bennington Museum by Jackie and Tony Marro, it stands high above the flowering plants.

Over the past three years, we have received annual grants from the Whipstock Foundation. This year Elhannon Nursery generously supported our efforts enabling us to plant many more wildflowers in the meadow. In addition to this, there have been gifts from a number of graduating classes of Bennington High School as well as individuals that included stone benches, bird baths, signs and more.

We thank our volunteers, donors, skilled artists and others who continue to add to the beauty of the trail and Hadwen Woods. If you would like to learn more, contact Jackie Marro at jcminvt@hotmail.com
Book Corner

Bennington Museum Store has a wide variety of publications for sale ranging from catalogues based on Museum-curated exhibitions to children’s storybooks. We offer a selection of books on Grandma Moses and her art, as well as those written in detail specific to the region, its history and culture. Great for gifts or for your own enjoyment.

**Rockwell Kent’s “Egypt”: Shadow & Light in Vermont**

This groundbreaking and richly illustrated exhibition catalogue includes vintage photographs of the artist, his studio, and family at their home in Vermont, and essays by Jamie Franklin, Curator of the Bennington Museum, and Jake Milgram Wien, independent Curator and Historian. "Nirvana", the evocatively titled painting by Rockwell Kent on the cover of this publication, signals entry into the world of ideas, Asian and Western, that suffuse the works Kent conceived in Vermont between 1919 and 1926.

This beautifully illustrated 63-page soft cover catalogue contains fifty-three plates and other images. It reflects the exhibition which was on view at the Bennington Museum from June 9 through October 30, 2012, the first exhibition to focus on Rockwell Kent’s life and work during his years in Vermont, 1919-1925. **$24.95 plus shipping.**

**Norton Stoneware and American Redware: The Bennington Museum Collection**

Thanks to Catherine Zusy, Curator of Decorative Arts at the Bennington Museum from 1988-1991, new information was brought to light not only about the specific pieces which were chosen for discussion and illustration in this book, but also about the potteries in which they were made and the individuals who shaped, decorated and defined their use. This catalogue presents the Museum’s collection of stoneware against the background of the famous Norton Pottery for which Bennington was well known. The redware collection is also addressed, with particular attention given to the complex questions surrounding origin and maker. This beautiful 80-page soft-covered catalogue contains 53 photographs and was published by Bennington Museum. **$19.99 plus shipping.**

Museum Store: 447-1571 ext. 208 or store.benningtonmuseum.org

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**Shop From the Comfort of Your Home… Not Just a Cliché**

The Museum Store is now online! Through our dedicated site, you can browse, order, and ask questions about our products all from the comfort of your home or office. Your purchases support the Bennington Museum and its programs. Choose from over seventy-seven Grandma Moses products, eight of the best-selling catalogues created for recent exhibitions at the Museum, and all issues of the Walloomsack Review. But the online store lets you do so much more:

- Support the Museum by giving to the Annual Fund...over a secure site.
- Place an inquiry with the Museum’s research library and pay for it online.
- Order and pay for rights and reproductions for any of the over 20,000 items in the searchable collection.
- Become a member of the Museum. Review the benefits offered at all levels of membership, and select which is right for you.
- Make a donation to the School Transportation Fund. Help offset the expense of bringing children to the Museum.

We accept all credit cards over a secure site and ship daily using priority mail. (Fees based on total sale.) The shop team holds shipping to a very high standard and securely wraps all orders to ensure your purchase arrives to you exactly the same as it was when it left our store.

Visit us soon at store.benningtonmuseum.org
**Vermont Arts Exchange (VAE) and Bennington Museum** have combined forces to bring two VAE camps to the beautiful Hadwen Woods and George Aiken Wildflower Trail of the Museum. While much of the time will be spent outdoors, each camp is set to integrate Museum exhibitions and artists such as Edward Koren and Bill Botzow. For information contact infovae@comcast.net or 802-442-5549. Register for these camps online at vtartxchange.org

**Monday, July 16 to Friday, July 20**
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**VAE Camp Outdoor Sculpture** is instructed by Matthew Perry. Artists who work with natural materials such as Bill Botzow serve as the inspiration as participants create small models and large-scale works of their own. Be prepared to think outside the box, get messy, and have fun! Ages 8+. $225 Fee.

**Monday, July 30 to Friday, August 3**
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**VAE Camp Gimme Shelter** is instructed by Gabi Rynes. Campers utilize the beautiful Hadwen Woods to explore, design, and create dwellings and shelters. Rain or shine, prepare for adventures with mud, sticks, vines, and Museum exploration. Ages 8+. $225 Fee.

**Sunday, August 5**
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Dig deep into the impact Federally-sponsored projects had in Vermont, 1933-1943. Join Bennington Museum Curator Jamie Franklin for a gallery talk on *Crash to Creativity: The New Deal in Vermont*. Reservations required by calling 802-447-1571 ext. 200. $5/Bennington Museum Member   $10/Not-Yet-Member. Fee includes admission to the Museum’s summer exhibition *Crash to Creativity: The New Deal in Vermont.*

**Friday, September 14**
3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

**Stoneware Collectors’ Meeting** held in the Paresky Wing will feature talks by Tim Bailey of Antiques at Bailey’s in Nassau, NY, Curtis Rice who recently released his new book “James River Stoneware and the S.S. Perry Connection” and Jude Hanley from Latham, NY an expert on the West Troy/Albany potteries. Enjoy their talks about the connection between potter Josiah Chapman and the stoneware made in Albany and Troy, NY, circa 1803-1815. Event free with admission to the Museum.

**Saturday, September 22**
Community Day is a special day at the museum when everyone is admitted FREE of charge! Be among the first visitors to see the wonderful fall exhibitions. Explore the galleries, walk the George Aiken Wildflower Trail, get creative with the VAE Art Bus, and more. Mark your calendars to join us.

**Saturday, September 29**
2:00 pm

**Bennington Museum welcomes Pamela Weeks**, Binney Family Curator of the New England Quilt Museum and Executive Director of ABC Quilts. Weeks physically examined and conducted extensive research on the quilt in 2013, on the 150th anniversary of its making. Weeks was able to shed new light on the life of the Vermont farm wife who made an incredible quilt. There is a charge of $10 for not-yet-members plus admission to tour the galleries and a charge of $7 for museum members.

**Sunday, October 7, 2018**
2:00 - 3:30 PM (followed with Q&A)

Join Devin Colman, State Architectural Historian at the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation in Montpelier as he presents **Art & Architecture of the New Deal in Vermont.** His illustrated talk explores the New Deal art and building programs of the 1930s, with an emphasis on projects undertaken in Vermont. This presentation is free and includes admission to the Museum’s summer exhibition *Crash to Creativity: The New Deal in Vermont.*
Looking Ahead:
September 15 - December 30

Where Did You Come From Anyway?: Works by Pat Musick

Looking Ahead …

September 1 through October 8

- September 28
- November 23 through December 29

- November 27
- December 7
- December 15
- December 28

1863 Jane Stickle Quilt

- Annual Members’ Social
- Peace, Love, and Understanding, Exhibition and Closed-Bid Auction
- Artists’ Reception
- The Museum Gala
- Family Day
- Closed-bid Auction Closes at 4 pm