

Letter from the Chair

by Connie Bostic



It is hard to believe that it has been more than two years since we've managed to get out a newsletter. Needless to say, I am more than a little embarrassed. All there is to do at this point is to promise to do better!

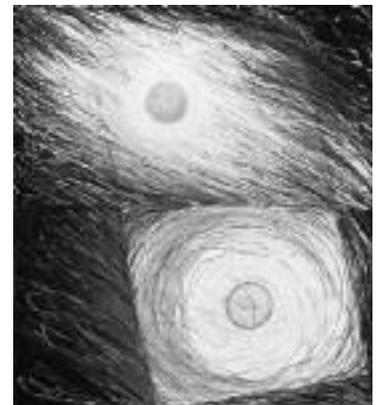
Now to catch you up: The last two years have been extraordinary in so many ways. The most important news is that we have formed an alliance with the University of North Carolina Asheville. While Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center retains ownership of our archives, they are now housed in the Special Collections Library at the University and are being digitized so that they will be readily available to researchers and scholars worldwide.

A series of exhibitions, titled collectively, *The Shape of Imagination: The Women of Black Mountain College*, is especially dear to my heart. Divided into three "shapes," the first show, *Sphere*, was a broad spectrum, including many media and endeavors from women who contributed so much to the life of the school. The second segment of the year's celebration was *Triangle*, an exhibition focused on the life and works of M.C. Richards, Anni Albers and Ruth Asawa. The third exhibition, *Point*, was a one-person show for Dorothea Rockburne. Recognition for many of these women came late, and it was satisfying to accord them the attention that they deserve. There is a great catalogue for the *Sphere* show, as well as Dorothea's; and there was diverse programming, including a panel discussion with alumni Alma Stone Williams, Cynthia Homire, Patsy Lynch Wood, Marie Tavroges Stilkind and Vera Baker Williams. Vera also did a reading for her young fans at Malaprops Bookstore.

Other programming for the exhibition included a *Floor Tales* Workshop by Mary Parks Washington in which she facilitated local members of a neighborhood wiped out by Urban Renewal to reconstruct their communities on a huge map. Suzi Gablik gave an enlightening lecture, *Art Without the Isms*, and Ati Gropius Johansen presented an amazing workshop titled, *The Awakened Eye: Explorations in 3 Dimensions*. There was a poetry reading called *Voicing the Women*, which also included music, dance, and projection. Brenda Danilowitz from the Albers Foundation gave a talk called *Anni Albers and Ruth Asawa: Two Lives in Art*. Then, as a part of her *Astronomy Drawings* exhibition, Dorothea Rockburne attracted a packed house for her keynote address at the Re-Viewing Black Mountain College Conference.

We are preparing now for our Re-Viewing Black Mountain College Conference 2 to be held again at UNC Asheville on October 8-10, 2010. Last year's

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FROM TOP LEFT: Andy Oates, *Lake Eden/Mae West*, 1950s, gelatin silver print, 5.5 x 8.5 inches, BMCM+AC Collection, Gift of the Artist. BMC alumna Dorothea Rockburne. Photo by Alice Sebrell. BMC alumna Suzi Gablik. Photo by Alice Sebrell. Dorothea Rockburne, 1998, *Caran D'Arche Neocolor II*, on indigo pigment 90% cotton, 5% abaca, 5% line paper and translucent abaca paper, 33 x 29.5 inches. Courtesy of the Artist.



conference was remarkable. To the delight of the presenters and attendees, several alumni were there to provide first-hand information. Topics explored ranged far and wide — from mathematics, to educational philosophy, to all the arts. This year’s keynote speaker will be Kenneth Snelson whose stunning exhibition is on display at our museum until October 23rd.

Works from our growing collection have made their way to other venues. Several photographs by Hazel Larsen Archer went to the Mobile Museum of Art for a show of work by women photographers; 40 works from our collection were loaned to Randolph-Macon College for a Black Mountain College exhibition; and nearly 100 works were loaned to the Hickory Museum of Art for their celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of Black Mountain College. Ambitious plans to share the collection whenever possible are of primary importance to us.

Other exhibitions in our space included *Recent Gifts to the Collection; Visions of Wonderment and Affection*, a memorial exhibition after the death of alumnus Jonathan Williams; *Past/Presence*, a show exploring the lasting influence of Black Mountain College; and *From BMC to NYC: The Tutelary Years of Ray Johnson*. In addition, Dr. Frances Beatty presented a lecture during the Johnson exhibition, and there was a collage workshop with Krista Franklin. Related poetry readings included one by North Carolina’s Poet Laureate, Cathy Smith Bowers. A poetry high point was hosting the interactive *The Poetry Bomb* — S.A. Griffin traveled from San Francisco with a Viet Nam era bomb filled with poems.

We are happy to report that there is a permanent exhibition space now at the University of North Carolina Asheville’s Ramsey Library for Black Mountain College materials. A constant stream of students and researchers come to the Museum for information, and our dedicated program director Alice Sebrell has given numerous talks to school and community groups. Other programming highlights include a delightful presentation by alumni Martha and Basil King called *Two Lives: After Black Mountain* and Johanna Vanderbeek’s fascinating presentation, *Stan Vanderbeek: Avant-Garde Filmmaker*.

Dorothea Rockburne’s *Astronomy Drawings* provided impetus for programs called *Visualizing World Views: Explorations at the Boundaries of Perception*, by our advisory board member David McConville, and *Scientific Foundations in Art and Music*, by physicist Michael Ruiz. *Black Whole*, a collaborative performance by New York City dancer/choreographer Janice Lancaster and multimedia artist Adam Larsen pushed the edges of contemporary existence with its daring and innovation in the deep bowl at Asheville’s downtown skate park. There have been numerous tours of the College’s two campuses and a brilliant multimedia production in the Lake Eden dining hall called {Re}HAPPENING. Our collaborators for the event were the Media Arts Project (MAP). Dance performances, beautiful projections on the lake, and many other unusual and interesting spectacles rounded out a sensational, experiential evening.

Several participants in Fred Horowitz’s recent workshop on Albers’ teachings on color described their experience as a religious one. Horowitz will return for a higher-level follow-up in a few months. Our current exhibition of Ken Snelson’s sculptures is breathtaking, and we look forward to having him as the keynote speaker for this year’s Conference.

We have just recently received the very good news that our grant requests to the North Carolina Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities have been approved. However, support from all who recognize the importance of Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center and its innovative approach to education is vital to our organization. Thank you for your continued interest and help.

FROM TOP: Johanna Vanderbeek with a poster for her presentation about BMC alumnus and filmmaker Stan Vanderbeek. Ron and Aiden Larsen read in front of *The Poetry Bomb*. Alumni Martha and Basil King. Fred Horowitz teaches The Albers Color Course. Photos by Alice Sebrell.

1 + 1 = 3

BMCM+AC'S COLLABORATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE

by Helen Wykle
Curator of Special Collections, UNCA Ramsey Library

Place mattered to those who created Black Mountain College (BMC), but it was ideas that mattered more. Ideas want to be free and some 75 years after the creation of the College, it is ideas, concepts, notions, thoughts, and more, that continue to challenge, inspire, and confound those who study BMC. For nearly 25 years BMC specialized in the fine art of launching new ideas and ferreting out the nuances of older ideas across the liberal arts. The University of North Carolina Asheville (UNCA) also specializes in ideas in a liberal arts interdisciplinary environment. It was only reasonable that the two like-minded colleges would find a point of contact for a conversation and a collaboration. That point of contact was the Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center (BMCM+AC).

Today BMCM+AC and UNCA have joined together to ensure that the educational mission of BMC will continue as an idea repository. When discussions first began regarding collaboration between UNCA and BMCM+AC, they began in that space where all ideas are born—the imagination. Brian Butler, Chair of the Philosophy department at UNCA and member of the BMCM+AC board, was appropriately central to the discussions to bring the BMCM+AC collections to UNCA. Special Collections worked with him, with Alice Sebrell, and with the BMCM+AC board to find a pragmatic means for sharing collections and expertise. The ideas that are daily born within the university classroom and the energetic imagination, skills, and ideas of the board and staff of the museum were natural magnets, but a sustainable point of physical contact with material collections needed to be established. Space was carved out for the BMCM+AC archive to come to UNCA Special Collections on deposit and a program of collaborative events was begun, including the now annual BMC conference. The strong commitment to sustaining the ideas of BMC and to the incorporation of those ideas in both the phenomenological space of a museum and the conceptual space of the classroom—or, the reverse! are evident on both sides of the institutional collaboration as the process of transitioning the BMCM+AC archive to UNCA continues.

Currently, a large Fotofolio (photographic album) of BMC images taken by BMC student Kenelm Winslow has been digitized and is shared on the Special Collections web site.* Also, the publications of BMC, including the bulletins and catalogues have been digitized and are available in full searchable text for students and scholars and others. On the main level of UNCA’s Ramsey Library a new gallery space



Ati Gropius Johansen, *Untitled*, 1945, oil on cardboard, 16.5 x 22.5 inches, BMCM+AC Collection, Gift of the Artist.

has been created to house a rotating exhibition of material from the BMCM+AC. This new exhibition space currently holds a photographic history of BMC. This interactive environment provides not only a physical space to share BMC, but a virtual repository for educational exchange with the larger community. Special Collections is also an outreach agency that looks for ways to bring collections together for researchers and scholars. Discussions have begun that imagine the excellent work of Mary Emma Harris, author of *The Arts at Black Mountain College*, (MIT, 1987) and *Remembering Black Mountain College* (BMCM+AC, 1996), the extensive BMC holdings from the North Carolina State Library, and the BMC art collections of the Asheville Art Museum, under a collaborative umbrella that will significantly augment the many collections of BMC and provide coordinated access to one of America’s most important idea repositories. Whether the access is real or virtual will not matter. What matters most are the ideas, and 75 years later it is not surprising to find the ideas of BMC still bringing minds together.

UNCA Ramsey Library Special Collections may be accessed through: <http://toto.lib.unca.edu>

*To access BMCM+AC holdings: http://toto.lib.unca.edu/findings/guids/mss/black_mountain_college_museum_arts_center/default_bmc_mac.html

Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center



56 Broadway in Downtown Asheville
Open Tues + Wed Noon – 4 p.m.
Thurs – Sat 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. + by appointment
Admission \$3 — Free Wed + for Members



KENNETH SNELSON: Sculptor|Photographer|Inventor

by Marya Roland
Associate Professor of Art, Sculpture, Western Carolina University

Kenneth Snelson's current exhibition at the Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center is a fascinating introduction to the breadth of his art and ideas. Composed of small sculptures, panoramic photos, a serigraph, and several codex, patent, and computer drawings, the show is clearly the work of a polymath, an expert in many areas and disciplines.

Snelson is perhaps first a master of physics and mathematics. The principles of tension and compression he developed, known as "tensegrity," are applied in six of the show's eight sculptures. For those of us more comfortable with art than science, all Snelson's tube sculptures are soaring 3-D compositions of rods and cables, some symmetrical and others more formally varied. Some exhibition sculptures such as *Four Chances* and *V-X*, have monumental counterparts, and whether large or small, all are technically structured the same way. However, here, gazing down rather than up at the sculptures, we gain intimacy and insight from the scale reversal.

The sculptures, singly and collectively, have a dynamic presence conveyed only by way of a real-time/space viewing. Moving around *Four Chances*, I was delighted by both its elegant simplicity and unfathomable (to me) complexity. Though I ultimately, lost my "chances" to figure out why some tubes had three and others, four connecting cables,* the piece revealed other secrets. Unique in the show, it has open-ended tubes allowing a view through them—a mini-cosmos—and first-hand knowledge that cable lines connect only at the ends of each rod (not in continuous tension from a single line).

Further evidence of Snelson as a Renaissance Man is his writing, drawings, patents, computer images, and models of the atom, each so beautiful in form, logic, and clarity that the art/science dichotomy is transcended. "Is the atom's electronic structure a reasonable subject for an artist? Of course!" writes Snelson in the pre-emptive, enthusiastic Q&A beginning of *Portrait of an Atom Codex Drawing Sheet 1*. One of the most compelling works in the show, *Codex*, with its writing and drawings on brown manuscript paper, is reminiscent of a Leonardo da Vinci codex (I expected the writing to be backwards). Even the hands in its lower right corner of Sheet 1, showing how atoms grasp on to others, seem a microcosm or fractal** of those iconic hands in Michelangelo's *Creation of Adam* in the Sistine Chapel.

Snelson, the son of a photographer and photo storeowner, grew up using cameras and became an expert in yet another area—the difficult and complicated technology of panoramic cameras, photography, and printing. The 360-degree images include one landscape, *Bois du Bologne*, and three cityscapes. According to Snelson, they "come out of a voyeuristic impulse, a desire to see in all directions at once."

On the surface, Snelson's oeuvre—from atom to panorama—may appear unrelated in its diversity. However, the connection is art as a manifestation of, and search for fundamental underlying truths, and an expression of how those universals operate in molecular and ordinary space. Snelson puts it in the clearest way, "My art is concerned with nature in its primary aspect, the patterns of physical forces in three dimensional space."

These days we are accustomed to contemporary art that single-mindedly investigates personal visions and social phenomena and rarely (maybe not since the Renaissance)—have we seen art with such profound scientific roots and import. That

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FROM TOP: Kenneth Snelson BMC Work Table 1949. Detail from *Atom Codex Drawing, Sheet 1*, 1980, ink on paper, Courtesy of the Artist. Snelson on KMTower 1971. Snelson exhibition at BMCM+AC. Photo by Alice Sebrell.



Kenneth Snelson, *Four Chances*, 1979, aluminum and stainless steel, 35 x 41 x 31 inches. Courtesy of the Artist.

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difference makes this show remarkable and endlessly interesting. Punctuated by informative excerpts from Eleanor Heartney's essay in *Kenneth Snelson: Forces Made Visible*, the exhibition is itself panoramic in its representation of Snelson, who is certainly one of Black Mountain College's (summers of 1948, '49) most illustrious past students.

As an art history undergraduate at UC Berkeley, artist Marya Roland took Physics (for Liberal Arts majors!), and wrote a paper—on Einstein's Theory of Relativity as part of her final exam for that class.

* "Sophisticated mathematical art often has a narrow audience because most of us don't understand the mathematical principles behind it or appreciate just how clever it is....Snelson's sculptures challenge the viewer's understanding, and sometimes the viewer falls short....Philip Stewart, a younger sculptor who helps build and install Snelson's work, puts it another way: 'Art critics were the kids who failed high-school math.'"

— From "Art for Smart People: The mathematical sculptures of Kenneth Snelson" by Elisabeth Eaves

** A fractal is an object or quantity that displays self-similarity in a somewhat technical sense, on all scales.

— From "Wolfram MathWorld"

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BMC Tribute Wall

IN DOWNTOWN ASHEVILLE

by Brenda Coates

Merce Cunningham dances, M.C. Richards quotes poetry, and Black Mountain College alumni and faculty perform on the Carolina Lane wall that Matt Logan has dedicated to Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center. Logan returns from New York to his hometown of Asheville, and fulfills a personal ambition of opening a wine bar at 5 Walnut Street in downtown Asheville. Wishing to honor the legendary Black Mountain College that he feels "made the greatest contribution to twentieth century art," Logan contacted BMCM+AC with the offer to award the famous school's museum a wall of his three-story building to do with as it wished, and at his expense.

A committee of artists began by choosing a 12-foot-high silhouette of Cunningham from one of Hazel Larsen Archer's photographs in a striking dance pose to be painted on the wall, in a slightly lighter shade. The understated image floats while merging into and re-emerging from its background. The side-entry door, coated with a rich, warm yellow, embraces the partial quote of M.C. Richards, "Imagine inventing yellow." A scattering of quotes from BMC alumni is slated to be painted on the wall, tying in and creating a fluid eye movement from object to object. Fastened to the wall, is a steel, three-dimensional deconstructed chair based on a collaborative work between Susan Weil and Christopher Rauschenberg. At the base of the wall, three slightly arched windows frame back-lit transparencies by Kenelm Winslow and Hazel Larsen Archer, illuminating images that typified the Black Mountain College experience: dance students, the Lake Eden campus, and one of Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome experiments. Their luminosity attracts passersby and casts a warm glow in the darkened lane. The BMC logo prominently marks the corner of the lane and reminds visitors that the BMC Museum + Arts Center is just around the corner.

Logan has generously extended a gallery space to local artists adjacent to his building, so now, he and the building are bound on each side by art. Don't miss a visit to the eponymous 5 Walnut Wine Bar and its great wall just around the corner.



ABOVE: BMC Tribute Wall in progress. Photo by Alice Sebrell.



FROM TOP: Hazel Larsen Archer, *Untitled (back of Ray's head)*, ca. 1945-48, gelatin silver print, 8.75 x 5.75 inches, BMCM+AC Collection, Gift of William S. Wilson and John Wronoski, in honor of Connie Bostic. Dr. Frances Beatty, Director of the Ray Johnson Estate lectures at BMCM+AC. Krista Franklin teaches a Collage Workshop at BMCM+AC. Photos by Alice Sebrrell. Enjoying some of Ray Johnson's early work at the opening reception. Photo by Charter Weeks.



REVIEW

From BMC to NYC: The Tutelary Years of Ray Johnson (1943–1967)

FEBRUARY 19 – JUNE 12, 2010

by John Dancy-Jones

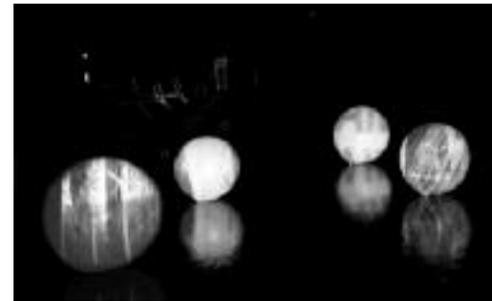
The Ray Johnson exhibition was an important retrospective on a Black Mountain College alumnus, and a seminal event in the continuing “rediscovery” of this lesser-known, but very significant artist. Ray Johnson was probably the most enigmatic and one of the least appreciated American artists of the 20th century. He was a deceptively complicated man whose work embodied multiple layers of meaning. The show provided a greatly needed showcase and explication for this seminal figure of Pop Art whose collages influenced a generation of contemporary artists. The curator for the exhibition, Sebastian Matthews, assembled a wide range of Ray Johnson’s collages, paintings and drawings that were enriched and enlivened by programming that included performance poetry, collage workshops, music, drama, *The Poetry Bomb*, an academic lecture, a film screening of *How to Draw a Bunny*, an exhibition catalogue, and Sebastian’s wonderful blog that documented the whole thing!

The exhibition itself is exactly what the title describes: Ray’s early work as he assimilated the lessons of Albers and others at BMC, and found himself as an artist in the wild world of post-war Pop, Dada, Surrealism, and eventually postmodern experiments in the New York art world. There were drawings from Ray’s youth in Detroit (loaned by his boyhood friend Arthur Secunda), selected BMC experiments, and a large collection of wonderful collages that show his evolution from painting to collage. Works were borrowed from the major Johnson collections, owned by William S. Wilson and the Ray Johnson Estate, as well as smaller personal collections.

Ray’s work makes much use of verbal puns and words as images, presaging the correspondence work or “postal performances,” which made him most famous. The show and its catalogue followed Ray’s emergence from Black Mountain College into the New York scene immersed in the ideas of his BMC mentors but prepared to follow Albers’ dictum: “to follow me, follow yourself.” As Sebastian wrote in his catalogue essay, “Ray was ripe for the challenges and experiences Manhattan had to offer.” He remains one of the most intriguing and complex artists of the 20th century, and this exhibition delineates many of the roots and threads that set him on his path.

That path is examined thoroughly in the catalogue, which is a unique critical appreciation of this very under-appreciated artist. There are 46 color plates, over a dozen images in the text, and several Hazel Larsen Archer photographs. Catalogue essays are contributed by curator Matthews; Ray’s boyhood friend Arthur Secunda; Ray Johnson expert, friend and collector William S. Wilson; and emerging young scholars, Julie J. Thomson and Kate Erin Dempsey. The capstone of the exhibition was the lecture and slide show by Dr. Frances Beatty, Director of the Ray Johnson Estate. Her remarks made clear why Ray Johnson deserves recognition as a major 20th century artist.

The final night of the show was a truly wild and wonderful event that did much to reflect Ray’s spirit. Music, poetry, and spoken word filled the space. Poets Earl Bragg and Keith Flynn offered work appropriate for the occasion. Vaudvie presented cabaret music, while Thomas Butler and Toby Magouirk presented a dramatic piece based on Ray’s writings. It was a great ending to a wonderful show.



{Re}HAPPENING

A FEAST FOR THE SENSES

by Gene Felice

{Re}HAPPENING is a meeting of creative minds and bodies, drawn to the historic and inspirational site of Black Mountain College’s main campus, known as Lake Eden in Western North Carolina. Once a year, artists come together from various genres and disciplines to cross-pollinate and draw inspiration from these historic grounds. This project has developed from an innovative fundraising and art-based collaboration between the Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center (BMCM+AC) and the Media Arts Project (MAP), balancing the history, tradition and experience of BMCM+AC with the forward thinking and media-based collective of artists that defines the MAP.

In its first year, {Re}HAPPENING brought together over 30 artists from across the Western North Carolina region and beyond, exploring the relationships between sculpture, dance, performance, sound, new media and the culinary arts. Lake Eden and the surrounding buildings that comprised the original Black Mountain College were transformed into a multimedia extravaganza of sights, sounds and tastes.

The main space for {Re}HAPPENING is the original dining hall where all meals were prepared during the days of Black Mountain College. The dining hall was also the primary rehearsal space and performance venue for the college. In the tradition of the original “Happenings” of BMC, {Re}HAPPENING consists of a meal that is surrounded by art. So often, the culinary arts are left out of the contemporary art equation, but even 50 years ago, BMC knew better. At {Re}HAPPENING 2010, on March 20th, the Saturday night dinner was comprised of tastes from more than a dozen different local restaurants and farms, complemented by special “site-specific” small plates created in the moment by local culinary artists.

The first half of the {Re}HAPPENING evening begins with cocktails; then dinner and various performances go on around the seated audience, with sculptural elements at the center of each table. After dinner, the hall is transformed, while the audience explores both the outdoor and indoor

FROM LEFT: {Re}HAPPENING March 20, 2009, Gene Felice and Megan McKissack, *Omni-present Spheres*, multimedia installation on Lake Eden. Sara Baird’s performance of *Lacuna* under the direction of Julie Becton Gillum. Dinner and performance in the BMC Dining Hall. Photos by Jon Leidel.

spaces of the rest of the campus. During the second half of the evening, the dining hall becomes the main performance space for music, dance and performance art, while the rest of the campus expands and contracts with creative breath.

The surrounding grounds and buildings are transformed into site-specific spaces where everything from sculptural video installation, to interactive sculpture, to multimedia-based performance takes place. The idea is that art is “happening” all around us simultaneously. It’s up to the viewer to choose to see or experience in the moment, possibly missing something going on in another space, but knowing that they are part of the creative process that is transpiring around them.

For a detailed look at the 2010 {Re}HAPPENING, please visit www.rehappening.com where you can view photos and video as well as listen to audio from the show. In 2011, {Re}HAPPENING will take place on Saturday, April 9, so mark your calendars now for another amazing evening of sight, sound, taste and experience.



Janice Lancaster was one of approximately 30 artists across the U.S. to perform *freedom of information 2008*. Beginning on December 31, 2008, it was a 24-hour performance/protest/ritual of continuous movement improvisation performed while blindfolded and ear-plugged, and intended as a contemplative act of solidarity with those displaced by war. *freedom of information 2008* was initiated by Miguel Gutierrez, a choreographer/performer based in Brooklyn, NY. Lancaster’s performance was available to witness in person at BMCM+AC, or on the internet. Photo by Alice Sebrrell.

Programming Highlights

by Alice Sebrell

One of the most fulfilling aspects of working as the program director at the Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center is having the opportunity to arrange our programming schedule. As I see it, the programming at Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center is moving forward on a dual track. Some of our programming is scholarly, some is completely experiential, and much of what we offer is both.

First, we work to recognize and communicate the extraordinary history and accomplishments of Black Mountain College (BMC) and the people who were there, many of whom are still actively working and creating today.

Second, we look around at the artists and thinkers of younger generations and find where the BMC flame can be seen burning brightly with energy and passion. It's a great pleasure to nurture that flame and move the BMC legacy forward.

The first track defines our exhibition schedule with projects like the *Women of Black Mountain College*, a yearlong series of exhibitions and events; last winter's history show, *Past/Presence*; the recent Ray Johnson show; our current Kenneth Snelson show; and upcoming shows with Don Alter and Pete Jennerjahn and Irwin Kremen, all BMC alumni still actively working in the studio. We're continuing to record oral history interviews with the BMCers mentioned above, as well as more recently with Vollmer Hetherington and Andy Oates. These "connections to the source" matter deeply to us.

The second track led us to some truly memorable projects like our first Re-Viewing Black Mountain College Conference in October 2009; *Black Whole* the multimedia, interdisciplinary performance at Asheville's downtown skate park; presentations on perception, music and art, poetry readings, workshops, and so much more. This spring's {Re}HAPPENING in the BMC Dining Hall at Lake Eden felt like a watershed event, bringing past, present, and future together in an exhilarating and altogether unforgettable evening.

Looking forward, we see a promising conference shaping up for October 8–10, 2010, with Kenneth Snelson as our keynote speaker and a full roster of panels, presentations, and performances (for more details see <http://www.blackmountaincollege.org>). The fall/winter exhibition will feature work by BMC artists Don Alter and Pete Jennerjahn; and then in February 2011, we'll open a show of recent work by BMC collage artist and sculptor Irwin Kremen. This exhibition has received funding from the NC Arts Council, the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, and the John W. and Anna H. Hanes Foundation and will have a catalogue, as well as lots of other related programming. On April 9, 2011, we'll stage our second {Re}HAPPENING out at the Lake Eden campus. Please consider joining us for that event. If it's anything like the first one, you won't regret it! And looking ahead to the summer of 2011, we're pleased about working with the Estate of Jack Tworokov to present an exhibition of works on paper created around the time he taught at BMC.

Another very significant development for this organization is that we just learned that the National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded us a grant under its Landmarks of American History and Culture program. This grant will enable us to offer two 1-week residence-based workshops for a national audience of community college educators. The thematic focus of the project is *Black Mountain College: An Artistic and Educational Legacy*. Needless to say we are thrilled by this opportunity!

We're pleased to welcome part-time Program Assistant, Bridget Elmer to the BMCM+AC staff. She brings talent and expertise as a book artist and grant writer to our work. Please stay in touch, come to an exhibition or event, check out our website, send us an e-mail, join if you aren't already a member and renew if you are.



FROM TOP: BMC alumni Vera Baker Williams, Marie Tavrogos Stilkind, Alma Stone Williams, Cynthia Homire and Patsy Lynch Wood participated in a panel discussion about the experience of women at BMC. Photos by Alice Sebrell. Claire Elizabeth Barratt performing *Luna*, a movement and sound installation at {Re}HAPPENING. Photo by Jon Leidel. BMC alumnus Andy Oates visits BMCM+AC and records an oral history interview. Photo by Alice Sebrell.



RE-VIEWING Black Mountain College

An International Conference
October 9-11, 2009 on the UNC Asheville Campus

by Dave Peifer

In October 2009, BMC Museum and Arts Center in collaboration with UNC Asheville, held the first Re-Viewing Black Mountain College conference. As a mathematician on the faculty at UNCA, I work with ideas first investigated by Max Dehn, the great mathematician who spent the last seven years of his life at BMC. The conference keynote speaker, Dorothea Rockburne, was a student of Dehn's at BMC. Dorothea asserts that Dehn, among all BMC faculty, had the most influence on her work as an artist.

The three-day event included multiple sessions with presentations on a diverse set of topics. There were talks about some of the great artists and educators who taught at BMC, such as Josef and Anni Albers, Buckminster Fuller, John Cage and M. C. Richards. There were presentations on the women at BMC, on queers at BMC, on the avant-garde, and on John Dewey and the unique form of liberal education the college provided. I was impressed with the broad spectrum of interest the conference evoked. Interspersed throughout the three days were performances and poetry readings.

In her keynote address, Dorothea Rockburne presented an overview of her work from the last five decades. It was fascinating to hear her discuss her motivations and inspirations as well as her time at BMC and how it influenced her work. She showed images of her work alongside classical and Renaissance paintings to demonstrate unexpected relationships. Today, Dorothea Rockburne is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and, in 2009, she received the National Academy Museum Artist's Lifetime Achievement Award.

As the conference proceeded, I was pleased to have a chance to talk with Dorothea myself and to learn about her time with Max Dehn. When the conference came to a close on Sunday, at the last minute I decided to join the tour of the old BMC site at Lake Eden. The tour, led by Connie Bostic and Alice Sebrell, was a highlight of the conference. They took us through the dining hall, the dorms, the classrooms, and the studios that had made up the physical college. They told us stories of BMC that made the rooms come alive. Gazing at the mountains surrounding the campus, one could not help but feel the spirit of BMC. At the very end of the tour, a few of us found the location of Max Dehn's grave. As I stood under the rhododendrons to see the marker, I realized that in a way, I had come to know more of Max Dehn by learning more about BMC.



FROM TOP: Professor Ken Betsalel presenting at the conference. Photo by Lindsay Bostic. BMC alumni Frank Hursh and Michael Rumaker on the Tour of the Lake Eden campus of BMC. Max Dehn's grave. Photos by Alice Sebrell.



In a November 2009 performance, DOUBLEBLIND (LOVE), Curt Cloninger (at BMCM+AC) and Annie Abrahams (in Montpellier, France) repeatedly sang "love" to each other in "real time" as a kind of duet. The "love" refrain was taken from U2's song "Until the End of the World," sung by Judas to Jesus. Curt also played the Rhodes electric piano. There was no set duration, and the two had never met in the flesh. In order to isolate them from their surroundings and make them more attentive to the other, they were both blindfolded. At the gallery space in Montpellier, and in the museum in Asheville, there were simultaneous live projections of both their faces singing to each other in near-real-time. The performance was also visible via the internet. Photo by Alice Sebrell.

Food for Thought Fundraiser

FOR BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE MUSEUM + ARTS CENTER

by Glen Shults, Jr.

BMCM+AC sponsored "Food for Thought" on Saturday, July 10, 2010, its bi-annual fundraiser to benefit the museum's exhibitions and programs. The evening started off with wonderful catered dinners at venues around Asheville. After dinner, everyone gathered at the YMI Cultural Center in downtown Asheville for dessert, champagne and coffee, and a live auction.

The items auctioned were unique plates, platters, and bowls designed and decorated by artists in Asheville, and from across the country. The works featured a quotation or thought from a student or teacher at the college, and evoked the college's contributions to the visual arts, literature, dance, music and architecture, such as Josef Albers' advancements in color and space, John Cage's admonition that we should fear old ideas, and not new ones, Robert Motherwell's observations on abstract art, and Charles Olson's poetry.

Other works took a more whimsical bent, such as Donald Sultan's celebration of one of our most important cultural symbols—the hot dog, and Mel Chin's hilarious demonstration that one of the truest sources of artistic inspiration in contemporary America is a trip to Wal-Mart.

Board member Brenda Coates gracefully described each piece before it was auctioned, and auctioneer John Hill humorously prodded everyone to dig deep into their wallets to bid up the prices. The large crowd (standing-room only) was enthusiastic, raucous, mostly sober, and above all, generous. The museum is grateful to everyone who helped in putting on the dinner and auction, the artists who contributed their works, and those who purchased the works.

Black Whole

by Gene Felice

Janice Lancaster and Adam Larsen's site-specific, performance/installation at Asheville's downtown skate park in April 2009 was an amazing evening of movement, light, sound, and creativity. In the tradition of Black Mountain College, *Black Whole* forged new relationships and connections between the everyday and the extraordinary. It merged the movement of dance with the glide of the skateboard while surrounded by the shape of light. The notion of how and where a multimedia performance can take place was truly redefined. To look into the skate park bowl was to look into a portal to another world that unfolded in front of the audience. Not only did the skate park become an image-based environment, but the technology actually shifted and interacted with its participants. The dancers were shaped, compelled, and constrained by the environment of light and shadow that surrounded them. That, combined with the cavernous depth of the bowl, shifted and warped perspective in new and exciting ways. The analog soundtrack, combined with the Doppler effect of the nearby highway traffic, fully immersed the audience—an evening of wonderful invention and awe-inspiring imagination.



Black Whole: site-specific, multimedia event at Asheville's downtown skate park. Photos by Alice Sebrell.



FROM LEFT: BMCM+AC's Food for Thought Fundraiser at the YMI Cultural Center in downtown Asheville. Conceptual artist Mel Chin brings a whole new meaning to the idea of a plate auction. Photos by Lindsay Bostic. Artist Alli Good used a Rauschenberg quote about the Cedar Bar for her plate. Photo by Alice Sebrell.

In Memoriam

We apologize in advance for any omissions to this list. If you know of any BMC alumni who have died recently, please let us know.

In Memoriam

2010

Lore Kadden Lindendorf
Kenneth Noland
Arthur Penn
Dorothy Ruddick

2009

Lyle Bongé
Merce Cunningham
Will Hamlin
Fernando Leon
Gregory Masurovsky
Jane Mayhall
Warren Outten
John Urbain

2008

Joe Fiore
Albert Lanier
Carol Singer Kalbfeld
Barbara Stone Rice
Robert Rauschenberg
Robert Sunley
Jonathan Williams

2007

Larry Fox
Hyalie Yamins Greene
Fannie Hillsmith
Elizabeth Schmitt Jennerjahn
Don Page
Howard Rondthaler



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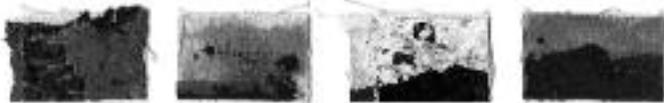
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Make checks to BMCM+AC. Memberships are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.



Board Chair Connie Bostic and Irwin Kremen planning his 2011 exhibition at BMCM+AC.

Irwin Kremen, *Yellow Canto*, 1996/2005, paper, canvas and acrylic, 4 x 10.0625 inches. Courtesy of the Artist.



Exhibition Schedule

KENNETH SNELSON: SCULPTOR | PHOTOGRAPHER | INVENTOR

June 25 – October 23, 2010

Internationally known artist Kenneth Snelson was an art student at Black Mountain College in the summers of 1948 and 1949, where he studied with Josef Albers and Buckminster Fuller. Since then, he has been a prolific and hugely successful artist with work in major museum and public art collections all over the world. Known primarily for his gravity defying sculptures, Snelson is also an accomplished photographer with a particular interest in panoramic photographs.

DONALD ALTER AND W.P. JENNERJAHN: TWO PAINTERS

November 5, 2010 – February 5, 2011

IN SITE: LATE WORKS BY IRWIN KREMEN

February 18 – June 4, 2011

JACK TWORKOV: WORKS ON PAPER

June 17 – September 24, 2011

Don't Miss! **RE-VIEWING 2**

Re-Viewing Black Mountain College 2: An International Conference, October 8–10, 2010. Kenneth Snelson is the keynote speaker for the conference, which is co-sponsored by UNC Asheville.

Black Mountain College MUSEUM + ARTS CENTER

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Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center preserves and continues the unique legacy of educational and artistic innovation of Black Mountain College for public study and enjoyment. We achieve our mission through collection, conservation and educational activities including exhibitions, publications and public programs.

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