CROSSING THE BRIDGE BEFORE YOU COME TO IT:

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT AT CRYSTAL BRIDGES MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

November 2, 2013
A CONCISE HISTORY OF CRYSTAL BRIDGES

- **2004:** First artwork purchased for Crystal Bridges
- **2005:** Crystal Bridges founded by the Walton Family Foundation
- **2006:** Contract Collection Coordinator hired
- **9/2006:** Construction of Crystal Bridges begins
- **2/2008:** First permanent collections staff member hired
- **11/18/2010:** Opening date for Crystal Bridges announced
- **4/18/2011:** Collections management staff moved into the permanent facility
- **5/9/2011:** Art collection began arriving
- **7/2011:** Substantial completion of construction
- **11/3/11:** Install substantially complete
- **11/11/11:** Museum open to the public
- **11/18/2010:** Opening date for Crystal Bridges announced
- **2004:** First artwork purchased for Crystal Bridges
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DISTANCE COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

WHAT DO YOU DO ALL DAY?

• New Acquisitions
• Inventory
• Conservation
• Framing
DISTANCE COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT
WHAT DO YOU DO ALL DAY?

- Photography
- Loans
- Answer Questions
DISTANCE COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT
FINE ART SERVICE PROVIDERS / PARTNERS

- Crate fabrication
- Transportation
- Inventory of works in storage
- Art handling
- Condition reporting
- Measurements
- Sculpture installation
- Advice
- Willingness to accommodate any request
PLANNING FOR A BIG MOVE
HOW DO YOU THINK OF EVERYTHING?

- Start early
- Determine discrete steps of the move
- Go in order
- Brainstorm with colleagues
- Keep it simple
MOVING THE COLLECTION
WHERE IT ALL CAME FROM

- Storage locations: 6 facilities in 4 states (New Jersey, Texas, Illinois, Arkansas) had 1,429 artworks
- Borrowers: 19 institutions across 12 states and 3 countries had 52 artworks
- Lenders: 43 individuals and institutions in 6 states lent 264 artworks and objects
MOVING THE COLLECTION
PACKING AND CRATING: STORAGE LOCATIONS BEFORE
MOVING THE COLLECTION
PACKING AND CRATING
MOVING THE COLLECTION
PACKING AND CRATING: STORAGE LOCATIONS AFTER
MOVING THE COLLECTION
CHOOSING TRANSIT: CONSIDERATIONS THAT AFFECTED OUR DECISION

- Insurance requirements
  - Per truck value limits
  - Notification and security requirements

- Security

- Couriers

- Lender Requirements

- Scheduling and timing
  - Receiving of trucks
  - Unpacking of artwork
  - Beginning and ending of loan periods

- Size of artwork

- Cost
MOVING THE COLLECTION
CHOOSING TRANSIT: OPTIONS WE CONSIDERED

Exclusive
Pros: Fine art transit; on our schedule; offer courier accommodations; higher level of security
Cons: More expensive; no art handling company had enough of their own trucks to accommodate our schedule

Shuttles
Pros: Fine art transit; regular schedule; lower cost; run by art handlers not just drivers
Cons: Exact timing hard to predict; lower overall level of security (can be mitigated with last on/first off service for more $)

Local transit options: (moving companies, self transit, etc.)
Pros: Can be done at our convenience; most cost effective
Cons: Level of collections care in question; insurance coverage risk higher; large amount of staff time associated
MOVING THE COLLECTION
HOW ARTWORK WAS TRANSPORTED

- Exclusive: 82%
- Shuttles: 16%
- Local Transit: 2%
MOVING THE COLLECTION
CHOOSING TRANSIT: LOAD ‘EM UP!

Can we fill it?

Yes, we can!
MOVING THE COLLECTION
TRUCKING PLAN: THE BIG PUSH

• **Big Push**
  • May 9 – June 9, 2011
  • **13** exclusive-use trucks carrying **487** artworks
  • Couriers on **12** shipments

• **Scheduling Concerns**
  • How many trucks we could receive per week
  • Space
  • Time
  • Courier availability
  • Truck availability

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>12:00am - 8:00am</th>
<th>8:00am - 2:00pm</th>
<th>2:00pm - 5:00pm</th>
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<th>notes</th>
<th>Office work hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun, May 8th</td>
<td>Office work</td>
<td>Office work</td>
<td>T1 (USAIR) EWR approx 10am</td>
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MOVING THE COLLECTION
TRUCKING PLAN: MAY TO 11/11/11

• In the six months between May and November we received 54 trucks:
  • 29 exclusives, all but 8 couriered
  • 20 shuttle shipments
  • 5 delivered by lender or hand-carried

• All told, in 27 weeks 1,720 artworks were transported from 12 states and 3 countries to Crystal Bridges!

• With the 21 exclusive-use couriered trucks, our Registrars, Curators and even a Deputy Director (7 people in all) spent a total of 240 hours in transit with artwork.

• One truck broke down, one truck had to be “abandoned” during a tornado warning, and 19 trips were uneventful.
MOVING THE COLLECTION
ARTWORK RECEIVED BY MONTH

- May: 44%
- June: 14%
- July: 18%
- August: 3%
- September: 19%
- October: 2%
- November: 0%
- April: 0%
MOVING INTO THE MUSEUM

SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION

- First departments to move into building
- Office equipment and files
- Prep Studio organization

- One month from move-in to the arrival of the first art truck
MOVING INTO THE MUSEUM
ACTIVE CONSTRUCTION SITE
MOVING INTO THE MUSEUM
ACTIVE CONSTRUCTION SITE
PREPARING TO RECEIVE ART
READYING THE SPACES

- Climate control and security
- Clearing and cleaning the art path
- Taking actual dimensions
- Preparing the vaults
PREPARING TO RECEIVE ART
READYING OURSELVES

- Learning our way around the buildings
- Building a prep team
- Staying focused
- Sustaining morale
RECEIVING ART SHIPMENTS
THE PLANNING PAID OFF

• Directing trucks
• Receiving Team
• Strategizing storage space
• Crate disposal
35,000 sq. feet of gallery space installed over 3 months

Total of 483 artworks and objects installed in that time

Four outdoor sculptures, two of which can be considered monumental

Team of 5-6 preparators and 5 registrars
49 artworks were loaned to 25 institutions

264 artworks were borrowed from 43 lenders

66 artworks were acquired: 26 of these were gifts, and 40 were purchases
BEYOND MOVE-IN AND INSTALL

RIGHTS AND REPRODUCTIONS

• Licensed the external reproduction of 27 artworks in the collection 48 times in approximately 33 publications

• Delivered close to 1,100 images in response to internal requests. Copyright permissions secured for 45 of these images. In addition, 173 images were formatted and delivered for the inaugural publication
THANK YOU!
ONE IN A MILLION

We could not have been a success without our supportive community of museums, colleagues and vendors!