Three Finalists for Art Museum Director Announced

The City of Springfield is pleased to announce the selection of three finalists for the position of Director of the Springfield Art Museum. The candidates will be in Springfield on Friday for interviews with the Art Museum Board. The candidates also will meet with the City of Springfield's Leadership Team and will participate in a meet-and-greet session with the public.

In alphabetical order, the candidates are:

- Nan Curtis is the Director of the Forsyth Center Galleries at Texas A&M University. In her 22 years of museum work, she has achieved an extensive history of administrative management. Curtis has obtained important artwork collections, donations, and financial support. Her accomplishments include completing two Museum Assessment Programs, overseeing two large-scale digital management initiatives, and the development of three new media initiatives.

  Curtis also has a record of engaging and educating the public about art and the creative process, along with a belief in community outreach. Some of her administrative outreach has been as a consultant for the Breast Cancer/Well Woman Exhibition and Retreat at the YWCA of Green Bay, Wis.; and Project Leader for the Green Bay Community Mural Project. Curtis has been Professor of Art History at both Blinn College in Bryan, Texas and at University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Lifetime Learning.

  Curtis has previously been Director of the New Visions Gallery in Marshfield, Wis.; Curator of Art at the Neville Public Museum in Green Bay, Wis.; consultant to the University of Michigan's Corsi-Salvioti Art and Architecture Library in Sesto-Florentine, Italy; Curator of the Visual Resources Collection at the University of Michigan Media Union in Ann Arbor, Mich; and Archivist at the J.P. Getty Research Center in Los Angeles.

- Brian O. Hill has served as the Executive Director of the Trenton City Museum in New Jersey for 13 years. With more than 30 years in the arts, he has been responsible for tremendous growth in attendance, collaborations, and sponsorship. Hill juries regional arts shows, and guest curates the Annual Open Juried Exhibition of the Catherine Lorillard Wolfe Art Club, for which he is Honorary Chair, to benefit the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He is a member of the American Association of Museums; the New Jersey Association of Museums; the National Association for Olmsted Parks; and the Trenton Artists Workshop Association. He is Past Chair of the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Commission, and recipient of the 2008 New Jersey Theatre Alliance Applause Award. Hill holds a Master of Arts in Museum Studies with a Certificate in Arts Administration from Seton Hall University, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts from The College of New Jersey.
Richard Metzger has been Executive Director of the Troy-Pike Cultural Arts Center since 2007, where he was charged with providing visual arts, performing arts, and art education to the citizens of Pike County, Alabama. Metzger oversaw the renovations of a 100-year-old, two-story post office into the Johnson Center for the Arts for the exhibition of visual arts; as well as a warehouse space into The Studio to present the performing arts. Metzger also initiated ArtBridges in both the county and city school districts to help integrate art education into the curriculum of other core subjects.

Metzger was previously Executive Director of YA/YA, Inc., a non-profit and social services organization in New Orleans, which empowered artistically talented inner city youth to be professionally self-supported through creative expression. Prior to that, he was the Executive Director and Curator of Exhibits with the Center for Contemporary Arts in Abilene, Texas, for eight years. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, Calif.

A selection committee consisting of the Art Museum Board plus Springfield Regional Arts Council Executive Director Leah Jenkins; longtime local arts advocate Rob Baird; Assistant City Manager Collin Quigley; and Human Resources Director Sheila Maerz will interview the candidates. The Art Museum Board will make the final selection, as required by the City Charter.

"As with previous searches for the Police Chief and the Director of Aviation, we have been deliberate about gathering community input during this search," said City Manager Greg Burris. "I am committed to an open and transparent process when it comes to hiring those who lead some of our community’s most vital institutions."

Input from the public at the Art Museum Board's Sept. 8, 2011 meeting has been incorporated into the interview process, and additional feedback from the public following Friday's meet-and-greet session will be provided to the Board. The meet-and-greet session will be held from 4 to 6 p.m., Friday, Oct. 21, in the lobby of the Springfield Art Museum, 1111 E. Brookside Dr. All three candidates will briefly introduce themselves and will then be free to talk to those in attendance for the remainder of the session. They will also be available to the media at that time.

For more information, contact: Collin Quigley, Assistant City Manager, (417) 864-1116; or Sheila Maerz, Director of Human Resources, (417) 864-1600.

About the Museum:

The Springfield Art Museum is the permanent home for some 8,895 art objects representing thousands of years of culture. Special collections include 19th, 20th, and 21st century American paintings, watercolors, sculptures, and prints.

Incorporated in 1928, the Museum was first operated entirely by volunteers and still relies heavily on community support in a variety of ways. The Museum has had several homes along the way. The present Museum, on the edge of Phelps Grove Park, first opened in 1958.
A 392-seat auditorium was completed in 1974 and extensive renovation of the Museum was completed in 1984. In 1994, the Jeannette L. Musgrave Wing with four new exhibition galleries and storage for the permanent collections was completed. In 2008, a new wing with an entry hall, galleries, gift shop, and a new library was completed.