Highlights of the 2007 NAASA conference in Fairbanks, Alaska, Sept. 25-27

The 15th biennial NAASA conference was held in Fairbanks, Alaska in September 2007, hosted by the University of Alaska and the Museum of the North. One of the great benefits of holding the NAASA conference in a new location for each meeting is the chance to learn about the art of the region, and the meeting in Fairbanks was no exception. Congratulations to Aldona Jonaitis and other members of the local organizing committee for putting together a gathering that the 130 members who attended will long remember. (Side note: The Northern Lights display was deemed sub-prime by locals, but was still pretty awesome to the rest of us.)

The conference opened with a welcoming song by Poldine Carlo, followed by a keynote address by distinguished anthropologist Rosita Worl (Tlingit), President of Sealaska Heritage Institute. The morning plenary session brought together six Native Alaskan artists to speak about their work, their influences, and their concerns for the future. Working in a range of media and drawing from the diverse cultural heritage of the state, presenters were Jack Abraham, Erica Lord, Sonya Kelliher-Combs, Da-ka-xeen Mehner, Tanis S’eiltin, and Ron Senungetuk.

A packed program offered more than sixty papers in fifteen sessions over the course of the three day conference. Evening tours allowed participants to see much regional art and meet many local artists. One evening was a visit to the Alaska Native Arts Center at the University of Alaska, where students displayed works in progress, discussed their training, and shared hospitality and moose meat stew. Another evening took us to the Alaska House Art Gallery and the Well Street Art Company, where works from some of the plenary speakers were on display. Those who still hadn’t gotten enough (and who had adjusted to the Alaska Time Zone) took advantage of informal late night sessions to share images and information in a casual setting.
The conference concluded with a trip to the beautiful new Museum of the North on the University of Alaska campus for exhibit viewing, a collection tour, a special showing of the film *The Journals of Knud Rasmussen*, and the traditional Saturday night banquet. We enjoyed a performance by the Pavva Inupiaq Dancers and were treated to a sample of games from the World Eskimo Indian Olympics, demonstrated by Lee Meckel and Erica Meckel. During the banquet Naomi Pascal was honored with the NAASA Lifetime Achievement Award. Spontaneous honoring songs and dances by Native Alaskan conference participants enriched the evening, evoking a strong sense of place as well as reminding us how much the visual arts are embedded in a deeper complex of expressive culture.

Pre- and post-conference tours gave participants a chance to see more of the state and its people. A pre-conference tour to Chena Hot Springs provided an opportunity to enjoy the Alaskan outdoors. The post-conference tour was a dramatic flight along the Yukon River Brooks Mountain Range to visit two Native villages, Beaver and Anaktuvuk Pass.

**Biennial Business Meeting**

The new leadership of NAASA would like to extend our thanks to all outgoing board members for their contributions to the organization, both at this year’s conference and throughout their terms on the board.

President Kate Duncan chaired a well attended business meeting on the second day of the conference. Secretary/Treasurer Lucinda Herrick presented a financial report showing that NAASA finances were solid, with membership and registration fees meeting costs of the biennial conference and other operational expenses, which were primarily associated with the newsletter.

Elections were held for officers and for three board positions. Candace Greene was elected as president and Karen Kramer as vice-president, each to serve for two years. Norman Vorano and Bill Anthes were elected as new members of the board, and Kate Morris was re-elected to a second term. Board members serve for four years.

The University of Oklahoma presented a bid to host the 2009 conference, which was warmly accepted by a vote of acclamation. Details regarding the venue are given below.

There was a motion from the floor that the base membership fee should be increased from $35 to $50. The motion was seconded and general discussion ensued. The intent of the motion for an increase was to provide more flexibility in the budget, particularly to support greater participation by Native artists and scholars. Concerns about the increase were that it might reduce participation by those without institutional support, particularly students and artists, both Native and non-Native. The motion was amended to charge the board with developing a scaled membership fee, and passed by voice vote. **Note: NAASA by-laws require that notice of proposed changes in membership fees be provided to members at least 30 days prior to the Biennial General Meeting.**
Meeting and are subject to ratification by majority vote of those in attendance at the meeting.

TRAVEL AWARDS
Thanks to the continuing generosity of NAASA members and supporters, we were able to grant six travel awards this year to cover a portion of the costs of conference attendance. The purpose of the awards is to encourage greater participation by students and Native people. The following individuals, all of whom presented papers, were honored with awards.

Marla Redcorn-Miller (Oscar Howe Award)
Jenny Tone-Pah-Hote (Allan Houser Award)
Amalia Pistilli Conrad (Richard Conn Award)
Christina Froschauer (General Travel Award)
Nadia Jackinsky-Horrell (General Travel Award)
John Lukavic (General Travel Award)

Announcing the 2009 NAASA Conference
The University of Oklahoma submitted a successful bid to host the 2009 conference. Proposed by the School of Art (Mary Jo Watson) and joined by the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History (Dan Swan) and the Philbrook Museum in Tulsa (Christina Burke), the local organizers presented a rich array of opportunities for the conference and surrounding events. The university, located in Norman, is home to two lively museums with important Native Art collections, the Fred Jones Museum of Art and the Sam Noble Museum. Also of interest in Norman is the Oscar Jacobson House, home of the educator who promoted the Kiowa Five painters, which is now a gallery of contemporary art. Just to the north is Oklahoma City, home to the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum with an important collection of Indian paintings and drawings, as well as the museum at the new Oklahoma History Center, which houses diverse materials from the many tribes of the state. The central location presents many options for pre- or post-conference tours, such as a trip to Tulsa to visit the Philbrook Museum of Art and the Gilcrease Museum, or tours to tribal museums and cultural centers.

2007 Presenters Mike Jordan and Jenny Tone-Pah-Hote

Sessions, evening events, and tours will provide participants with access to the Native arts of the region and the opportunity to learn about rich traditions of art produced for community use as well as displayed in galleries.

It's not too early to begin thinking about themes, topics, and events you would like to see. Contact Program Chair Karen Kramer or any member of the local organizing committee with your suggestions.

Message from the President
I would like to express my appreciation to the membership for entrusting me with the important role of leading NAASA for the next two years. I look forward to working with the board and the wider membership to maintain and build this unique organization. I know that I will be ably assisted by Vice President Karen Kramer and Secretary/ Treasurer Marit Munson. I believe that NAASA has successfully created a space for dialogue among scholars of both contemporary and traditional arts, as well as working artists. My goal as president is to continue to maintain a cordial and welcoming interchange where we can all learn from each other.

During my term of office I plan to work on two issues. The first is to build greater member involvement in the work of the organization. Although I fully recognize the value of organizing sessions and presenting papers, I would like to
extend active participation in management even further, looking beyond the small elected board and giving members new opportunities to serve NAASA. I intend to include non-board members on all committees, and many other types of service are needed as well, whether helping with newsletters, working on web site development, contributing to the travel award fund, recruiting new members, or assisting at the conference.

The second issue I plan to work on is assessing our modes of communication. For much of our history, the printed newsletter has been the major tool through which we kept members connected between conferences and let them know about conference planning. Given the rise of electronic communications, information that formerly awaited the newsletter production and mailing process is now instantaneously available. With these new developments, the newsletter has come to focus entirely on providing information about the conference. I have created an ad hoc Communications and Outreach Committee and charged them to review all our lines of communication and consider how well they serve our present and potential members. Specifically, I have asked them to investigate the costs and benefits of eliminating the paper newsletter.

I see these two issues, greater member involvement and more effective communication, as connected. I am certain that we have members out there with the interest and skills to contribute to improving our electronic outreach, while ensuring that members with limited access to technology are not excluded from active participation. I would love to hear your thoughts on these and other issues.

THIS COULD BE THE LAST PAPER NEWSLETTER TO BE DELIVERED TO THE FULL NAASA MEMBERSHIP.

The survey conducted at the 2007 conference indicated that most members are comfortable with receiving newsletters in electronic form. However, not all members were in attendance, and I do not want to exclude anyone from participation in NAASA because they do not have internet access to receive and print newsletters.

I am asking anyone who needs to receive NAASA communications by mail to drop me a note with your address asking for a print version. I will be pleased to meet your needs –while we save money by reducing unnecessary printing and mailing costs overall. Others are encouraged to join the listserve!

Mail requests to:
Candace Greene
NMNH – MRC 112
Smithsonian Institution
P.O. Box 37012
Washington, DC 20013-7012

2007 NAASA Lifetime Achievement Award

Naomi B. Pascal was honored with the 2007 NAASA Lifetime Achievement Award for her distinguished career as longtime editor-in-chief of the University of Washington Press. Presentation of the award was a highlight of the conference banquet. Karen Kramer, chair of the Honor Award Committee, introduced Naomi as the recipient, and Aldona Jonaitis shared great memories of working with Naomi and also shared Pascal’s many contributions to the study and recognition of Native American art. In recognition of this honor, Kramer and Jonaitis gifted Naomi with a
contemporary quilled Athabaskan basket, after which Naomi spoke eloquently about her longstanding commitment to the field of Native American art and some of the highlights of her career at the University of Washington Press.

Naomi’s interest and support have been pivotal to the publication careers of scores of NAASA members over the past several decades. Most of us have benefited from her leadership in the publication of works on Native American art – monographs, regional and tribal art studies, historiographic volumes, contemporary art studies, and major museum catalogues. Until her health began to limit her travel, she attended almost every NAASA conference - managing a book table, talking with attendees about their manuscripts, and sitting in on sessions. Naomi Pascal retired in May 2002 after a rich and rewarding 49 years at the press.

From Aldona Jonaitis’ introduction:

Naomi B. Pascal was born in Brooklyn, New York, and graduated from Wellesley College, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in her junior year. She began work as an editor at Vanguard Press, in New York City, in 1946, and left two years later for Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where her husband, Paul Pascal, studied for his PhD in Classics. In Chapel Hill she worked at the University of North Carolina Press except for two glorious years in Rome, where Paul was a Fellow of the American Academy.

In 1953 Paul joined the faculty of the University of Washington, and the Pascals moved to Seattle, where Naomi began working with the then-small staff of the University of Washington Press. With brief periods of time out to produce two children, she worked at the Press until she retired in 2002 as Associate Director and Editor-in-Chief, and then continued as part-time Editor-at-Large until January 2007.

During her years at the Press, Naomi was active in the publishing world. She frequently presented papers and published numerous articles and chapters in books on various aspects of scholarly publishing; coauthored one book, *Glossary of Typesetting Terms*, published by the University of Chicago Press in 1994; and continues to serve on the Editorial Advisory Board of the *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, published by the University of Toronto Press. In 1991 she was the first recipient of the Constituency Award, presented by the Association of American University Presses “for her outstanding contribution to scholarly publishing.” That same year she was invited to China to present a 10-day UNESCO-sponsored seminar on scholarly publishing to a group of 35 Chinese university press editors. In 1994 she participated in another seminar for publishers in Riga, Latvia.

Among other authors Naomi has worked with are the following (in alphabetical, not chronological, order): Lloyd Averill, Janet Berlo, Margaret Blackman, Steve Brown, Douglas Cole, Kate Duncan, Ann Fienup-Riordan, Erna Gunther, Susan Harless, Audrey Hawthorn, Bill Holm, Ruth Kirk, Aldona Jonaitis, Frederica de Laguna, Claude
Levi-Strauss, Daphne Morris, Judith Ostrowitz, Ruth Phillips, Dorothy Jean Ray, Mary Schlick, and Robin Wright. Other scholars have served as manuscript readers, or have appeared as contributors in catalogues published or distributed by the University of Washington Press.

From the nomination letter by Janet Berlo:

I would like to put forward the name of Naomi Pascal, now retired from the University of Washington Press, as a worthy candidate for our honor award. Naomi started as an editor, then became editor in chief, and finally after her retirement, "roving editor" for the press, and spearheaded the campaign for the press to be a leader in the publication of works of Native American scholarship in general, and Native art history in particular.

As some of you know, she shepherded to press many of the most notable publications in our field of the last 25 years--several of you on the board, Aldona Jonaitis, Judith Ostrowitz, me, and a host of other people have benefited from her discerning insights, her editorial judgments, and her enthusiasm that scholarly work in the forefront of Native art history be showcased and tirelessly promoted by the press.

While the field of NW Coast studies has been especially well-represented by UW Press in the last several decades, her interest in our field extended to well beyond that, from major museum catalogues, historiographical volumes, contemporary art studies, and many others.

I hope you will agree with me that Naomi Pascal (who I believe has seldom missed a NAASA meeting!) is well worthy of this honor.

Survey Results

During the Business Meeting, the board circulated a survey form to get member feedback on conference events for future planning. Vice President Karen Kramer has synthesized the information provided by the people who completed and returned the survey. The nature of the form invited individual responses rather than numeric tabulation, but some general trends were evident.

Members indicated greater enjoyment of organized sessions than open sessions, with the Plenary noted as by far the most popular part of the conference. The Late Night sessions were also enthusiastically endorsed, and there was a call for the return of the poster sessions as well. A theme that ran throughout responses to many questions was a desire for more opportunity for interaction outside of the formal paper presentations, including more interaction with local artists. Given the many great suggestions for additions to the program, as well as the ever increasing number of session proposals and paper submissions, the board will clearly be faced with some major decisions on shaping a conference to serve the enthusiastic (might one say insatiable?) NAASA membership!

Other survey questions sought information on members' affiliations and communication preferences. It seems that our membership is equally divided between individuals who belong to the College Art Association and to the American Anthropological Association. A large number also belong to the American Association of Museums and the Council for Museum Anthropology.

Regarding the newsletter, twice as many respondents indicated that they would prefer paperless newsletters over postal delivery, with that number rising significantly if one includes those who indicated that electronic delivery was acceptable.
Many thanks to those who took the time to complete the survey. The board will be reviewing all of your thoughtful comments and suggestions as we plan for the 2009 conference.

**Committee Leadership**

Much of the business of NAASA is carried out through committees. During 2007-2009 the following standing committees will be chaired by the board members named.

**Program**
Karen Kramer, Vice-President

**Local Arrangements**
Christina Burke

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**Honor Award**
Linda Lomahaftewa

**Travel Awards**
Jessie Ryker-Crawford

**Nominations**
Kate Morris

In addition to the standing committees listed above, there are two new *ad hoc* committees.

**Communications and Outreach**
Marit Munson, Secretary/Treasurer

**Development**
Candace Greene, President

The committee chairs would welcome your thoughts and suggestions.

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**MEMBERSHIP DUES:** All amounts are for two years, conference to conference. Dues received after the 2007 Conference will apply to the 2009 Conference.

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<tr>
<th>Membership Type</th>
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<tr>
<td>Regular Member</td>
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<td>Sustaining Member</td>
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Support beyond regular membership goes toward travel awards to increase student and artist attendance at the conference.

Enclosed is my check for:
- Regular Membership ($35) [ ]
- Sustaining Member ($50) [ ]
- Patron ($100) [ ]

**CHECKS PAYABLE TO:** Native American Art Studies Association or NAASA (U.S. currency only, please)

**SEND DUES AND THIS FORM TO:**
NAASA
Dept. of Anthropology
Trent University
1600 West Bank Dr.
Peterborough, ON K9J 4V8
Canada

Name ________________________________________________________________
Address ________________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip _________________________________________________________
E-mail ________________________________________________________________

New Member [ ] Renewal [ ]