MISSION STATEMENT

The Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, is dedicated to the growth of its collections and the study and exhibition of reproducible art forms — including prints, photographs, film, video, and computer-mediated art — and to their capacity to reach and transform society.
**EXHIBITIONS**

**A Letter from Japan: The Photographs of John Swope**

Main Gallery • September 19–November 30

Hollywood photographer John Swope traveled to Japan at the end of World War II to document the release of Allied prisoners of war. Swope’s striking images of liberated G.I.s, Japanese soldiers and civilians, and ravaged landscapes create a highly complex portrait of two nations in the aftermath of war. *A Letter from Japan* was organized by the Hammer Museum.

**Drawn from Memory: Holocaust in the Art of Samuel Bak**

Print, Drawing, and Photography Student Center • September 19–November 30

Drawing from Memory: Holocaust in the Art of Samuel Bak

Reinterpreting iconic themes from Western art and combining them with his own recurrent imagery, Samuel Bak addresses the tragedies he and other European Jews endured during the Holocaust. *Drawn from Memory* was organized by the Block with cooperation from Pucker Gallery, Boston.

**Magdalena Abakanowicz: Reality of Dreams**

Alsdorf Gallery • September 26–December 14

The work of internationally renowned artist Magdalena Abakanowicz expresses deep spiritual and philosophical quests. Organized by the Block with cooperation from Marlborough Gallery, New York, *Reality of Dreams* focused on Abakanowicz’s drawings, a rarely explored facet of her oeuvre.

**Theo Leffmann: Weaving a Life into Art**

theo Leffmann Gallery • ongoing exhibition

The Leffmann Gallery is dedicated to the work of the Chicago fiber artist and highlights selections from the more than 75 works donated to the Block by her husband, Paul Leffmann.

**THREE AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS: IN DEPTH**

A yearlong schedule of programs complementing the Block’s exhibition of photography by John Swope, Robert Mapplethorpe, and Gordon Parks launched in fall 2009, with generous support from the Terra Foundation for American Art and the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University.

**The Artist at War:**

**John Swope and the History of War Photography**

September 26 – Carolyn Peter, director of the Laband Art Gallery at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, addressed Swope’s work in the context of war documentation.

**World War II Short Films**

October 9 and November 12 – Block Cinema explored Hollywood’s participation in the war effort with screenings of educational films, public service announcements, and propaganda created with the participation of top talents such as John Ford, Frank Capra, and Katharine Hepburn.

**BLOCK CINEMA FILM SERIES**

**The Photography of John Swope and Hollywood’s Depiction of World War II**

Programmed to complement the exhibition of John Swope’s photography, this group of films provided a range of perspectives—devastating (Attacks!), funny (*The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*), and often highly nuanced (*Go for Broke!*)—on the Second World War.

**The Berlin School**

Block Cinema focused on an emerging crop of German directors more concerned with exploring the present than the impact of their country’s past. Cosponsored by Northwestern’s Department of German, this series was loaded with Chicago premieres, from Ulrich Köhler’s comedic and surreal *Windows on Monday* to Benjamin Heisenberg’s tense and timely *Sleeper*.

*Visit www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu/podcasts for podcasts of these events.*
**THREE AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS: IN DEPTH**

Patti Smith in Conversation*

January 30 – Following a screening of Patti Smith: Dream of Life, the rock star and poet took part in a conversation with film director Steven Sebring and music critic Jim DeRogatis, discussing her relationship with Robert Mapplethorpe, her artistic processes, music in the digital age, and more.

Robert Mapplethorpe: Artist and Activist*

March 7 – Northwestern art theory and practice professor Lane Relyea moderated a discussion of Mapplethorpe’s influence on contemporary photography, activism, and issues of the body and sexuality. Participants included photographer Catherine Opie, Polaroids: Mapplethorpe curator Sylvia Wolf, former Mapplethorpe Foundation collections consultant Marina Cardinale, and University of Maryland professor Jeffrey McCune Jr.

*Visit www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu for further discussion highlights.

**PROGRAMS**

**Principles of Drawing**

January 28–March 4 – A collaboration with ARTica Studies in the University’s Norris Center, this six-session studio course focused on drawing the human figure, with frequent visits to the Italian drawing exhibition at the Block for inspiration.

**Connoisseurship and Scholarship in Italian Drawings:** Two Cogent Collections Compared*

February 5 – Suzanne Folds McCullagh, Anne Vegt Fuller and Marion Titus Suace Curator of Earlier Prints and Drawings at the Art Institute of Chicago, discussed the exhibitions From Michelangelo to Annibale Carracci and the Art Institute’s Drawings to Drawings: The Goldman Collection, the extraordinary collections from which they were drawn, and the work of independent curator Nicholas Tummi in organizing them.

**In Depth: Italian Drawings**

February 11 – Block Museum senior curator Deborah Wood and Art Institute curator Suzanne Folds McCullagh led private viewings of Italian drawings at the Art Institute and the R. S. Johnson Fine Art Gallery.

Drawing Triptychs

February 21 – Works in the exhibition From Michelangelo to Annibale Carracci inspired families to create their own masterpieces using three different drawing techniques.

**Mapplethorpe Gallery Talk**

February 26 – Block Museum senior curator Deborah Wood gave a special tour of Polaroids: Mapplethorpe, relating the exhibition’s photographs to Mapplethorpe’s later work and centuries of classical imagery.

**Black In Friday**

February 27 – Northwestern students enjoyed an Italian buffet and drawing lessons in the Main Gallery in an event cosponsored by Northwestern Art Review.

Renaissance Drawing: A Roundtable Discussion

March 13 – Professor Claudia Swan, chair of Northwestern’s Department of Art History, organized this conversation with Northwestern faculty and visiting scholars aimed at both schol-
EXHIBITIONS

Bare Witness: Photographs by Gordon Parks
Max Gallery • April 24–June 28
The lens of Gordon Parks captured iconic images of the 20th century, from photographs chronicling the devastating grip of poverty and the arduous struggle for civil rights to powerful portraits of social and cultural leaders such as Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali. Bare Witness was organized by the Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University.

MFA Thesis Exhibition from the Department of Art Theory and Practice
Alsdorf Gallery • May 8–June 21
This annual exhibition represents the culmination of the course of study for the master of fine arts degree in art theory and practice from Northwestern University. This year’s exhibition featured the work of John Henderson, Aaron Hughes, Casey Lurie, and Jessie Mott.

THREE AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS: IN DEPTH

Gordon Parks and His Artistic Process
May 7 – David Parks spoke about his father’s photography, films, and books and shared stories about their creation.

Gordon Parks: A Renaissance Man*
May 14 – Professor Darlene Clark Hildy, chair of Northwestern’s Department of African American Studies, moderated a panel discussion about Parks’s influence on 20th-century photography and film. Participants included Chicago-based photojournalist Bob Black, Philip Brexman of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, and Professor Maren Stange of the Cooper Union, New York.

* Visit www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu/podcasts for a podcast of this event.

PROGRAMS

Family Day Presented in Partnership with the Chicago Humanities Festival
May 17 – Families enjoyed an afternoon of printmaking, improv games, and animated films.

Bare Witness Gallery Talk
May 28 – Block Museum senior curator Deborah Wood led a tour of the Gordon Parks exhibition, exploring his involvement with his subjects and his passion for telling stories through photography.

Block in Friday
May 29 – Nearly 200 Northwestern students celebrated the end of the school year at an outdoor event cosponsored by STITCH magazine and Northwestern Art Review.

Gallery Talks: The Artists’ Perspectives
June 6 – The artists of the 2009 MFA Thesis Exhibition discussed their work.

BLOCK CINEMA FILM SERIES

Gordon Parks
The first African American to direct films in the Hollywood studio system, Parks portrayed rural 1920s life in the semiautobiographical The Learning Tree, ushered in a wave of black action heroes with Shaft, and told the story of a free man kidnapped into slavery in Solomon Northup’s Odyssey.

Biomimicry
This cross-section of science fiction, drama, and action-adventure films (e.g., A.I. Artificial Intelligence, Demonlover, Robocop) asks what it means to be human when technology can replicate and reproduce life.

60s Godard
The French New Wave’s leading director made films for and about the baby boomers, or, as he put it, “the children of Marx and Coca-Cola.” This series introduced and reintroduced Block Cinema’s audiences to Contempt, La Chinoise, and other early classics by Jean-Luc Godard.

* Visit www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu/podcasts for a podcast of this event.

SPRING 2009

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SPRING 2009
EXHIBITIONS

Place and Presence: Photography from the Collection
Adelphi Gallery • July 9 – August 30
Photography has always played an important part in the Block Museum’s permanent collection and exhibitions. This selection of photographs evokes the complex dimensions of locations and people, from quiet interiors and mysterious landscapes to intimate portraits and symbolic visages. Many of the photos in the exhibition had never previously been displayed at the Block.

PROGRAMS

Exhibition and Outdoor Sculpture Garden Tours
July 11 – August 30 • Block Museum docents led tours of the Place and Presence exhibition and the Block’s Sculpture Garden.

Family Days
July 12 and August 9 • Two afternoons of creative fun and activities filled the Block’s galleries and hallways with art making, laughter, and learning.

Gallery Talk
July 9 • Block senior curator Deborah Wood discussed the wide range of subjects and techniques on display in the exhibition Place and Presence.

BLOCK CINEMA FILM SERIES

Summer Outdoor Movies
In partnership with the Norris Center for Student Involvement and Northwestern's Summer Session, Block Cinema brought a handful of contemporary blockbusters (Iron Man, Wall-E, and Kong Fu Panda) and classics (Frank Mr. Lincoln, The Wizard of Oz, and The Third Man) to Evanston’s lakefront.

Committee on Art Accessions

James Elkins, chair
Helen Hillen
Judy Linderwood
David A. Robinson
Ann Scharf
Claudia Swat

The Block Museum acquired the following works through gift and purchase in 2008–09. The Museum extends its gratitude to the art donors and purchase fund supporters.

Accessions are listed alphabetically by artist’s last name and then by objective. All dimensions refer to sheet sizes, unless noted. Height precedes width. Block Museum catalog numbers are on the front of each entry.

Mary Cassett (American, 1883–1946), In the Oranges, also called The Tramway, 1897–98, oil on canvas, soft ground etching, and drypoint, 27 3/4 x 11 7/8 inches. Gift of James and Anne DeNaut, 2008.51.1

Mary Cassett, Standing Nude with a Travel ca. 1875, oil on canvas, soft ground etching and aquatint, 22 x 9 1/2 inches. Museum purchase, 2009.3.1


Jean-Pierre Hébert (American, born France, 1939), Cactusform, 2008, drypoint; software: Chance, by the artist in Mathematica: 36 x 20 7/8 inches. Anonymous Gift, 2008.32.4


June Leaf (American, born 1929), Man and Serpent, 1990, color monotype, 57 x 41 inches. Purchase funds provided in part by anonymous donor, 2009.2.1

June Leaf, Rider, 1990, color monotype, 47 1/4 x 35 1/4 inches. Purchase funds provided in part by Jerry and Carol Ginsburg and William and Nina Hinke, 2009.2.2

Henri Matisse (French, 1868–1954), Repose on the Balcony, 1912, lithograph, 19 1/4 x 26 1/2 inches. Gift of James and Anne Delauff, 2008, 31.2


Roman Verescak, Pathway Series, 1988, planographic: color ink on paper: software by the artist in RASCI, output device: Houston Instruments DFM-34 printer, 24 x 24 inches. Anonymous Gift, 2008, 31.4

BLOCK CINEMA AND THE FILM AND PROJECTION SOCIETY
Organized by the Block Museum in collaboration with the Margaret Herrick Library at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Casting a Shadow: Creating the Alfred Hitchcock Picture opened to much acclaim in January 2009 at the Berlin Film Festival. Originally scheduled through early May, the exhibition's run at the Deutsche Kinemathek Museum was extended by popular demand into June.

Back in Evanston, Block Cinema mounted collaborations with a number of Northwestern partners during the year, from a challenging selection of movies exploring the cultural times of Robert Mapplethorpe supported by the Center for Global Culture and Communication to talks by multimedia artists Dan Graham and Deborah Stratman coordinated with the Department of Art Theory & Practice.

The student-run Film and Projection Society continued to program series—including a selection of rock and roll movies and an exploration of biotechnology in science fiction, action, and drama films—and assist in the operations of Block Cinema. The annual Northwestern University Student Film Festival showcased the best of filmmaking on campus, while Sonic Celluloid, a joint production with the University radio station WNUR, once again paired silent and experimental films with live music.

Will Schmenner, film curator and director, Block Cinema, 2002–09

COMMUNICATIONS
The Block's communications department and its talented student employees continued to broaden awareness of the Museum on campus, incorporating e-marketing efforts with grassroots approaches to promote the quarterly Block Out/Block In programs. Partnerships with student groups greatly helped build audiences for these events, with the spring Block In attracting more than 200 students. Working with Northwestern's Department of University Relations, the Block secured coverage of its exhibitions and programs in a wide range of media outlets, from the Chicago Tribune and Time Out Chicago to NBC5 Chicago.

Burke Patten, communications manager

EDUCATION
With support from the Terra Foundation for American Art and Northwestern’s Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, the Block presented Three American Photographers: In Depth, a yearlong series of public programs focusing on the work of John Swope, Robert Mapplethorpe, and Gordon Parks. Thanks also to generous assistance from the Terra Foundation, the Block began offering podcasts of selected programs on its website this year. The podcasts have helped the Museum’s programming reach a larger audience while creating permanent records of events.

In the spring the Block’s education department teamed up with the Chicago Humanities Festival for the second time to present a free Family Day, with art-making activities, improvisational games, and animated films. Summertime brought scores of summer campers to the Museum for fun tours and art projects and saw the Block participating in the family activity areas at Evanston’s Ethnic Arts and Lakeshore Arts Festivals.

Sheetal Prajapati, director of educational programs 2007–2010

BLOCK CIRCLE STEERING COMMITTEE
Block Museum supporters convened a new group in 2008–09 to deepen the involvement of the Museum’s patrons. Combing the long-standing Friends Leadership Council with the Block Benefit Committee, the Block Circle Steering Committee organizes special programs for Block members and creates exciting opportunities to help the Museum grow.

In the fall the Steering Committee organized a private visit to the downtown Chicago galleries of Richard Gray and Thomas Masters for tours of work by artist Magdalena Abakanowicz. To complement the Block’s winter exhibition of Italian drawings from the Prado Museum, the committee arranged a special viewing of Renaissance drawings from the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago and R. S. Johnson Fine Art. Following a reception thanking supporters at the Block in the spring, during the summer the committee held a reception at the home of Chicago-area collectors James and Sari Klien.

Helen Hilken, director of development

Helen Hilken, director of development

Bonnie Balkin
Patricia Barnes
Elizabeth Bergmann
Sally Dumas
Ruth Eisner
Pamela Elesh
Jean Guritz
God Hodges
Dorothy Speidel
Steffi Masur
Camille Nachy
Yvonne Kined
Sam drawback
Dorothy Speidel
Helen Hilken
Christina G. Block—chair
Susie Rashid
Sandra Shane-DuBow
Sheila Stankiewicz
Christina G. Block—chair

COMMITTEE AND DEPARTMENT REPORTS
COMMUNITY AND STUDENT DOCENT PROGRAMS

The Block Museum is honored to have had a dedicated core of volunteer docents from Evanston and surrounding communities during the past 20-plus years. In 2008–09 these docents guided more than 1,000 visitors through our exhibitions and Outdoor Sculpture Garden during public and scheduled group tours. Docents underwent extensive training and education from the Block’s curatorial and education staff before each season, enhancing their knowledge of the Museum’s exhibitions and collections. Meanwhile the Community Docent Steering Committee continued to provide invaluable leadership and coordination support to their fellow docents and Museum staff.

The Museum successfully launched its student docent program in 2008–09, providing professional training and experience in museum practices to a select group of Northwestern undergraduates while delivering high-quality educational experiences to young visitors. Student docents are specially trained to give tours and lead related activities for school groups from kindergarten through 12th grade. New docents complete an eight week course to learn about the Museum, gallery teaching techniques, and discussion methods for school-age children. Student docents are specially trained to give tours and lead related activities for school groups from kindergarten through 12th grade. New docents complete an eight week course to learn about the Museum, gallery teaching techniques, and discussion methods for school-age children.

Shobha Prasad, director of educational programs 2007–2010

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The economic downturn of 2008 had an impact on the Block Museum, with revenue for the fiscal year totaling $1,837,454, a decrease of 14 percent compared with 2007–08. With expenditures of $1,873,430, the Museum’s overall financial operations nonetheless resulted in a favorable balance of $165,023 carried forward to the following fiscal year’s budget. The majority of this surplus consisted of funds raised in advance for specific programs to be held during 2009–10.

A combination of endowment income, gifts, grants, memberships, and earned income provided approximately 54 percent of the Museum’s operating support in 2008–09. University allocations provided the remaining 46 percent. Unlike many of its peers where budgets have been severely cut, the Block Museum received an increase in financial support from its parent institution, Northwestern University, this year.

Grants, totaling nearly $250,000 this year, continue to serve as an area of growth in the Museum’s operating budget, with funding sources reflecting both ongoing relationships with a number of charitable foundations and government agencies and new connections forged for exhibition and program needs. Among the former, the Museum is fortunate to have earned the support of the Louis Family Foundation; the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; the Elizabet F. Cheney Foundation; the Myers Foundations; the Rothschild Foundation; and the Rubens Family Foundation. The Terra Foundation provided generous assistance for American arts programming, while the Museum received new grants in 2008–09 from the McCormick Foundation and the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation.

In 2008–09 the Museum received the first payment on a major endowment established for Block Cinema by Block advisory board members Rosalyn M. Laudati and James B. Pick as well as a generous bequest from longtime friend and supporter Home Martin.

Jean B. Shedd, chair

REVENUE

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David A. Robertson, Jean B. Shedd, chair; Cinda Turen
The Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art gratefully acknowledges the following individuals, families, foundations, and agencies that made contributions between September 1, 2008, and August 31, 2009.