

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Leslie Miller, External Relations Specialist
Pacific Northwest College of Art
503.821.8959 | lmill@pnca.edu

Becca Biggs, Director of Communications
Pacific Northwest College of Art
503.821.8892 | bbiggs@pnca.edu

Museum of Contemporary Craft Reflects Upon Its History Through Printed Material

Collateral Matters: Selections by Kate Bingaman-Burt and Clifton Burt

On view August 26, 2010 – January 8, 2011

Museum of Contemporary Craft

PORTLAND, OR—JUNE 17, 2010—Museum of Contemporary Craft invites graphic designers Kate Bingaman-Burt and Clifton Burt to craft a response to the Museum’s collection. Naturally drawn to Museum ephemera – invitations, posters, receipts and correspondence – the designers create an installation that uses printed materials from the archive to examine how institutional identity is constructed. This exhibition is part of an ongoing series of curatorial strategies that engage contemporary ways of looking at the collection.

Citing the term “collateral,” which today refers to a suite of print materials created to brand an organization, the exhibition documents the Museum’s shifting identity through the decades. “I was struck by the rapid shifts in the way that the organization defined itself,” explains Burt. “Things pivot so fast. You can see identity shifts in the logos alone. The paper and print methods show thoughtfulness that connects to a Museum whose history is about careful making.”

“Design reflects who we are in the moment,” explains Bingaman-Burt. “It’s a good way to tell a story of an organization or the personae of an individual. Even though these are just pieces of paper – announcements and invoices, for example – putting all of this together shows an interesting narrative of what it means to be this Museum through the flotsam and jetsam of getting things done.”

Focusing primarily on materials from the 1940s through the 1970s, the papers on view provide a simple study of identity shifts through both intentionally and unintentionally designed pieces in the pre-desk-

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top publishing era. The critical role of printshops is revealed through designed print pieces, such as invitations, posters and letterhead, and then contrasted alongside office paperwork – handwritten artist statements, pastel-toned invoices and receipts speckled with red “sale” dots, for example. In an installation designed to show the visual impact of printed materials, the curators engage typography from the mundane to the meticulously designed, showing how graphic language functions in a range of types of printed collateral.

“The focus here is not on what was put on view,” adds Bingaman-Burt, “it’s what is left after shows are gone. To focus on exhibition materials and publications obviously reveals identity, but I was amazed by the piles of papers and materials and receipts and the sheer numbers of handwritten artist statements in the archive. These are the kinds of pieces of paper that everybody deals with – but in this exhibition we can showcase them in a different light and bring an appreciation for the history they tell.”

In addition to curating and designing the exhibition installation, the guest curators engage in conversations with area designers and printers to add additional information to the history of graphic design as seen through the materials on view. These discussions will be available via podcasts when the exhibition opens in addition to written excerpts from conversations between the curators to share their selection process.

MUSEUM PROGRAMS

ATTIC TO ARCHIVE

November 20, 2:00-4:00 pm

Dig into your desk drawers, clean out your closets and shuffle through your shoeboxes—turn your housecleaning into archive-building for the Museum!

Blow the dust off those boxes and bring your ephemera to the Museum on November 20. Through conversations with curators Kate Binagaman-Burt and Clifton Burt, you can learn how your Museum-related paper piles tell the story of craft and graphic design in the Pacific Northwest. As the Museum nears its 75th anniversary in 2012, those photographs, invitations and correspondence from the 1930s to the present could fill the gaps and help us tell stories about the Museum for future generations.

ABOUT THE CURATORS: KATE BINGAMAN-BURT AND CLIFTON BURT

Kate Bingaman-Burt is active in the indie craft and craftivism movements. She resides in Portland, Oregon where she is an Assistant Professor of Graphic Design at Portland State University. She founded Obsessive Consumption in 2002 and has documented her personal consumption in many different mediums, including her first book, *Obsessive Consumption: What Did You Buy Today?* Her illustrations have appeared in *Handmade Nation: The Rise of DIY, Art, Craft and Design*, and she has created commissioned work for IDEO, Madewell, ReadyMade Magazine, The New York Times, and Wieden + Kennedy.

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Clifton Burt is a design-worker in Portland, Oregon. He has worked with the Rural Studio, 20x200, and Marc Horowitz among others. His work has been featured in PRINT, the New Yorker blog, Make blog. He is currently the publisher of Folk Object, a blog about ornament and its relationship with functional objects.

ABOUT MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY CRAFT

Committed to the advancement of craft since 1937, Museum of Contemporary Craft in partnership with Pacific Northwest College of Art is one of Oregon's oldest cultural institutions. Centrally located in Portland's Pearl District, the Museum is nationally acclaimed for its curatorial program and is a vibrant center for investigation and dialogue, expanding the definition of craft and the way audiences experience it.

EXHIBITIONS AND PUBLIC PROGRAMMING ARE SUPPORTED BY:

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MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY CRAFT

in partnership with Pacific Northwest College of Art

724 Northwest Davis Street

Portland, OR 97209

503.223.2654

www.MuseumofContemporaryCraft.org

HOURS

Tuesday through Saturday 11 am to 6 pm

First Thursday of every month 11 am to 8 pm

Closed Sunday and Monday

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