SAMUEL DORSKY MUSEUM OF ART | SUNY New Paltz

Paltz



Newsletter Spring 2004

From the Director

Museums and Magic - With thanks to Dr. Steven Weil, Director Emeritus, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (Smithsonian Institution)

Welcome to the first issue of the *Newsletter* of the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art. Although it has taken more time than we anticipated to launch this publication, we look forward to sending out interesting and informative issues on a regular basis. As we approach our third year of operation, it seems fitting to look back and reflect upon what has been accomplished at the SDMA during the last year, and to recall the exhibitions and programs that we have been privileged to bring to SUNY New Paltz and to our neighbors throughout the Hudson Valley and Catskill region.

Without question our programming over the past year has been robust and ambitious while remaining true to the mission of the museum. Exhibitions of art historical importance served as counterpoints to an exciting and provocative series of contemporary exhibitions. Our museum staff is gratified by the enthusiastic response that we have had, and the assistance that we have received from our advisory boards and our members.

A recently announced campus-based initiative to raise a significant endowment to support the SDMA's exhibitions and educational programs has been given a jump-start through three major donations made during the past year. Gifts from Sara Bedrick, Arthur A. Anderson, and Karen Dorsky have resulted in the naming of two galleries and the creation of a Director's Fund to support new program initiatives and professional development at the museum. These generous gifts have strengthened and expanded the "public-private partnership" initiated in 1998 by Samuel Dorsky and Alice Chandler, past president of SUNY New Paltz. On behalf of the SDMA and all of our constituents, I extend my sincerest thanks and gratitude to our new patrons.

Along with our endowment campaign, we are now launching a "membership drive" to help expand the broad-based support necessary for the museum to prosper. A strong membership program helps to ensure that the museum is responsive to its community. It also helps to align the SDMA with other leaders in the museum community as we move from creating an institution that is not just about *something*, but one that is for *someone*—our friends. Please join us now by filling out and mailing in the membership application included in this newsletter! Your support is needed and greatly appreciated.

At a time when museums throughout the country are cutting staff and programs, the SDMA dares to move ahead and aspires not only to grow but also to prosper. We do this fully aware of the obstacles and challenges ahead, but with the fervent belief that our mission-based commitment to community will inspire our friends to provide the support necessary to propel the museum forward in the 21st century. The dramatic successes that we have experienced since the formal dedication of the museum in October of 2001 are indicators of all that the SDMA can be. That said, we will continue to improve and expand our public programs so that in addition to being a source of pride, the SDMA soon will become an even more dynamic institution, one in which, according to Dr. Steven Weil—"learning, meaning, entertainment, and social connections weave a fabric of experience that is both elevating and transformative." With the continuing support of our friends, the SDMA will soon become the kind of museum that, according to Weil, "can create the magic by which two plus two can make five."

Neil C. Trager

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Profile: Dr. Karl Emil Willers

We are pleased to welcome Dr. Karl Emil Willers as Curator at the SDMA. Formerly chief curator at the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, Florida, Dr. Willers also has had a long professional history with the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City.

His interest in art history and museum work developed as an undergraduate student at the College of Wooster in Ohio, although he also was attracted to studies in classical piano and higher mathematics. Inspired by the teaching and scholarship of two art history professors – the Americanist Arne Lewis, and Thalia Gouma Peterson, a Byzantinist and scholar of contemporary women artists - he began to focus on an art history major during his junior year. While still an undergraduate student Willers pursued an internship at the Whitney Museum with Barbara Haskell, assisting her in the organization of exhibitions on Marsden Hartley and Milton Avery.

After graduating in 1980, Willers returned to the Whitney to participate in its year-long Independent Study Program in Curatorial Studies. This endeavor resulted in Willers being asked to direct the Whitney Museum's Downtown Branch at Federal Reserve Plaza in Lower Manhattan. Thus began a decadelong association with the Whitney Museum, during which time Willers supervised curatorial students who mounted exhibitions on themes ranging from *The (Un)making of Nature to Suburban Home Life.*

Although challenged and gratified by his work at the Whitney, Willers felt the need to further his education, particularly in the fields of European art and early modernism. Consequently, in 1991 he left the Whitney to pursue a doctorate in art history at Yale University, where he wrote his dissertation on the 19th-century French realist Gustave Courbet. In addition, sensing the need in the non-profit museum community for greater business acumen, Willers also completed an MBA at Yale's School of Management.

Fortuitous circumstances again led to his reestablishing a working relationship with the Whitney Museum. Upon completing his degrees at Yale, he approached Lisa Phillips, one of the curators at the Whitney, to request letters of reference. As it happens, she was engaged in preparing the second part of *The American Century*, the largest exhibition ever mounted by the museum. She asked Willers to rejoin the staff as an associate curator to help coordinate this

ambitious exhibition that explored the art and culture of the United States from 1950 to 2000.

Willers' expertise and experience next took him to the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, where he was chief curator, with his primary responsibilities focusing on the exploration of European art. To this end, he organized a pair of exhibitions on French and German printmakers of the 17th century.

Now at SUNY New Paltz, Willers is enthusiastic about the stimulation of working with students and being in an academic setting. He also is particularly pleased that the SDMA provides opportunities to work with contemporary and living artists. He loves the challenge of organizing exhibitions and working with all the individuals who contribute to the success of every museum project. In particular, he looks forward to engaging students, faculty, and the larger community in an energetic and dynamic exchange through the programs at the SDMA. Meanwhile, he continues to pursue independent writing and publication projects on modern and contemporary art, as well as assisting the Whitney Museum in fundraising for its Independent Study program.



From the Permanent Collection

An Architectural Anomaly *Bebhinn Dungan*

An exotic and picturesque drawing representing an ancient Roman tomb in the form of an Egyptian pyramid has been tentatively attributed to the English painter J. M. W. Turner (1775-1851). It ranks as one of the highlights of the permanent collection of the SDMA. Turner is best known for his otherworldly effects of color, light, and atmos-

phere, but the father of English Romantic painting did indeed concern himself with architecture, since he was Professor of Perspective at the Royal Academy of Arts in London.

The drawing titled Tomb of Gaius Cestius & Protestant Burying Ground, Jan. 1st, 1817 (charcoal on paper, 9 5/8 x 13) appears to be dated two years before Turner traveled to Rome, where the famous monument is located. Constructed of brick-faced concrete covered by white marble slabs, this monument was erected as a tomb in the late first century B.C. to hold the ashes of the Roman general Gaius Cestius. An inscription on the tomb informs us that Cestius was Praetor, Tribune, and Septemvirate of the Eupolos, positions that combined responsibilities in civil service, events planning, and state religion. As once as luminous as it is monumental, the pyramid is nearly 90 feet high and more than 70 feet square. Although it may have appeared to English tourists of the early 19th century as much of an anomaly as it does to the modern viewer, pyramids were relatively common in the Roman Egypt of the 1st century B.C. The Protestant Burial Ground

to which the title refers is in fact the Cimitero degli Inglesi, now the resting place of two of England's Romantic literary giants John Keats (1795-1821) and Percy Bysshe Shelly (1792-1822).

The most likely source for the drawing is Giovanni Batttista Piranesi's renowned series of Roman views Vedute di Roma (1748-1778). Piranesi's ubiquitous Vedute, engravings of 135 views of the main tourist sights in Rome, grew out of a market for souvenirs of Italian views, both antique and contemporary. From the late 17th century into the 19th century, English aristocrats and artists embarked upon the Grand Tour, which traditionally consisted of travels through France and Switzerland, culminating in a tour of Italy and the Mediterranean in pursuit of classical antiquity. Having already illustrated James Hakewill's Picturesque Tour of Italy (1818), Turner finally toured Italy himself for the first time in 1819. Experiencing the legendary Italian landscape firsthand affected Turner's art right up to the last years of his life. Confirmation of the drawing's attribution is presently being pursued in consultation with Turner scholars in London.

The Year in Review 2003

Exhibitions

Sandow Birk: Incarcerated. January 29-March 9

An exhibition of faux history paintings by a contemporary artist now based in Los Angeles. This series, done in the style of the Hudson River School, depicted the landscape and environs of rural prisons in New York State.

Reanimating Matter: Raoul Hague's Sculptures and Robert Frank's Photographs. January 23-March 9

Curated by artist and critic David Levi Strauss. This extraordinary exhibition paired the works of two fiercely independent artists who maintained a fascinating friendship for decades. This comprehensive survey exhibition featured Hague's large-scale abstract sculptures carved from the massive tree trunks that were his chosen material and photographs by Frank that depicted Hague's work and lifestyle.

Annual Faculty Art Exhibition. February 12-April 13

A group exhibition featuring faculty members from the art department of SUNY New Paltz. The faculty exhibited works of art that they created, along with objects that influenced and inspired them, enabling viewers to gain insight into the creative process. The exhibition celebrated the rich diversity of vision and the artistic sensibilities that distinguish the art department faculty.

Bolton Coit Brown: A Retrospective. April 15-June 15

A definitive and comprehensive retrospective of the work of one of the three founders of the Byrdcliffe Art Colony in Woodstock (1902). Brown's long-overlooked contributions as an artist and master printer were examined within the context of a life style that defines the term "Renaissance Man." Developed over a period of more than two years, the exhibition included dozens of drawings and etchings that had never been exhibited before, as well as rare landscape paintings, ceramics, and lithographs. An entire gallery was devoted to works that Bolton Brown printed for others, including George Bellows.

Utopia Post/Utopia: Conceptual Photography and Video from Cuba. September 17-December 14

Nine photographers and video artists on the cutting edge of the Cuban art scene. This exhibition dramatized how universal issues about personal identity, dislocation, and place could be explored through images that are at times both poetic and provocative. An illustrated catalogue accompanied the exhibition with essays by guest curator Helaine Posner and art critic Eugenio Valdés Figueroa. The nine artists included were Tania Bruguera, Raúl Cordero, Carlos Garaicoa, Luis Gomez, Ernesto Leal, Elsa Mora, René Peña, Manuel Piña and Sandra Ramos

Out of the Studio: Hudson Valley Artists 2003. June 21-August 10, August 27-September 25

An annual summer exhibition focusing on emerging, mid-career or under-recognized Hudson Valley artists. Six prominent, established artists in the New Paltz area recommended an artist in their discipline who lives and works in the region. The painter Jake Berthot of Accord selected the painter Ruth Leonard of Cairo; the photographer Lynn Davis of Hudson chose the photographer Chad Kleitsch of Rhinebeck; the painter Al Held of Boiceville nominated the painter Gene Benson of New Paltz; the painter Al Loving of Kerhonkson picked the painter Ralph Fleming of Kerhonkson; the sculptor Judy Pfaff of Kingston designated the photographer Laura Gail Tyler of Tivoli; and the sculptor Martin Puryear of Accord proposed the sculptor and painter Jonah Meyer of Kingston.

Alice Neel's Feminist Portraits: Women Artists, Writers, Activists and Intellectuals. October 14-November 25

Held in association with Women and Social Action, the 2003 Women's Studies conference at the State University of New York, New Paltz. Despite being a regular in New York City's art world in the 1930s, Alice Neel (1900-1984) did not begin to gain mainstream visibility until the 1970s when her colorful life story, ebullient personality, and passion about showing her work began to attract the media's attention. Neel's towering portraits of women as a category of their own reflect Neel's more complex political views and her relationship to feminism.

The Photographs of James Van Der Zee. October 15-November 2

Held to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the publication of *The Souls of Black Folk* by W. E. B. DuBois. For over 60 years, African American photographer James Van Der Zee (1886-1983) worked in obscurity as he made a visual record of life in New York City's Harlem neighborhood. Through his sensitive and moving images, he captured the spirits of both the famous and the ordinary residents of this community. His meticulous darkroom techniques allowed him to not only present his community at its best for posterity, but also to add a psychological and ethereal dimension to many of his everyday images.

Thesis Exhibitions.

April 25-May 21, December 5-17

BFA and MFA thesis projects completed during the final year of study exhibited in a formal museum environment. These popular and challenging exhibitions are designed and installed by the graduating students at SUNY New Paltz in consultation with faculty advisors and museum staff.

Lesley Dill: A Ten Year Survey March 9-April 21, 2002

Continued travel to venues throughout the United States. This exhibition, which originated at the SDMA, completed its two-year tour at the National Museum for Women in the Arts in Washington DC. It was hosted at the following venues:

- The Chicago Cultural Center
- The CU Art Galleries at the University of Colorado at Boulder
- The Contemporary Museum, Honolulu
- The Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art

Museum Publications

- Bolton Coit Brown: A Retrospective
- Reanimating Matter: Raoul Hague's Sculptures and Robert Frank's Photographs
- Reading Objects 2002
- Utopia Post/Utopia: Conceptual Photography and Video from Cuba
- Out of the Studio

Endowment Gifts

To endow The Sara Bedrick Gallery To endow The Morgan Anderson Gallery The Karen Dorsky Director's Fund

Grants

\$25,000 - Rockefeller Foundation to support Utopia/Post Utopia: Conceptual Photography and Video from Cuba.

\$25,000 - The Dorsky Foundation Inc. to support the museum's exhibition and educational programs, in memory of Adeline Dorsky.

\$3,500 - Furthermore: A program of the Kaplan Foundation, to support the publication of *Bolton Coit Brown: A Retrospective*.

\$7,500 - Jim and Mary Ottaway Publications Fund, to support the publication of *Bolton Coit Brown: A Retrospective.*

\$7,500 - New York State Council for the Arts, to upgrade the SDMA collection database and help to facilitate access to objects in the permanent collection for research, study, and enjoyment.

\$20,000 - Museum memberships

\$1,500 - from the Raoul Hague Foundation to support the exhibition catalogue Reanimating Matter: Raoul Hague's Sculptures and Robert Frank's Photographs.

Donors to the Permanent Collection

The expansion of the museum's permanent collection depends in large part on the generosity of donors.



Gift of the ArtistJohn Mayer, American, *Untitled*, n. d., watercolor



Gift of the Artist Scott McMahon, American Suspended Passages, 1995, artist's book



Gift of the Artists
Anne Gorrick, American (1967 -) and
Cynthia Winika (1943-), American
"SWANS, THE ICE," SHE SAID, 2000-2002,
artist's book



Gift of Marna Anderson Beata Wehr, Poland, A Double Whole, 1998, artist's book



Gift of Elizabeth Ajay
Abe Ajay, American (1919-1998)
Untitled, 1980, wood and mixed media construction.



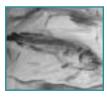
Gifts of Howard Greenberg

Edward Steichen, American (1879-1973) Untitled (vase with flowers), ca. 1932, vintage gelatin silver print Adolf Fassbinder, American (1884-1980) The White Night 1932, vintage toned bromide print Total Eclipse 1925, vintage silver bromide print Today, World's Fair, 1938, vintage gelatin silver print On High, New York World's Fair, 1940, vintage bromide print Tranquility, Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia, 1936, vintage silver bromide print New York World's Fair, ca. 1939, vintage silver bromide print Tucked in the Snows, 1948, vintage silver bromide print Untitled (couple speaking under archway), 1948, vintage silver bromide print Ave Maria, 1943, toned silver bromide The Patriarch, 1936, vintage silver bromide Street Scene, ca. 1940, vintage silver bromide print Green Pastures, 1943, vintage silver bromide print Untitled (house and roadway), ca. 1940, vintage silver bromide print Larry Fink, American (1941-) Skating Rink, PA, 1980 (printed in 1983), gelatin silver print N.Y.C. 2nd Hungarian Debutante Ball, 1978 (printed in 1983), gelatin silver print Graduation Party PA, 1977 (printed in 1983), gelatin silver print MOMA N.Y.C., 1977 (printed in 1983), gelatin silver print N.Y.C. Stephanetti, 1974 (printed in 1983), gelatin silver print American Legion Dance - Bangor, PA, 1979 (printed in 1983), gelatin silver print Russian Ball, N.Y.C., 1978 (printed 1983), gelatin silver print Pat Sabatine and Big Stuff, 1977, printed in 1983), gelatin silver print N.Y.C., 1976 (printed in 1983), gelatin silver print MOMA Benefit N.Y.C., 1977 (printed in 1983), gelatin silver print Allen Ginsberg, American (1927-1996) My room in apartment I shared with Peter

Orlovsky at 1010 Montgomery Street San Francisco wherein I, 1955, vintage gelatin silver print William S. Burroughs, 1953, vintage gelatin silver print. Peter Orlovsky, 1953, vintage gelatin silver Neal Cassidy, ca. 1954, vintage gelatin silver William S. Burroughs sitting up in back bedroom, 1953, gelatin silver print Dorothy Norman, American (1905-1997) Church - Waguoit Mass VI, 1933 (printed later), gelatin silver print Jawaharlal Nehru, 1952 (printed later), gelatin silver print Untitled (waterscape), 1932 (printed later), gelatin silver print Untitled (bridge), 1932 (printed later), gelatin silver print Bertold Brecht, 1937 (printed later), gelatin silver print New York Skyline, 1942 (printed later), gelatin silver print Church Steeple, 1937 (printer later), gelatin silver print White Blossoms and Fence, Woodstock, N.Y., 1936, (printed later), gelatin silver Marc Chagall, 1944 (printed later), gelatin silver print Luise Ranier, 1945 (printed later), gelatin silver print Untitled (big hand), 1937 (printed later), gelatin silver print Untitled (lily pads), 1932 (printed later), gelatin silver print Telephone in front of Alfred Stieglitz "Equivalent," at an American Place, New York, ca. 1940, vintage gelatin silver print Aaron Siskind, American (1903-1991) Untitled, 1988, platinum print Iwao Yamawaki, American (1889-1987) Untitled (playing with the piano), 1930-1932, vintage gelatin silver print, Untitled (counter), 1930s, vintage gelatin silver print. Untitled (tiled porch), 1930-1932, vintage gelatin silver print Untitled (brick wall on circular base), 1930-1932, vintage gelatin silver print Untitled (Bauhaus industrial site), 1930-1932, vintage gelatin silver print Untitled (woman with cart on littered street), 1930-1932, vintage gelatin silver

Untitled (glass circular stairwell), 1930-1932, vintage gelatin silver print

Donors to the Permanent Collection



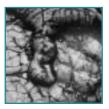
Gifts of Natalie Minewski

Alex Minewski, American (1917-1979) Untitled (full fish), c. 1973, watercolor on paper Untitled (fish head), c. 1973, tempera on paper Untitled (fish in water), c. 1973, charcoal on paper Untitled (fish body), c. 1973, charcoal on paper Untitled (fish head), c. 1973, charcoal on paper



Gifts of Ann Lawrance Morse

Eric Lindbloom, American (1934-) Hudson River and Ice Flows, 1991, gelatin silver print West Strand, 1991, gelatin silver print Tip of the Hook, Kingston Point Park, 1991, gelatin silver print Nantucket Clipper, Rondout, 1990, gelatin silver print



Gifts of Charles and Mary Traub

Aaron Siskind, American (1903-1991) Volcano 54, 1980, vintage gelatin silver print Volcano 80, 1980, vintage gelatin silver print



Gift of Elizabeth Pollet

Joseph Pollet Bluestone Quarry, Oil on canvas



Gift of Albert Shahinian of Albert Shahinian Fine Art

Christie Scheele, American (1957-) Flood, 1999, oil on canvas



Gifts of Jaimee Pugliese Uhlenbrock

Henry W. Bannarn, American (1910-1965) Untitled, (street scene with horse-drawn cart) ca 1930-1940, etching The Crossing, ca. 1930-1940, lithograph Coal Chute, ca. 1930-1940, etching Untitled (street scene with pedestrians), ca. 1930-1940, etching Untitled (ice skaters), ca. 1930-1940, litho-Untitled (dancers), ca. 1930-1940, lithograph Dewey Albinson, American (1898-1971) Cactus, 1933, lithograph

Cement Works, 1933, lithograph



Gifts of Albert H. Tannin, MD

Harriet Tannin, American (1929 -) 24 portraits of Woodstock artists, gelatin silver prints Brock, 1981 Reginald Wilson, 1981 Michael Densen, 1981 Richard Pantell, 1981 Amy Small, 1981 Stephan Lokos, 1981 Cecile Germain, 1981 Stuart Klein, 1983 Kurt Sluizer, 1981 Eugene Arcieri, 1981 Anthony Krauss, 1981 Adele Breth, 1984 Franklin Alexander, 1982 Carolyn Haeberlin, 1981 Stuart Krisel, 1981 Nick Buhalis, 1982 Rebecca Kosakowsky, 1982 Mary Earley, 1981 Barbara Neustadt, 1983 Daniel Galfand, 1982 Roman Wachtel, 1981

Albert Handel, 1981

Lillian Fiolic, 1981 Alan Siegel, 1982

WISH LIST

Creating a museum takes more than bricks and mortar. One of our highest priorities is to further develop and strengthen our permanent collection. With your support the SDMA will become the major repository for works of art of the Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountain region.

- Hudson River School paintings, drawings, and prints
- Paintings, prints, sculpture and crafts from the historic Woodstock art
- Historic paintings, prints and drawings from the Shawangunk Mountain region
- 19th and 20th Century photographs
- Metalwork, gold and silver jewelry and holloware
- Works by prominent artists living in the Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountain region

Care of Art in the Home

Avoiding Damage from Light Cynthia Dill

Pigments, dyes, and the structure of many substances are altered by exposure to light. Unlike most healthy skin, which may recover from a little tanning, watercolor and oil paintings are changed permanently by the effects of light! Watercolors will fade quickly (within an hour you may notice changes) and oils will darken over a longer time. Pigments, paper, glues, fur, feathers, hair, leather, silk, celluloid, rubber, bone, and natural fibers are all weakened by exposure to light.

All light sources emit some level of ultraviolet radiation (UV) and heat. Heat and UV are the most damaging components of light. To limit this damage, display any artwork or documents that are important to you and your family on a wall or shelf that gets no direct sunlight or that can be screened with curtains. Keep artificial light at low levels on the object. If the work is glazed (under glass or Plexiglass), and you are motivated to go to great lengths to protect a valuable family heirloom, then a special UV filtering Plexiglass sheet (Perspex) can be installed between the mat and the glass in a picture frame. But remember to keep lights dim on those special objects!

Pigments, paper, glues, fur, feathers, hair, leather, silk, celluloid, rubber, bone, and natural fibers are all weakened by exposure to light.



Saturday, May 15, 2004

Join Now to Join Us for the SDMA

Annual Members and Donor Recognition Event

featuring the dedication of the Morgan Anderson Gallery Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art

Private viewings of:

Milton Avery

Written In Memory—Photographs by Jeffrey A. Wolin Short Takes: Art Historians in the Museum Recent Acquisitions Maria Urquidi, David Stimpson, Matthew Bialecki, and James Parrish at 2003

SDMA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES AND BENEFITS \$15 - Student • Newsletter Invitation for exhibition previews • 20% discount on SDMA publications and merchandise \$25 - SUNY Faculty & Staff & Seniors Same as above \$50 - Friend • Same as above PLUS • SDMA Poster \$100 - Donor • Same as above PLUS • Enrollment in North American Reciprocal Membership Program (Member benefits in cooperating museums in the U.S. and Canada) \$250 - Sponsor • Same as above PLUS • Complimentary copies of SDMA Publication. • Recognition on annual donor's banner. \$500 - Patron • Same as above PLUS • Invitation to participate in annual escorted tour of NYC museums and galleries. \$1000 - Benefactor • Same as above PLUS Recognition on permanent donor's plague and · Invitation to annual Director's dinner party. \$2500 - Director's Circle Same as above PLUS • One-time exclusive use of SDMA for private reception.

MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM		
☐ I want to become a member	of the Samuel Dorsky Mu	seum of Art. SUNY New Paltz
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☐ Student, \$15	☐ Friend, \$50	☐ Patron, \$500
☐ SUNY Faculty & Staff, \$25	☐ Donor, \$100	☐ Benefactor, \$1000
☐ Seniors, \$25	☐ Sponsor, \$250	☐ Director's Circle, \$2500
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PAYMENT INFORMATION		
☐ Enclosed is a check for \$	payable to the Samu	uel Dorsky Museum of Art, SUNY New Paltz
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The Year in Review: 2003

From the Permanent Collection

Profile: Dr. Karl Emil Willers

From the Director

NEMSCELLER SPRING, 2004

SAMUEL DORSKY MUSEUM OF ART

SUNY New Paltz

75 S. Manheim Blvd Suite 9 New Paltz, New York 12561-2443