

In our Galleries~Edith Freeman and Edward S. Curtis

Montana Seasons Exhibit

This summer the Bair Museum hosts *Montana Seasons*, a special exhibition of work by Montana artist **Edith Freeman** (1912–1992), May 30–October 31, 2014. On loan from the Yellowstone Art Museum, the exhibit also features a set of her working tools and a woodblock the public is allowed to touch, an experience that allows them to fully appreciate her artistry. In the 1950s Freeman developed her own technique for printing multiple colors with a single block. The results are lush and serene prints that capture central Montana in all its varied seasons.

Freeman drew her inspiration from the undeveloped areas around Billings — the sandstone Rimrocks, slopes covered with yucca and sage and Ponderosa pines. She also loved wildflower

meadows and her own well-tended garden of irises, poppies and zinnias.

Edith Freeman was born on her grandparents ranch near Broadview in 1913 and later moved to Billings with her family. She taught in eastern Montana and in Billings. After retiring, Freeman began her second career as a printmaker. In 1993 she was posthumously awarded the Montana Governor's Award for the Arts.



Edith Freeman, *Late Summer Sagebrush*, 1978, woodblock print 10.24, 29 x 37 7/8 inches, Collection Yellowstone Art Museum, 1989.007



The Rush Gatherer, 1908, photographed by **Edward S. Curtis** (1868–1952). This photogravure depicts a woman of the Arikara tribe with rushes she would have gathered for a Medicine Ceremony or for the weaving of lodge floor mats. The Arikara, of Caddoan stock, were Indians of the Southern Great Plains. The principal surviving tribes of the Caddoan stock are Arikara, and the Caddo and Pawnee of Oklahoma.

It's Not Too Early!

School groups, reserve your date to visit the Bair Museum in May. Big Timber has already arranged their exclusive tour of the museum's Native American Collection and Charlie Russell paintings. Also, there are new exhibits of Edward Curtis photographs, Edith Freeman woodcuts and the never-publically-displayed Haarr Collection of Native American tools. In May the museum is only open to the public on weekends, leaving weekdays for individual schools to reserve their own date and customize an educational experience. Last year we hosted almost 170 students from six counties. We book up fast! Please call 406-572-3314 today.

Open Weekends in May & Daily through Labor Day

The Big Elk Creek Cache #1

This winter the Board of Advisors of the Charles M. Bair Family Trust approved the long-term loan from a private collector of several significant early Native American stone artifacts discovered near Two Dot, Montana, in 1958. In a story reminiscent of Huckleberry Finn's adventures, three young Montana boys headed out in 1958 across a recently plowed field near Two Dot on the Big Elk Creek Bottom. Their plan was to complete a cottonwood raft they had been building. Instead they walked into an area about eight feet in diameter filled with stone tools, flakes and chips. They dug down in the soil until they could not find any more, and then divided the larger stone tools, including many



Big Elk Creek Cache #1, Pre-Pelican Lake Culture biface, actual size 6 x 3¼ inches

bifaces as large as seven inches in length, amongst themselves. In the years since their discovery, many of the objects disappeared. However, one of those boys, then twelve-year-old **Loren Haarr**, held on to what he could and remained passionate about studying these rare objects as well as sharing them with others. Now known as the **Big Elk Creek Cache #1**, these objects are projected to be Pre-Pelican Lake Culture and approximately 5,000 years old. To enhance and expand our Native American collection, Mr. Haarr has generously made a long-term loan to the Bair Museum of his artifacts.



The Arikara Medicine Ceremony, 1908, photographed by Edward S. Curtis (1868–1952). The Arikara Medicine Fraternity consisted of nine groups, the Ghost, the Black-tailed Deer, the Buck Deer, the Buffalo, an unidentified swamp bird, Principal Medicine, the Big Foot or Duck, the Moon (also called the Owl), and Mother Night (also called Young Dog or Bear.) This image depicts a group of three young Arikara men participating in a medicine ceremony as "the Ducks." The men were painted to represent ducks and they wore necklaces of duck bills strung on otter skin. They danced around the sacred cedar tree holding rushes representing the rushes among which the waterfowl rested.

MSU Student is Bair's First Intern

This winter we had our first — of we hope many — interns. **Halley Heintz**, came to Montana State University–Bozeman from Pine Bluffs, Wyoming. She graduates this spring with a Bachelor's Degree in Art History and minors in Museum Studies and Business Administration, and plans to attend graduate school in Museum Studies. We first met Halley when she contacted the Bair about a class project. Her internship this winter predominantly focused on studying, scanning and organizing some of the important Bair family documents and correspondence. Her project will result in a new touch screen exhibition that opens this summer and allows visitors, for the first time, access to selected family correspondence and records. To vary her experience, Halley also assisted with reinstalling

the permanent collection of Western and European paintings. The museum depends on volunteers like Halley who put in countless hours to help bring the Bair family story to life.



Working on collection documents, intern **Halley Heintz**

BAIR MUSEUM

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