



CHARLES ALLIS & VILLA TERRACE ART MUSEUMS

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The Charles Allis and Villa Terrace Art Museums are pleased to officially announce their new Senior Curator, Shana McCaw. McCaw, a widely recognized art professional and an essential asset to the regional art community, joins the museums at a significant time. They are celebrating 120 years of service to the city this year. Over the last two years they have created momentum toward redefining how they fulfill their mission to create opportunities to experience history, art and culture through the stewardship of the gifts of Charles and Sarah Allis and Agnes Smith Curtis. They have built out their own non-profit separate from the War Memorial Corporation, further developed their relationship with Milwaukee Public Schools' art programs, and staged contemporary art exhibitions that challenge their notions of what these museums are and can be.

Over the last 16 years McCaw has brought innovative ideas to a multitude of institutions.

Her projects have ranged from curating and directing the Northwestern Mutual Gallery at Cardinal Stritch University; assisting in the design and installation of five exhibitions in partnership with the Chipstone Foundation at the Milwaukee Art Museum; teaching 3-D design, sculpture, and domestic field study courses at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, Cardinal Stritch University, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; and developing an internationally recognized art practice with her husband and collaborator, Brent Budsberg.

As an artist, McCaw recognizes curating as another form of art-making. Just like any artistic medium, curating comes with a different set of tools and processes; combining, juxtaposing and creating comparisons — in this case — between artists' works in the same space or building. Just like an individual work of art, the choices made in the curation of an exhibition are made with intentions of realizing concepts and starting conversations. In this way, McCaw has never seen curating as something that takes time away from her art practice. Instead, it is just another facet of it. Her first two major curatorial projects were *Destination* at the Gas Light Building in Milwaukee (2003) and *Gigantic* at the Soap Factory in Minneapolis (2005). Both exhibitions were site-specific, a genre of art McCaw actively engages in her own practice.



"I'm an idea person, and I thrive in situations where new initiatives are being developed and put into action."

– Shana McCaw, Senior Curator



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During her time as Gallery Director at the Northwestern Mutual Gallery from 2013 to 2015, McCaw curated eight exhibitions including “Midwest Field Reporters” (recent collaborative work by Jenna Knapp, Zach Hill, and Kayle Karbowski); “Digital Craft: Redesign, Remake, Reimagine” (recent work by artist/designer Frankie Flood); “Everyday Mysteries: Emily Belknap, Grant Gill, Jon Horvath” (recent photography and sculpture); “A Culture of Evil” (recent work by Sarah Nitschke and Robin Assner); “The Collection Project” (a display case exhibition of collections amassed by local people); and “New Histories and Old Futures: The Timeless Art of Story” (backdrops and small works by Sue Lawton). While working with the Chipstone Foundation on their new exhibitions for the Milwaukee Art Museum, McCaw was able to use her interest and expertise in the decorative arts to reinterpret their collection of historical objects through a contemporary lens – something she is excited to bring to the collections at the Allis and Villa.

Both the museums and McCaw plan to not only contribute to the dynamic curatorial programming CAVT is known for, but to also revitalize their collections and evolve their interpretation of these historic sites.



“The Charles Allis and Villa Terrace Art Museums are two gems of Milwaukee’s cultural landscape. Shana’s diverse experience as a practicing artist, professor, and gallery administrator is a perfect fit with our objectives. Now is the right time to welcome Shana McCaw as our Senior Curator.”

– Executive Director, John Sterr



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