In the field of white snow, I starve for the love of my own people.

### SNOW COUNTRY PRISON

was organized by the NORTH DAKOTA MUSEUM OF ART

for tour through the Museum's RURAL ARTS INITIATIVE

The exhibition was curated by Laurel Reuter, Director North Dakota Museum of Art in collaboration with Marilyn Snyder, Curator of Education, State Historical Society of North Dakota and Scott Schaffnit, Outreach Programs Coordinator, State Historical Society of North Dakota.

Special advisors to the project included The staff of the United Tribes Technical College, Bismarck Frank Vyuzralek, historian and retired North Dakota State Archivist John Christgau, author Satsuki Ina, film producer and daughter of Itaru Ina, former Fort Lincoln internee Sensei Etsuko Wakayama, calligrapher

The touring exhibition through the Rural Arts Initiative is underwritten by the OTTO BREMER FOUNDATION



# SNOW COUNTRY PRISON Interned in North Dakota

# Wild chrysanthemums bloom in the Dakota fields for prisoners.

—Itaru Ina

#### SNOW COUNTRY PRISON: INTERNED IN NORTH DAKOTA

represents the first public examination of a dark time in the lives of 3,850 men, all classified as "enemy aliens," all incarcerated in North Dakota's Fort Lincoln during the Second World War. These were not soldiers, not men of war. Rather some were German and Japanese citizens caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. Others were Americans of German and Japanese ancestry whose loyalty was questioned by their own government. And there were Japanese Americans, forced by the fear that their families would be split apart, who renounced their American citizenship, and were subsequently locked up in Fort Lincoln to await deportation to Japan.

The exhibition tells the story of this dark, forgotten moment in North Dakota history. In the early 1980s, John Christgau wrote *Enemies: World War II Alien Internment*, the only book written about the North Dakota camp. It soon went out-of-print and for the next twenty years little notice was taken. Through the collaboration of many people, the story is now being remembered.

We set out to create an exhibition with only a few dozen official photographs taken by various branches of the United States Government such as the Border Patrol and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). We put out a national call for photographs, only to receive duplicates of the official pictures. Then a miracle happened. Satsuki Ina, the producer of the film Children of the Camps, was invited to speak at the Minnesota State University Moorhead. En route from California, she stopped in Bismarck, called David Gipp, President of the United Tribes Technical College-which is located in what was the Fort Lincoln Internment Camp—and asked to visit her father's Snow Country Prison. A few hours into the visit, David said, "You must talk to my friend Laurel," and he picked up his





cell phone and introduced us. We met for dinner the next evening, and out of her purse came the miracle we needed: translations of the haiku her father had written while interned in Fort Lincoln. Once again, I had come upon wonderful, honest, but gut-wrenching art, poems to show the lies buried in the pictures, words to make the heart wise, Itaru Ina's gift to us.

# Under the blazing sun, the locomotive pulls the journey along. —Itaru Ina

Sixty years later, these haiku written by Itaru Ina pull the heart into understanding.

These small, graceful poems ground the exhibition in the reality of those who were imprisoned in Fort Lincoln. Without them, the official INS photographs of ski jumps, beer gardens, and musicals would define those years as one long picnic. Itaru, a young man in his late twenties and the true keeper of the records, wrote several haiku a day during his long incarceration. The reader is struck by how accurately the poet evokes—with singular and simple words—both the landscape and the weather of this new country, coupled with the loneliness and grief that lie at the heart of internment. The poems read as songs of sorrow to a time, a place, and a frightened but "arrogant country."

Just as the internee's story was hidden, so was his

loss. In memory to those unnamed losses, we have created a field of ghost tombstones, cloth monoliths embedded with shadow images of those whose spirits came and went. The most poignant of war memorials are based in repetition: row upon row of crosses, name following name, tombstone after tombstone, seemingly without end. But because this is an exhibition confined to small spaces, only a few stand in for the three-thousand-plus who left a part of their souls buried at Fort Lincoln.

There are many to be thanked for making this exhibition a reality. Chief among them are John Kostishack, Executive Director of the Otto Bremer Foundation, and his Board of Trustees, whose bedrock support of human rights is unparalleled in our region; Dr. Marilyn Snyder and Scott Schaffnit came to me with the original idea for the show and were my collaborators to the end. United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) President David Gipp; filmmaker Satsuki Ina; scholar John Christgau; attorney Karen Ebel; and the unnamed staffs of both UTTC and the North Dakota Museum of Art. Frank Vyzralek completed the initial research. Other supporters number in the dozens and many are listed elsewhere in the catalog. We are especially indebted to those internees who have returned sixty years later to participate in the opening ceremonies. I extend my deepest gratitude.

> Laurel Reuter, Director North Dakota Museum of Art



Internees were brought to Bismarck by train.

### THE STORY OF FT. LINCOLN DURING WORLD WAR II

### BY JOHN CHRISTGAU

At nightfall on December 10th, 1941, just three days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, an unusual thunderstorm struck southern California. The bolts of lightning and the deep booming thunder sounded like enemy ship salvos, and jittery citizens of Los Angeles and San Diego feared they were under attack.

At 8:00 p.m., anxious aircraft spotters charged with protecting the southern coast from attack reported that unidentified planes were circling near Los Angeles. Radio stations were ordered off the air. An immediate lights-out order was issued. From Bakersfield to San Diego, the entire coast went dark, and there was panic in the streets.

Hollywood cops warned pedestrians and motorists to take shelter. Citizens shot out streetlights in the frenzy to black out the city. Los Angeles motorists caught in the streets tried to work their way through snarls of traffic at dark intersections. A San Diego driver who refused to dim his lights was dragged from his car and severely beaten. Los Angeles hospitals were swamped with calls for ambulances to cover traffic accidents involving panicked drivers. In the days and weeks following December 7th, 1941, the panic and fear did not disappear, and long-held ethnic and racial prejudices, aggravated by that wartime panic, led to the arrest of thousands of German, Japanese, and Italian so-called "dangerous enemy aliens."

The arrests were done under the authority of the "Enemy Alien Act" (Title 50, sec. 21-24, USC), which is still in effect. The Act specifies that citizens of enemy nations can be "apprehended, restrained, secured and removed" during a declared war or actual or threatened invasion of the United States.

The government had begun making preparations for enemy alien internment in 1940, with the registration of some six million aliens under the provisions of the Alien Registration Act. Relying upon information gathered through FBI surveillance, the Special Defense Unit of the Department of Justice began compiling lists of the "most dangerous" aliens, who would be subject to custodial detention in the event of war. Finally, the Immigration and Nationalization Service (INS) was given the responsibility of constructing camps to house the detained and interned aliens, and the Border Patrol assumed responsibility for staffing the camps with guards.

Eventually, there would be eight INS internment camps. Ft. Missoula, Montana, held Italians and

A train moves that's all. Summer prairie. The station is hot there's hatred in the eyes looking at me. —Itaru Ina

Japanese; a huge camp in Crystal City, Texas, held Germans and Japanese and their families; Ft. Stanton, in New Mexico, was a maximum security camp for Germans; Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Kooskia, Idaho, also held Japanese internees; and camps in Kenedy and Seagoville, Texas, held Germans and Japanese and their families.

The eighth camp, and one of the largest, was Ft. Lincoln Internment Camp, on the Missouri River flatland just south of Bismarck. Converted from an old U.S. Army cavalry installation, the brick barracks of the fort had been among the first internment facilities of the war. It had opened in May of 1941, to house German crewmen from Standard Oil tankers who had been stranded in New York because of Germany's attack on Poland. For almost two years they had been under virtual house arrest in New York, until they were rounded up and sent to Ft. Lincoln on May 31, 1941.

Those interned German seamen were the welcoming party for the first enemy aliens, who arrived at Ft. Lincoln on December 20, 1941. "110 German Enemy Aliens Interned at Ft. Lincoln," headlines in the Bismarck Tribune reported. Described as sullen and hardened, they were among hundreds of "dangerous enemy aliens" who had been arrested during that initial period of fear and hysteria on the West Coast, then kept in local jails or hastily constructed detention facilities on the Coast. Technically, they were still "detainees," the government considering detention a more temporary form of imprisonment than "internment." Chief Patrol Inspector A.S. Hudson, in charge of the Ft. Lincoln facility, told reporters he did not know where the aliens had come from. But they arrived by a special Northern Pacific train that originated from the San Francisco Bay Area, then picked up more aliens from the Pacific Northwest during a stopover in Portland.

Within a month, the German enemy alien "detainees" and the interned seamen were joined by four hundred Japanese aliens from the West Coast. "The little yellow men scrambled out of the coaches ...," the *Bismarck Tribune* reported, "and were put in trucks and rushed out to the internment camp." The Japanese aliens were housed in wooden barracks along the south side of the camp, separated from the Germans in the brick barracks by a double row of prison fencing, a guard dog run in between.

# The iron door is closed, the guards have all gone— Moths dance around the light.

In late January of 1942, as required by the provisions of the Enemy Alien Act, a three-man Alien Enemy Hearing Board began meeting at Ft. Lincoln to consider release, parole, or long term internment for the enemy alien detainees. Chaired by P.W. Lanier, the highly respected U.S. Attorney for the North Dakota District, the Hearing Board was little more than a kangaroo court. The aliens who went before the Board were not permitted an attorney, could not present evidence or witnesses in their own defense, and could not see or rebut the FBI evidence against them, most of which was based on hearsay and anti-ethnic gossip. "He listens to German music," one FBI informant said. And a Japanese alien was reported to have a "short wave radio." Still, it was evidence which led to approximately half of the enemy alien detainees receiving orders for permanent internment.

Meanwhile, under pressure from U.S. authorities, Latin American governments had arrested some six thousand German and Japanese Latin Americans and then transferred them to the custody of INS internment camps in the United States. Hundreds of them wound up at Ft. Lincoln. Attorney General Francis Biddle admitted in a handwritten memo that the circumstances of these Latin American arrests had been "unusual." Granting the men hearings, he warned, could publicize those circumstances and was therefore "undesirable." Finally, the German seamen at Ft. Lincoln, who were described as "illegal aliens," also received no hearings.

By October of 1942, those German enemy aliens at Ft. Lincoln who hadn't been paroled were transferred to Army camps for permanent internment. Meanwhile, President Roosevelt had signed the infamous Executive Order 9066, which resulted in the "relocation" of all persons of Japanese ancestry, including Japanese American citizens, from restricted areas of the West Coast. It meant that most of the Japanese aliens at Ft. Lincoln and elsewhere were transferred from the authority of the INS to War Relocation Authority camps run the U.S. Army. And by early spring of 1943, Ft. Lincoln's internee population had dropped to just over 300 men, mostly seamen.

Then in March of 1943, to make room in Prisoner of War camps for an increasing number of German soldiers captured during the North African campaign, the government began moving alien enemy internees back to INS control from Army POW camps. With the arrival of enemy alien internees from POW camps in Wisconsin, Tennessee, and Ohio, Ft. Lincoln's population swelled to over 1,000 men, most of whom were enemy alien internees. Therefore, to be consistent with previous hair-splitting between "detention" and "internment," the government now officially categorized Ft. Lincoln as an internment camp. to meet women, but the tunnel they dug from beneath the mess hall only got to the open ground short of the fence before a truck caved it in. In the fall of 1943, Karl Heinz Alfred Fengler walked away from his railroad track gang work just outside Buffalo, North Dakota, and got all the way to New Orleans before he was captured. Finally, in June of 1944, Albert Gregeratzki and Herman Cordes, two enemy alien internees who had met in a previous



Day to day life in the camp was described by one internee as filled with periods of "loneliness and boredom . . . and bitter cold." A measure of relief could be found in athletic activities, including soccer, baseball, tennis, and swimming, where the Japanese men wore modest trunks, while the Germans splashed with naked abandon. Some Bavarian internees even found relief from the bitter cold by building a high wooden ski-jump that stood on the bare ground like the bones of a museum dinosaur when the snow melted.

Meanwhile, there were attempted escapes. A lovesick Belgian seamen named Johann Marquenie slipped under the fence one night in 1941, stole a scow moored to a tree on the Missouri River, and floated almost to Huff, North Dakota, before he was captured. That same year, half a dozen German seamen tried to find a way to get into Bismarck bars

I live in a country without love, where the roses are red. camp, were also foiled in a tunneling attempt to get into Bismarck to meet women.

Despite the boredom and loneliness, the camp was not without moments of discord. A camp thief and outcast, who had alienated a small group of diehard German loyalist seamen in camp, was thrown out of his barracks and told to stay out. Camp guards insisted on his return and threw seven of the protesters in the guard house. With that, months of internment bitterness erupted and two hundred angry men gathered at the main gate. It took threatening machine guns and gas grenades to get them to disperse. But such instances were rare, and most of the internee bitterness and loneliness expressed itself in poignant letters to families and friends from whom they had been separated for months and years.

Ft. Lincoln had opened in June of 1941 as a camp for German seamen. The second phase of its history had been as a camp for enemy aliens, first German, then Japanese. But in January of 1945, as the war drew to a close and the internee population dwindled, closure of the camp seemed imminent.

# When I talk to the broken-hearted German red poppies.



Autumn melancholy the foreign smell of Germans remains on the book's pages. —Itaru Ina

Yet, the final chapter in the history of the camp was yet to be written, and it began in February and March of 1945, with the arrival of hundreds of mostly young Japanese Americans who had renounced their citizenship at the huge War Relocation Authority camp for Japanese Americans at Tule Lake. According to the government, by the act of renunciation they had become Japanese enemy aliens, and they were sent to Ft. Lincoln to await their deportation back to Japan.

Eventually, the circumstances of their Tule Lake renunciations were challenged in court and most of the renunciants were restored their American citizenship. With their departure on Wednesday, March 6, 1946, the camp was finally empty. The chain link fence was struck and rolled into bundles like carpeting. Camps records were boxed and shipped to INS headquarters in Philadelphia. Blankets, sports equipment, and office furniture were given to charitable organizations in Bismarck. Finally, a huge, sensitive microphone at the main gate was disconnected. Several Border Patrol guards, on their way out of Ft. Lincoln, stopped and shouted "Good bye!" into the dead mike.

Between June of 1941 and March of 1946, 3,850 internees came and went at Ft. Lincoln . That number was only a portion of the 31,275 enemy aliens who were imprisoned in Justice Department camps under the provisions of the Enemy Alien Act during World War II—10,905 Germans, 16,845 Japanese, and 3,278 Italians. Tens of thousands more—Germans and Italians and Japanese—were excluded from military zones and relocated. Immigrant freedoms were sacrificed in the name of national security. Professions were interrupted or lost, property and business were forfeited, and families were torn apart. The Ft. Lincoln historical exhibit, *Snow Country Prison*, serves as a poignant reminder of what can happen to any ethnic community when national security fears and wartime terror run amuck, as they did that night in December of 1941 on the streets of Los Angeles.

Why has the story of enemy alien internment remained largely unknown so long? The simple answer is historical neglect and governmental shame. But for many former internees, perhaps the answer lies in something one Ft. Lincoln German internee chose to call, "Gitterkrankheit." The fence sickness. "After you've been behind barbed wire for months and years," he explained, "a part of you begins to feel like a criminal. When you finally get out," he said, "you don't want to talk about the past."

Snow Country Prison presents the Ft. Lincoln internment experience in one distinct voice: in powerful haiku images, Itaru Ina renders the sorrow and bitterness and insights of his internment experiences. His voice speaks as the voice of thousands of German and Japanese enemy alien internees and their families who suffered "the fence sickness" during World War II.

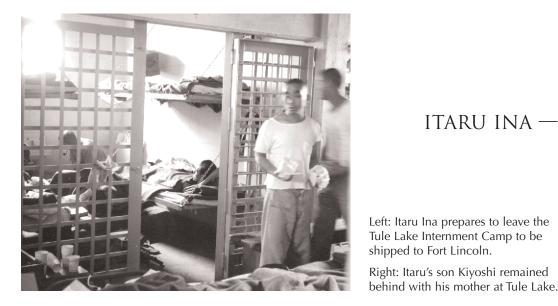


Over the fence we touch hands autumn farewell.

—ltaru Ina



I am leaving but the sun-tanned child doesn't know. —Itaru Ina



Under the scorching sun on and on I curse this arrogant country. —Itaru Ina

ITARU INA was born in San Francisco, California, on June 10, 1914. His father was an immigrant who worked for the local Japanese newspaper. His mother came to America as a "picture bride." At age five, Itaru accompanied his mother and sickly sister to Japan and received schooling there. He returned to America to rejoin his father when he was sixteen-years-old.

Itaru began studying and writing haiku during his teen years. In 1939 he met Shizuko Mitsui, also an American citizen, who was working at the Japanese pavilion on Treasure Island in San Francisco during the 1939-40 World Trade exposition. They were married in March 1941.

Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Japanese in December 1941, and by March 1942 they both were incarcerated at the Tanforan Assembly Center near San Francisco. Shizuko was pregnant at the time and suffered a great deal while confined to life in a horse stable. Itaru was desolate witnessing his wife's suffering, and by the time they were transferred to Topaz, Utah (September 1942-September 1943), he vowed to make a better life for his family by disavowing his loyalty to America and requesting repatriation to Japan.

On June 30, 1945, shortly after the birth of their

second child, Itaru was arrested at Tule Lake. Three days later he was sent to a Department of Justice internment camp at Fort Lincoln in Bismarck, North Dakota, where he was held until March 1946. Eventually it was determined that renunciation of citizenship under the duress of imprisonment was unconstitutional, and Itaru and his family were reunited at Crystal City, Texas, family internment camp. They were finally released on July 9, 1946.

ITARU INA — HAIKU

After the war the Ina family lived with relatives in Cincinnati, Ohio, where their third child was born. They returned home to San Francisco in 1950. During camp life, Itaru was an active member of haiku clubs and had several poems published in camp haiku journals. He served as the leader of the San Francisco Yukari Haiku Kai until his death on October 31, 1977.

Itaru returned with one gift from Fort Lincoln: his fellow internees introduced him to German classical music, which he loved for the remainder of his life.

Chilly winter light swallows the man to bring back the darkness. —Itaru Ina



Autumn grief unbearable— I look at the children's photo. —Itaru Ina

HAIKU consist of seventeen syllables divided into three groups-or lines-of five, seven, and five syllables. A haiku must contain a word that indicates a seasonal theme. Because the poems of Itaru Ina were translated from Japanese, they do not correspond to the five – seven – five rule in English.

Furthermore, haiku should contain no center of interest and poets must respond to their first impressions, just as it was, of subjects taken from daily life, using local color to create freshness.

Haiku must be divided into two parts: the shorter first-line portion is a fragment; the longer portion, or the rest of the poem, is a phrase. There needs to be a syntactical break dividing the fragment and the phrase. (In Japanese an accepted sound-wordkireji—was the break whereas in English it is often replaced by a dash or comma.

In haiku articles and prepositions are dispensable, adjectives and adverbs avoided, gerunds eliminated. The rules pile up, only to be broken as the poet searches for the raw experience, subtly phrased and elegantly laced together into a single, encompassing moment.

Note: Originally written in Japanese, Hisako Ifshin and Leza Lowitz translated Itaru Ina's haiku.

The war has ended but I'm still in the snow country prison.

**CIVIL LIBERTIES ACT OF 1988:** The bill passed by Congress giving financial redress and acknowledging injustices done to Japanese resident aliens and Japanese Americans during World War II.

**ENEMY ALIENS:** Citizens of Germany, Italy, and Japan who were legal residents of the United States during World War II. If they were age fourteen and older, they were required to register and carry certificates of identification. They were civilians, not soldiers or military personnel.

**EXCLUSION:** The removal of enemy aliens from restricted military areas. The exclusion provisions of the Enemy Alien Act during World War II applied to Germans and Italians as well as Japanese. American citizens of German and Italian ethnicity were also excluded pursuant to Executive Order 9066, on an individual basis.

**ILLEGAL ALIENS:** The term used by authorities to describe German and Italian seamen taken off their ships immediately before the war and held in INS camps, along with enemy aliens.

**INTERNMENT:** After a hearing before an Alien Enemy Hearing Board, an internment order was issued. The alien was then technically an internee. Some internees were held up to three years after the war, pursuant to an executive order by President Harry Truman.

**PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATIONS 2525, 2526, 2527**: Orders signed, pursuant to the Alien Enemies Act, by President Roosevelt immediately after Pearl Harbor, authorizing among other things the arrest, detention, and internment of enemy aliens.

**PRISONER OF WAR:** An enemy soldier captured during war. Even though enemy aliens were civilians and not soldiers, they were for a time kept in separate compounds in prisoner of war camps run by the Army.

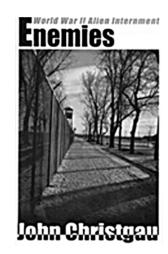
**RELOCATION:** The term used to describe the eventual relocation under Executive Order 9066 of all persons of Japanese ancestry, tens of thousands of whom were American citizens, from restricted military areas.

**RENUNCIATION:** The act of forfeiting citizenship.

**RENUNCIANT:** One who has forfeited or given up citizenship.

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY: The special branch of the War Department created to oversee the relocation camps for all persons of Japanese ancestry. These camps were separate from the INS camps and facilities that held enemy aliens.





.ENEMIES: World War II Alien Internment By John Christgau

#### ISBN 0-595-17915-0

Originally published by Iowa State University Press, 1985. Reprinted by Authors Choice Press, iUniverse.com, 2001 \$16.95 US, \$27.95 Canada

This riveting book recounts the highly secret Enemy Alien Internment Program of the United States during World War II. It does so by presenting for the first time the story of Fort Lincoln Internment Camp for German and Japanese aliens near Bismarck, North Dakota, where guards were bound by oaths of silence, and where life for inmates involved loneliness, boredom, and bitterness.

Based on interviews and FBI and National Archives records, ENEMIES follows the lives of eight internees prior to incarceration at the camp, life once there, and their lives after internment. In so doing, the book reveals a chapter of American history as astounding as any account of the usually peaceful West Coast relocation centers for persons of Japanese ancestry.

ENEMIES, which was recommended for the National Book Award and the first book written on World War II alien internment, is food for thought about the rights of immigrants in an American democracy, then and now.

According to *Snow Country Prison* curator Laurel Reuter, "This is the only book written specifically about Fort Lincoln as a World War II enemy alien internment camp. It is also a seminal text in North Dakota history." We have come to value the arts because they make our hearts wise—the highest of human goals. Therefore, in an environment that might be perceived as alien to the arts, we propose to build a stellar museum for the people of the Northern Plains.

### - North Dakota Museum of Art Mission Statement

## NORTH DAKOTA MUSEUM OF ART



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Laurel Reuter, Director Sue Fink, Director of Museum Education Matt Wallace, Director, Rural Arts Initiative Greg Vettel, Exhibition Coordinator Justin Dalzell, Rural Arts Initiative Associate Rural Arts E-mail: mwallace@ndmoa.com

Admission: Free to Museum and Rural School programs Museum Suggested donation: \$5 from adults and change from children The Museum Cafe is open weekdays for lunch. Call to book special tours or to rent event space.

### ABOUT THE MUSEUM

**HISTORY:** The Museum was founded in 1974 as the University Art Galleries located in the University of North Dakota Student Union. In 1985 the Museum was designated as the official State Art Gallery and the name was changed to the North Dakota Museum of Art. The Museum is not funded by the State Legislature except for project-based support. Individuals, foundations, and corporations underwrite the Museum and its programs.

**Mission:** The Museum's purpose is to foster and nurture the aesthetic life and artistic expression of the people living on the Northern Plains through exhibitions, programs, and publications that engage the region, the country, and the world.

**PROGRAMS:** The Museum produces over seventy events per year including exhibitions, concerts, children's programs, lectures, workshops, art auctions, and fund-raisers. Temporary exhibitions are housed in the Museum's three galleries. Exhibitions run from six weeks to two months. Works from the permanent collection are included in temporary exhibitions. In addition, many of the Museum's exhibitions tour nationally and internationally.

**COLLECTIONS:** The Museum's collection, begun in 1989, numbers 900 objects encompassing 1) national and international contemporary art acquired through the exhibition program, 2) works that are vital to the visual history of the region, and 3) contemporary Native American art from the 1970s on. The Museum also commissions new work by artists that explore the unique and changing culture and environment of the Northern Plains.

**AUDIENCE:** Historically, the Museum's audience averages between 35,000 and 50,000 a year. It is located in Grand Forks but serves a large, geographic area that includes all of rural North Dakota and northwest Minnesota. Between 2005 and 2007, over 100,000 people will see Museum exhibitions in such cities as Buenos Aires, Montevideo, New York, and Santa Fe. The Museum's penetration into its community (ratio of visitors to population) is one of the highest in the country.

**RURAL ARTS INITIATIVE:** The Museum has launched an educational outreach program that will encourage and empower rural school children and their teachers to actively participate in learning through museum exhibitions. As of December 2006 the Museum has taken three exhibitions and complimenting programming into twenty-two rural communities, had sixty-six schools participate from neighboring school districts, and inserted more than 60,000 eight-page tabloids into daily and weekly newspapers across the state. The Museum targets schools within a fifty-mile radius of each host community.

**GOVERNANCE:** In 1996 the Museum underwent significant institutional change when UND turned over management of the Museum to an independent Board of Trustees under its own 501 (c) (3). There are nineteen active Trustees and twelve Emeritus Trustees. In 1998 the North Dakota Museum of Art Foundation, with ten members, was established as a separate 501 (c) (3) charged with raising and managing Museum major gifts and endowments. Currently there are nineteen active Trustees and eleven Trustees Emeritus. There are eleven active members of the Museum Foundation Board.