

Marking Territory Exhibition Opens Saturday

Written by Natalie Dunlop
Friday, 01 March 2013 10:45

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Davenport, Iowa (February 28, 2013) – Beginning Saturday the Figge Art Museum will present the exhibition: *Marking Territory: Cartographic Treasures of the Mississippi River and the World Beyond* in the second floor print gallery. □

Curated by Rima Girnius, PhD, the exhibition features a selection of more than 25 historic maps that range from early representations of the world to more detailed examinations of America's vast interior west of the Mississippi. The exhibition explores how maps communicate highly complex ideas about identity, politics and culture.

American identity coincided with the evolution of maps. From the late 17th through the 19th centuries, cartographers and explorers recorded what they were learning about the United States interior west of the Mississippi. Never innocent of broader political objectives, these maps of the New World function as exercises in power, attempts on the part of one nation and race to exert control over another. For example, the shifting boundaries of Iowa in the 19th century demonstrate the American government's interest in solidifying borders and publicly laying claim on territories.

In documenting the fluidity and continuity between territories, maps suggest that the West is capable of being traversed and thus inhabited, conquered and exploited. Informed by political agendas and underlying values, maps function as important historical and cultural documents

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that offer a compelling look into the past. They remind the exhibition viewer to look for what is not only present in an image but also what has been hidden from view.

According to Girnius, “The featured maps contribute to our growing knowledge of the physical world by functioning as essential navigation and information-gathering tools and thus providing insight on what people knew (or thought they knew) about their environment.”

The exhibition will be on display through June 16 and is sponsored by Humanities Iowa.

Companion Programming:

Collecting and Curating Reception and Talk

Thursday, March 7

6 p.m. Reception • 7 p.m. Talk

Presenters: Rima Girnius, PhD, and H. Dee Hoover

Introduction to the exhibition by Curator Rima Girnius followed by a gallery talk with map collector H. Dee Hoover about the maps featured.

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Artist Talk

Personal Geography: Charting a Course

7 p.m. Thursday, March 21

Presenter: Maureen Bardusk

Join studio artist Maureen Bardusk for a presentation of her unique stitched paper work, during which she will discuss her ideas and technique. Bardusk also will describe her creative life in Galena, Illinois, after which she will provide audience members with a hands-on display of her work in various stages.

Free Family Day

Maps: Adventure, Fun & Family

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Saturday, April 13

Find the fastest route to the FREE Figge Family Day, "Maps–Adventure, Fun and Family." Make a treasure map, learn about maps of all kinds, chart your family tree and more as you explore the wonderful world of maps!

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Docent-led Tours

3:30 p.m. Saturday, March 2, 9, 16 and 23

6 p.m. on Thursdays, March 7 and 21

1:30 p.m. on Sundays in April 7, 14, 21 and 28

Interactive Workshop

Given Space: Writing Your Own Cartography

6-8 p.m. Thursday, June 6

Presenter: E. Marie Bertram

Join poet and Augustana Professor E. Marie Bertram for this interactive workshop combining visual art and the written word. This workshop is free, but space is limited so registration is required. To register, contact Heather Aaronson at [563.326.7804 x2045](tel:563.326.7804) or haaronson@figgeartmuseum.org

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X Marks the Spot

March 9-June 16

Families can visit *X Marks the Spot* in Studio 1. Chart a route to learning and adventure, exploring everything from the trusty road atlas to genealogical maps that trace your family history.

About the Figge Art Museum

The Figge Art Museum is located on the riverfront in downtown Davenport at 225 West Second Street. Hours are from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday and Sundays 12-5 p.m. Thursdays the museum is open until 9 p.m. Admission to the museum and tour is \$7. Admission is free to Figge members and institutional members. To contact the museum, please call [563.326.7804](tel:563.326.7804), or visit www.figgeartmuseum.org.

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