



ANNUAL REPORT 2017



About the Western Museums Association

Providing professional development to museum professionals since 1935

The Western Museums Association (WMA) is a nonprofit, membership organization dedicated to serving museums, museum professionals, as well as the related organizations and individuals, by providing vision, enrichment, intellectual challenge, and a forum for communication and interaction. The WMA is primarily comprised of members across the Western states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington, the Western provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, and the Pacific Islands, among others.

The WMA sustains itself through memberships, the Annual Meeting, and partnerships.

Mission Statement

Transforming the museum field through collaboration.

Vision

Dynamic museums connecting with thriving communities.



WMA believes museums must be essential to the communities they serve and that their impact contributes to why their communities thrive. By sparking the generation of ideas that continually refresh the museum field, **WMA ENSURES MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS ARE INSPIRED TO CREATE MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES THAT INDIVIDUAL VISITORS VALUE.**



“WMA is definitely leading the packing in terms of cutting-edge sessions.”

–WMA 2017 Annual Meeting Attendee

“The conference was excellent and staff was always super helpful and upbeat!”

–WMA 2017 Annual Meeting Attendee

Western Museums Associations 2017 Annual Meeting



Living our mission of “transforming the museum field through collaboration”, the Western Museums Association (WMA) partnered with the Alberta Museums Association to welcome 450 museum professionals to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada for the convening of the 2017 Annual Meeting on September 20-23. This year’s Annual Meeting theme **UNITE** focused on the ways museums can unite across sectors, across communities, and across borders to work towards innovative and inclusive solutions to shared concerns. Our program had a variety of professional development and networking opportunities. The progressive sessions, lively discussions, and pioneering insights that took place at this year’s Annual Meeting embodied the collaborative nature of this joint international museum conference.

WMA’s tradition of provocative and engaging programming continued in 2017 with over 40 Sessions, 5 Pre-Conference Workshops and Tours, 2 Evening Events, 4 Affinity Gatherings, a Poster Session, and the first Game Show Showdown! In addition to our interactive sessions and hands-on workshops, we were pleased to present Tony Butler as our keynote speaker. Tony is the Executive Director of Derby Museums Trust and the Chair and Founder of the Happy Museum Project. His keynote address, *If Not Here, Where? The Museum as Bridge in Polarized Times* explored how museums play a role in addressing long term challenges like climate change and abrupt

disruptions like Brexit, and set us up for more challenging museum thinking to come throughout the Annual Meeting.

Each year WMA presents two awards: the Charles Redd Award and the Director’s Chair Award. The Charles Redd Center Western Studies Award for Exhibition Excellence honors excellence for an exhibition that furthers the study and understanding of the American West. The 2017 Charles Redd Award was presented to the Boise Art Museum, for the exhibition *Minidoka: Artist as Witness*. Melanie Fales, Executive Director, accepted the award on behalf of the museum. The Director’s Chair Award is presented to an individual who has had a significant and lasting impact on museum practices



450

MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS
WERE WELCOMED AT
THE 2016 ANNUAL
MEETING IN PHOENIX

15

SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENTS

40

SESSIONS

145

PRESENTERS

and the museum profession in the Western Region – and beyond! The 2017 Director’s Chair Award was presented to Dr. Robert R. Janes. He has worked in and around museums for 40 years as an executive, consultant, editor, author, board member, archaeologist, instructor, volunteer, and philanthropist



Practitioner; and Carol Mayer, Curator of Oceania and World Ceramics, Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia. The panelists discussed how museums and communities can work together to address social problems and charged museums with making change in the world.

Another wonderful highlight from the final day was the Game Show Showdown: Canada vs. USA – hosted by Seth Margolis. Representatives from both sides of the border participated in a lively showdown featuring museum-centric trivia and games!

- devoting his career to championing museums as important social institutions that are capable of making a difference in the lives of individuals and their communities.

“I really enjoyed the merging of both American & Canadian organizations. It was very interesting to learn how institutions tackle similar situations and how different American and Canadian museums can be.”

3
EVENING EVENTS

5
AFFINITY GATHERINGS

8
PRECONFERENCE TOURS
AND WORKSHOPS

2
GENERAL SESSIONS

The final day included a powerful Closing General Session and panel, Museums **UNITE** to Improve Communities, which gave examples of museum and community collaborations. The panel featured: Lisa Sasaki, WMA President and Director of the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center; Laura Huerta Míguis; Executive Director, Association of Children’s Museums, Robert R. Janes, Museum Scholar-



In the end, with much laughter and tough museum questions, our host country’s team was victorious and perhaps a new WMA tradition was started...

THANK YOU to all attendees, sponsors, volunteers, Program & Host Committee members, the WMA board of directors, and finally our partners: the Alberta Museums Association for making WMA 2017 a success! We look forward to seeing you at WMA 2018 in Tacoma, Washington.





“The content was challenging and focused and it was an environment of safety where attendees could discuss difficult issues.”

–WMA 2017 Annual Meeting Attendee

“The focus on working with and telling the stories of Indigenous communities was very timely and helpful.”

–WMA 2017 Annual Meeting Attendee



“I was really happy with the EMP-focused events because it created a space for people to find each other under a common interest.”

–WMA 2016 Annual Meeting Attendee

For the 2017–2020 term, the WMA Board of Directors welcomed 6 distinguished museum professionals:

- Sarah Bloom, Senior Manager of Teen, Family, and Multigenerational Programs, Seattle Art Museum
- Melanie Fales, Executive Director, Boise Art Museum
- Noelle Kahanu, Assistant Specialist, Public Humanities and Native Hawaiian Programs, University of Hawaii at Monoa
- Sonja Lunde, Deputy Director of Planning and Programs, Utah Museum of Fine Arts
- Jeanette Woodburn, Principal, Holistic Fundraising
- Dafna Zilafro, Vice President of Marketing, MATT Construction

A Special Thanks to Our 2017 Annual Meeting Sponsors

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INNOVATOR



LEADER



CATALYST



ENTHUSIAST



WMA by the Numbers in 2017

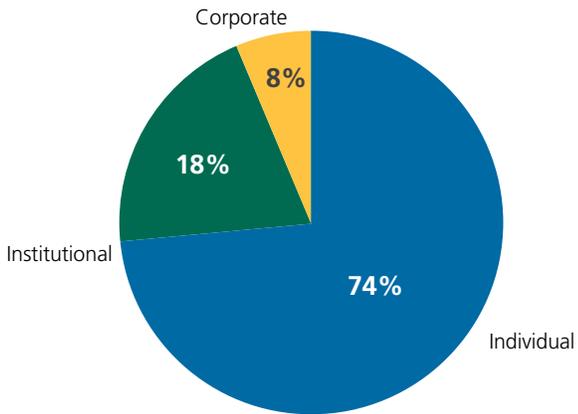


6,608
SOCIAL MEDIA
CONNECTIONS

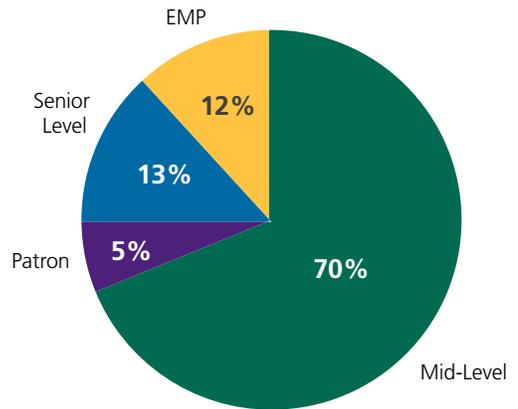
1,613
TOTAL MEMBERS
INCLUDES ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



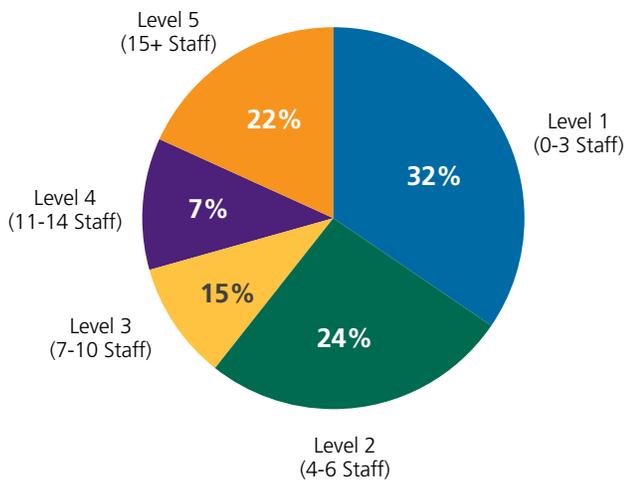
MEMBERSHIP: All Levels



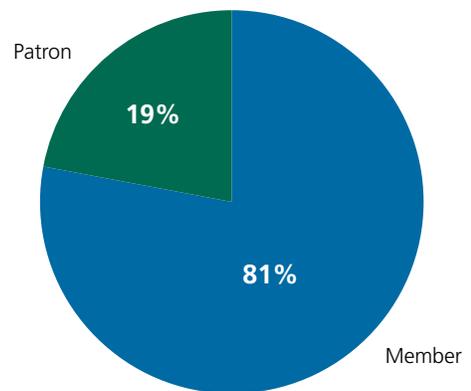
MEMBERSHIP: Individual



MEMBERSHIP: Institutional



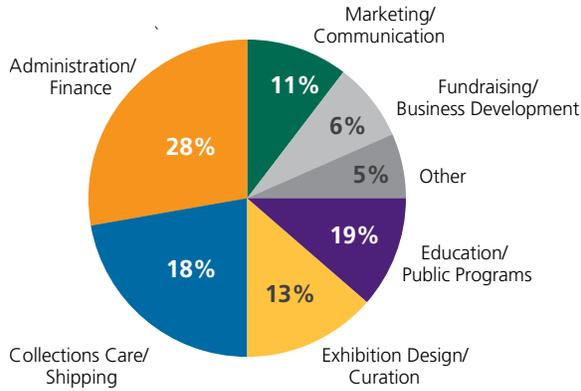
MEMBERSHIP: Corporate



WMA 2017 by the Numbers



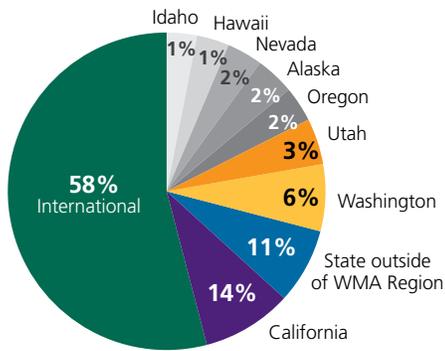
ATTENDEES: Work Area



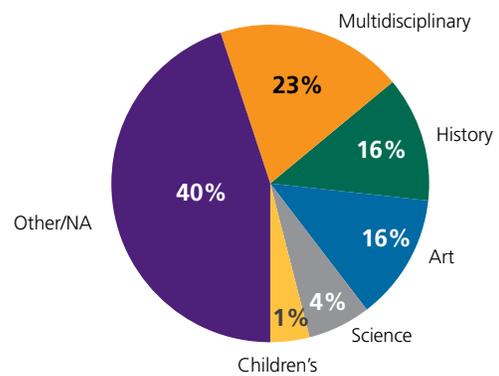
ATTENDEES: Career Stage



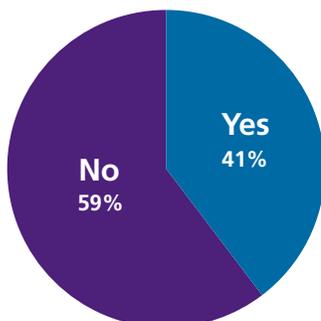
ATTENDEES: By Location



ATTENDEES: Museum Type



ATTENDEES: First Time



ATTENDEES: Registration Rate



WMA Board of Directors



OFFICERS

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Lisa Sasaki, Director, Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center (APAC)

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Keni S. Sturgeon, Vice President, Science Engagement & Outreach, Pacific Science Center

Vice President, Programs and Innovations:

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Micah Parzen, CEO, San Diego Museum of Man

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Kippen de Alba Chu, Executive Director, Iolani Palace
Term ends: 2018

MEMBERS

Eowyn Bates, Vice President of Institutional Advancement
San Diego Natural History Museum

Sarah Bloom, Senior Manager of Teen, Family, and
Multigenerational Programs, Seattle Art Museum

W. James Burns, Ph.D., Museum Adviser, Independent Curator
and Scholar, Public Historian

Steve Comba, Associate Director/Registrar, Pomona College
Museum of Art

Laurie Egan-Hedley, Director and Curator, Barona Cultural
Center & Museum

Melanie Fales, Executive Director, Boise Art Museum

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Noelle Kahanu, Assistant Specialist, Public Humanities and Native
Hawaiian Programs, University of Hawaii at Monoa

Jonathan Katz, CEO, Cinnabar Inc

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Museum of the North

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Dafna Zilafro, Vice President of Marketing, MATT Construction

WMA STAFF

Jason B. Jones, Executive Director

WESTERN MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

2018 ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 21-24

INSPIRE

TACOMA, WA