

New director to lead Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture & the Arts

Eva Laird Smith is the new executive director of the Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture & the Arts, only the seventh person in the 46-year history of the arts agency to hold the post. She follows Ronald K. Yamakawa who is retiring after serving as director for 10 years, capping a 35-year career with the State Foundation.

Laird Smith is joining HSFCA from her position as director of the USO of Hawai'i and before that was president of Junior Achievement of Hawai'i, executive director of the Filipino Community Center of Hawai'i and executive director of Hawai'i's Plantation Village. She assumes her new duties on January 3, 2012.



Eva Laird Smith

"Eva Laird Smith is an outstanding choice among many able candidates who applied," said Barbara Saromines-Ganne, Oahu commissioner and chair of the board of the HSFCA. "She joins our excellent staff and commissioners to deal with the challenges facing state government and the arts community today and we are confident she will do a great job."

Smith has a master's degree in museum studies from the University of Manchester, England; a dean's list bachelor's degree from the University of Washington in Seattle; and bachelor of fine arts from the College of the Holy Spirit in Manila.

First Friday – Open Galleries

Friday, January 6, 2012, 6 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.,
Hawai'i State Art Museum, Free

Join us for First Friday this January 6th at the Hawai'i State Art Museum. Dayton Watanabe will be playing Hawaiian slack key guitar, or *ki ho alu*, to soothe your senses and relax your mind as you stroll leisurely through our Diamond Head, 'Ewa and Sculpture Lobby Galleries. Hang out in our Courtyard and watch the stars go by.

First Friday in February will take us back to a time before electronic games.

Come to the Hawai'i State Art Museum and play some of the board games you may not have played for a while. The second floor courtyard will be set up with tables and various games. Bring your own game, a friend, or a group and be with people.

The Hawai'i State Art Museum—a center for the community.

Galleries will be open from 6:00 PM until 8:45 PM.

DECEMBER FREE EVENTS AT HISAM

The public is invited to these free events for January 2012 to be held at the Hawai'i State Art Museum in the No.1 Capitol District Building at 250 South Hotel Street in downtown Honolulu. See feature stories and photos of these events in this newsletter.

First Friday Open Galleries Friday, January 6, 2012 6-8:45 p.m.

Dayton Watanabe will be playing Hawaiian slack key guitar, or *ki ho alu*, to soothe your senses and relax your mind as you stroll leisurely through our Diamond Head, 'Ewa and Sculpture Lobby Galleries.

Second Saturday Hats Off to Art! with Michael Wall Saturday, January 14, 2012 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Celebrate the New Year together with your family on a Saturday guaranteed to put a new hat on your head and new ideas in it! Construct your own one-of-a kind hat before taking a musical safari in our galleries with percussionist and Teaching Artist Michael Wall.

Art Lunch Why Sit When You Can Move? A Kinetic Connection to the Arts With Mimi E. Wisnosky Tuesday, January 31, 2012 12-1 p.m.

Explore the possibilities of responding to visual art through movement with professional dancer and Teaching Artist Mimi Wisnosky. She will explain and demonstrate kinetic ways to "Respond to Art" that draw upon the innate communication potential within each of us

Portrait of an Arts Administrator: Ron Yamakawa

by Estelle Enoki

When Ron Yamakawa joined the State Foundation in 1976 as the first member of the fledgling Art in Public Places Program, he had been teaching at a private school in Honolulu for a year following his return from active duty in the Vietnam War. Having obtained his degree in arts education, he was eager to work with Alfred Preis, the agency's executive director and respected architect, designer of the Arizona Memorial.

"I guess you could call Alfred Preis fastidious; a workaholic. He put in long hours. Obviously, he had high aesthetic standards and could be extremely analytical, not because he was trying to be difficult, but because he could envision so clearly what he wanted," reflects Yamakawa. "He influenced my work ethic and I can honestly say even now that no one I've met has had a higher aesthetic sensibility than Fred Preis."

Preis and Masaru "Pundy" Yokouchi, the agency's first chairman, authored the country's first percent for art law for a state agency. The law makes art an integral part of all new state buildings. Yamakawa later refined the law by drafting legislation that established the Works of Art Special Fund, which helped to rework the mechanics of the percent for art law, providing for a process that allowed for the proper time in which to appropriate and encumber the funds.

"As long as the State adheres to the bond counsel advice (i.e., that the funds are to be used strictly for Capital Improvement Program projects to build buildings) the law will thrive. This is a well written law," states Yamakawa, who, as executive director, fought against compromising the intent and

language of the law during many legislative sessions. "An attorney can appreciate how clearly the law is written."

Yamakawa administered the APP Program for 26 years, assuming duties as planner, curator, commissions project manager, registrar, and conservation coordinator. He became the agency's top gun in 2002 and immediately worked to establish the Hawai'i State Art Museum, a vision of the Cayetano admin-



Ron Yamakawa

istration, which opened in November of the same year in the No. 1 Capitol District Building.

"The importance of HiSAM is that we now have a primary venue to exhibit our collection," Yamakawa comments. The collection has grown to nearly 6,000 pieces. "We are able to mount fully interpreted exhibitions with themes. I am most pleased for Hawaii's artists to be able to have their work shown in a high quality venue," Yamakawa confides.

As head of the agency, Yamakawa has also worked conscientiously to perpetuate the art of the host culture, a goal initiated by Preis and Yokouchi, which contributed to the renaissance in Hawaiian culture during the seventies. Initiatives in Hawaiian music and dance were funded under Yamakawa's direction and at his discretion. Notably, a three-year project in the art of kapa-making is currently underway, with many cultural resources involved. Halau O Kekuhi opened this year's Merrie Monarch Festival dancing in the handmade kapa and a documentary film about the project is in its second year of production.

Yamakawa has also been an advocate for arts education, noting the initiation four years ago of the museum's Art Bento Program, which provides exhibition tours and hands-on art workshops for young students led by Artistic Teaching Partners. "We even fund bussing for all of the schools that need transportation," Yamakawa points out. "It's so important for art to be part of a student's early learning experience."

Despite difficulties with travel due to the lagging economy, Yamakawa also appreciates the need for the professional development of his staff, sending them to regional and national professional development opportunities over the years. "It's not a field for people who want to earn a lot of money without putting in long hours," he says. "You have to love art. You need to be able to gain satisfaction from giving back to the community."

Invariably, Yamakawa's legacy to the public is in public art. "It's a great public process that ultimately reflects

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Join the Friends of HiSAM

We invite you to join the Friends of the Hawai'i State Art Museum (HiSAM). By simply joining, you can help maintain a free, public institution dedicated to the art and people of Hawai'i. You can join by phone by calling 536-2644, or you can download an application form by clicking on [Friends of HiSAM Application Form](#).

Portrait of an Arts Administrator: Ron Yamakawa (cont'd)

the aspirations of a community,” he explains. “I have many memorable experiences that contributed to the growth of the APP Program.” Among them are Sean Browne’s sculpture at Kapiolani Community College (“The first monumental sculpture project that I managed.”); Hon Chew Hee and Mataumu Alisa for their systematic process and diligence in working through a project; Satoru Abe’s ability to effectively explore variations on a theme; and George Segal’s willingness to adapt his sculpture for the UH Manoa campus using directional signs in Hawaiian.

Yamakawa recently traveled to Kahului where he viewed a statue of Yokouchi on the grounds of the Maui Arts and Cultural Center. “Pundy stood for art and the common man and art as

an educational resource. He believed everyone should have access to art and that art is universal.” The MACC was Yokouchi’s dream for Maui’s arts community. “Pundy would be pleased with the MACC’s progress,” Yamakawa reflects, confiding that his visit to the Center served as a sort of pilgrimage to honor his friend and mentor.

Late in the day, Yamakawa sits at his desk, intently working at his computer while staff members on flex time depart over a period of two hours. Typically, Yamakawa is the last to leave the office. At dusk, he locks the door behind him, exiting past the sculptures in the lobby and the magnificent sculpture garden, near completion; its photovoltaic canopy of a reef triggerfish casting a sprawling colorful reflection on the rear

wall of the building.

After 35 years, Yamakawa’s name may not be a highly visible imprint on the landscape of State government. Nevertheless, as a public servant and through his creativity and leadership, Yamakawa has significantly contributed to the quality of life in the state, an achievement not many can claim. By his own philosophy, his reward will be in knowing that he departs the State leaving it a positive influence for generations of Hawaii’s residents and visitors far into the future.

“I believe the arts are the strongest educational tool there is, as well as the bridge that connects human beings at the most basic level of understanding,” he says. “I’ve tried my best to serve those interests.”

Second Saturday – Hats Off to the Arts! Saturday, January 14, 2012, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m., Hawai‘i State Art Museum, Free

Celebrate the New Year with a day at HiSAM guaranteed to put a new hat on your head and new ideas in it! Construct your own one-of-a-kind hat and proudly wear it as you take a musical safari in our galleries with percussionist and Teaching Artist [Michael Wall](#). Come and spend the day with art!

Gallery Hours for the museum are 10 am to 4 pm. The hands-on art activities are free and open to the public from 11 am to 3 pm while supplies last.

Downtown streets aren’t crowded on the weekend, so walk, bike, take The Bus or drive to HiSAM on Second Saturday (\$3 flat-rate parking across the street at Ali‘i Place; enter at 1099 Alakea St. Free parking available at City & County underground lot at Beretania and Alapai).

Come see—it’s your art!



Hats off to the Arts!

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Art Lunch Lecture: Why Sit When You Can Move? A Kinetic Connection to the Arts With Mimi E. Wisnosky

Tuesday, January 31, 2012, 12 Noon – 1 p.m., Free

Explore the possibilities of responding to visual art through movement with professional dancer and Teaching Artist Mimi Wisnosky. A graduate of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Mimi has studied ballet, modern dance, improvisation and creative movement with teachers including Betty Jones, Gregg Lizenbery, Peggy Gaither Adams, Marcia Sakamoto Wong and Joe Goode. Inspiration and encouragement came from her mother (MiMi Wisnosky), a committed professional dancer and teacher at Kapiolani Community College for 30 years. Her father, painter and UHM professor John Wisnosky, provided an environment rich with visual art.



Mimi Wisnosky

Mimi successfully brings the two disciplines of creative movement and visual art together as a Teaching Artist for HiSAM education programs. She will explain and demonstrate kinetic ways to “Respond to Art” that draw upon the innate communication potential within each of us. Audience members will be invited to join in. No experience required!



Creative dance with Mimi.

HiSAM Facilities Rental Program

Hold Your Special Event or Party at the Hawai'i State Art Museum

The Hawai'i State Art Museum is available for rentals for special events and parties. The rental options include: Option 1 - Front Lawn, Option 2 - Second Floor Courtyard, or Option 3 - Front Lawn and Second Floor Courtyard.

The rental brochure is available for download here [HiSAM Rental Program Brochure](#). Anyone interested in renting the facilities may request a HiSAM Rental Information Packet which contains a Rental Handbook, Rental Request Form, and HiSAM brochure.

For more information or to request the packet, contact the HiSAM Visitor Services Manager via email at hisamrentals@gmail.com or call 586-9959.



Showcase Hawaii Visit Showcase Hawaii, the museum gift store. The store features Hawai'i-made art, gifts, and goodies. It's the perfect place to find a unique gift for that special someone. Open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. On First Friday, Showcase Hawaii opens again from 6 to 9 p.m. and is on the ground floor of the Hawaii State Art Museum.