



Northern Arts News

A Publication of the Region 2 Arts Council

Artist Interview: Morris Blanchard

By Elaine Fleming

"Grandmother Moon...wanted me to do this painting about one of the bear legends," said Morris Blanchard, a self-taught artist of Canadian and French-Ojibwe descent. Although he has had no formal training, traditional knowledge guides his oil and acrylic drawings rich in colors and intending to teach that Ojibwe people and culture are vibrantly alive and well. Placed in a boarding school work farm in Dryden, Ontario, at four years of age, Morris began his artistic journey. Not allowed to talk to his sister, he sent her hand drawn pictures of hearts and animals. Today, those drawings have evolved into representations of Ojibwe legends. "All the pictures come from dreams. They were spiritually given."

Sometimes Morris fasts up to five days for the paintings. Only painting during the winter months, Morris does a monthly thank-you ceremony for his gifts. Albeit grateful, Morris is a struggling artist. "Being an artist is either feast or famine. [Selling your work] depends on who's promoting you." Most of his work is advertised through word of mouth. Sometimes friends travel door to door to sell it. Recently the Wild Hare Coffee House displayed his paintings, and Louise Erdrich, well-known author, bought a lynx painting. Still, he encounters the same problems of other upcoming artists. Morris said, "It takes money to make money." This is difficult because Morris and Joyce are raising three children and subsist on income from traditional-seasonal work. Often, they can't afford the fees to display his work in art events. He has no studio or car.

Presenting two of his paintings,

Morris lays tobacco on top of the first one. He prays in Ojibwe and speaks of the woman in a green jingle dress. Her purple footprints are those of a bear. The particular legend that brings forth the painting concerns a lost daughter saved by a mother bear. Morris says it is a summer legend. He hopes that no one will be offended in anyway with his telling of the story. Women are important figures in his work. He says that women are sacred. "Women are givers and keepers of life. They need to be acknowledged," He accomplishes this through his paintings.

Laying out more tobacco, Morris talks about the second painting, the making of the bullhead clan. One sees into the fish, even their bones. Employing bright and contrasting colors, Morris has painted a story about seven children given a great teaching by Wenaboozhoo's oldest sister, Tabiik. Flowing lines and violet ripples in pale blue water illustrate his upbringing. Canadian Ojibwe art work is given through the northern lights, and so it flows and dances. Sam English, an acclaimed artist, said that Morris has his own unique style. English offered Morris the use of his personal studio; only it is in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Consequently, Morris continues work in the woods, waiting for winter when it will be time once again to paint legends through the northern lights.

Elaine Fleming, Chair, Arts and Humanities Department, Leech Lake Tribal College, has an M.F.A. in Creative Writing. She has written and directed several plays in the local area.

September/October 2008

Vol. 11 No. 1

Region 2 Arts Council Offers Grants

R2AC has several upcoming grant deadlines for eligible artists and art organizations in the five-county area of Region 2, which includes Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods and Mahnommen Counties.

Arts Project Grants

September 10 & March 11

For any organization, school or community group that needs funding assistance with an arts project or event.

Anishinaabe Arts Initiative Grants

October 1 & March 4

Grants awarded to individuals, schools and organizations for projects that address AAI's mission of supporting, maintaining and promoting traditional and contemporary Native American art.

Individual Artists Grants

October 8 & February 11

Designed for artists at various career stages for production or exhibition of art, performances, workshop fees, materials/equipment, mentorships and projects.

McKnight Grants to Arts Organizations.

January 7

For 501(c)3 arts organizations that need funding assistance for events or for small capital items.

For information and applications, contact Terri Widman at R2AC.

218-751-5447 or 800-275-5447.

E-mail: r2arts@paulbunyan.net.

To download the guidelines and applications, visit: www.r2arts.org

R2AC Grant Writing Workshops

Baudette	Sept. 4	LOW High School ITV Rm.
Individual Artist Grant		5:00 - 6:00p.m.
Arts Project Grant		6:00 - 7:00p.m.
Park Rapids	Sept. 18	Public Library Conf. Rm.
Listening Session		5:00 - 6:00p.m.
Individual Artist Grant Workshop		6:00 - 7:00p.m.
Arts Project Grant		7:00 - 8:00p.m.

ADVANCE REGISTRATION is required. To reserve a place in a free workshop or for further information, please call 218-751-5447 or 1-800-257-5447, or e-mail: r2arts@paulbunyan.net

NORTHERN ARTS NEWS is a free publication of the Region 2 Arts Council, published 6 times per year, with a distribution of over 1,300.

Funded by a grant from the McKnight Foundation, *Northern Arts News* provides news and information to artists in Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, and Mahnommen counties of north central Minnesota.

We welcome:

- story topic ideas;
- guest commentary topic ideas;
- names to add to our mailing list;
- collaboration and registration notifications.

To submit information and/or to be added to our mailing list, contact the R2AC office:

Call: 218-751-5447 or 1-800-275-5447

FAX: 218-751-2777

E-mail: r2arts@paulbunyan.net

Website: www.r2arts.org

Northern Arts News
Region 2 Arts Council
426 Bemidji Avenue
Bemidji, MN 56601

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GUEST COMMENTARY inquiries are invited. Submit your topic idea to Terri Widman by telephone, FAX, or e-mail. Selected works must be previously unpublished and fit within the space allotment.

Due to the advanced print deadlines of this publication, we suggest that you call to confirm dates, times, and other pertinent information about events and opportunities listed here.

Statewide Needs Assessment Survey of the Arts

The Minnesota State Arts Board and the Regional Arts Councils are conducting a statewide needs assessment to help determine how Minnesota residents currently participate in the arts, the degree to which they perceive the arts to be an asset in their lives or communities and if a gap exists between residents' current connection with the arts and what they wish or believe that connection should be.

The primary method of gathering information is a survey that anyone either can fill out online or on paper. As one of the 11 arts councils that partner with the State Arts Board in providing grants and services to Minnesota arts organizations, we are eager for the Arts Board to have the broadest possible representation of perspectives and ideas.

We strongly encourage you to respond to the survey and similarly encourage your colleagues, board, staff and audience members and anyone else to do the same. The survey can be found at <http://www.theimprovementgroup.com/surveys/mnarts.htm>

Showcase Artist

Morris Blanchard

Makwa Aadizookahn
(The Bear Legend)
16" x 20" oil paint, acrylic



~See Page 4 for more from Morris~

Enduring Vision Award Winners

The Bush Foundation announced three recipients of its Enduring Vision Awards which focus on propelling the artistic investigations of mature artists.

Each recipient will receive \$100,000 over the next three to five years. The Enduring Vision Award is the only award of this size and intent in the country. Up to three awards will be given annually to artists in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. The 2008 awards were considered in the visual and media arts categories; 2009 awards will focus on performing and literary arts.

Winners of this years awards include **Janel Jacobson**, a wood carver from Harris, MN, **Walter Piehl**, acrylics on canvas or paper from Minot, ND, and **Frank Big Bear**, painter from Minneapolis. Big Bear was born in Detroit Lakes and spent his early years on the White Earth Reservation. His drawings are in collections of the Walker Art Center, the British Museum in London and the Frederick R. Weisman Museum. In September 2008, the Tweed Museum in Duluth will show a retrospective of Big Bear's work.

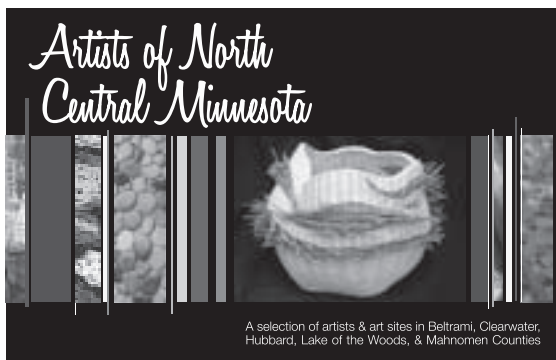
Legislature Appropriation for the Arts

The Minnesota State Legislature had the important task of finding nearly \$1 billion in new revenue or expense cuts to balance the fiscal 2009 budget. We are pleased that there will be no cuts to the appropriation to the Minnesota State Arts Board and by extension to the Region 2 Arts Council. R2AC will be able to provide approximately \$72,000 in grants to artists and organizations in the five county area during the fiscal year that began July 1, 2008. The legislature appropriation reaffirms the important role that the arts play in strengthening communities.

Now Available: 3rd Edition

Artists of North Central Minnesota

Produced by the Region 2 Arts Marketing Program.



Includes a juried selection of artists and art sites.

Copies will be distributed throughout the five counties. You can stop by the R2AC office. 426 Beltrami Ave. Bemidji to pickup a copy.

Talking Stick Book Release Party and Jackpine Writers' Annual Celebration

This is a celebration of writers and the written word. Join in on an afternoon where those who work in the solitary world of the writing craft can come together.

September 20, 2008

Northwoods Bank, Park Rapids

Free and open to all. Sponsored by the Jackpine Writers' Bloc.

1:00 p.m. Kurt Nerburn, celebrity judge, will be signing his books.

2:00 p.m. Program begins

For more information, contact Sharon at 218-732-3782 or sharrick1@wcta.net.

Northern Arts News
Submission deadline

October 7

for the

Nov./Dec. issue

Please send to:

amy.zimmermann@hotmail.com

OPPORTUNITIES

29th Annual UND Writers Conference in Children's Literature

Featuring Minnesota author
Will Weaver, formerly a BSU
English professor.

October 3rd 6:30 p.m.
October 4th 8 a.m.

Memorial Union Lecture Bowl
Grand Forks, ND

Cost: \$85 for Members of the
Society of Children's Book
Writers and Illustrators
\$95 for Non-members

For more information, visit
www.english.und.edu/ChildrensLit/ChildrensLit08.html or
e-mail ursulahovet@mail.und.nodak.edu

Bemidji Symphony Orchestra Auditions for 2008-2009 Season

The Bemidji Symphony Orchestra is
holding auditions for Violin I, Violin
II, Viola, Cello and Double Bass.

Thursday, Sept. 11
5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Green Room on 2nd Floor
Bangsberg Fine Arts Building
Bemidji State University

Audition Requirements:
Please prepare a 2 minute solo that
features your playing at its best.

Woodwinds, Brass and Percussion
players may audition to be placed
on substitute list.

For more information or to request
an audition, contact Beverly Everett
at Podium314@aol.com or 218-751-
0665.

CALL FOR ARTISTS

The Bemidji Community Art Cen-
ter announces its new pilot project
"Shop 426" and call for artists to
submit work to be sold in this new
gallery shop.

Open to:

- All artists and crafts people
presenting original work in
design and final product.
- Work in all mediums including
small scale sculpture and small
2-dimensional work.
- Must be ready for sale and
installation by a buyer.
- Do not accept dealers, agents or
product representatives.

For more information, contact Lori
at 218-444-7570 or bcac@paulbunyan.net.

About the Showcase Artist **Morris Blanchard**

Artist's Statement:

*To have people understand that
the Ojibwe people and culture
are vibrantly alive and well.*



*Waasisii Aadizookahn
(Legend of the Bullhead)
16" x 20" oil paint, acrylic*

"Vote Yes Minnesota" is a Once in a Lifetime Opportunity

This November, you will have the opportunity to Vote Yes for Minnesota - dedicating funds to preserve clean water, protect game, fish and wildlife habitat, arts and parks and trails. This is a once in a lifetime chance to make an investment in protecting Minnesota's quality of life preserving it for future generations.

The amendment will offer tremendous help to protect our environment. The outdoor fund will preserve our many forests, prairies and natural areas that both Minnesotans and our tourists enjoy so much. Protecting our lands for game habitat, wildlife, fishing, hunting and hiking is critical at this time and passing this amendment is now the right thing to do for our state's future.

Just like our natural resources, the cultural resources are important to our quality of life and tourism industry. **19.75% of the funding will be directed to the arts and cultural resources.** Passage of this amendment will increase access to the arts for all Minnesotans, including greater access for kids to arts education. This amendment is a long-term investment in Minnesota's future generations.

For more information, contact Minnesota Citizens for the Arts at www.minnesotacitizensforthearts.org or the "Vote Yes Minnesota Campaign" at www.yesformn.org

Call for Artists

Bemidji Community Art Center and Bemidji State University Visual Arts Department announce the 6th annual

It's Only Clay 2008 Juried Ceramics Competition and Exhibit

This year's juror is artist and potter Linda Christianson.

**Submission Deadline:
Sept. 5 (postmarked)**

**Application fee:
\$30 for 3 entries**

Accepted work will be on display at BCAC Nov. 7 - Dec. 20, 2008.

Prize money for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners equaling \$1,600 and additional purchase awards for work going towards the Margaret Harlow Vessel Collection at BSU.

For more information, contact BCAC at 218-444-7570 or bcac@paulbunyan.net. For prospectus, visit www.bcac.wordpress.com.

Bemidji First City of Arts **STUDIO CRUISE**

October 17, 18 and 19

Participating artists in the Bemidji area invite the public into their studios to view and discuss their arts and crafts and the creative process behind the work. Brochures will be available listing participating artists and studio locations.

This event is free and open to the public.

For more information, call 218-751-6767 or swensonmail@yahoo.com

Bemidji Community Art Center Call For Artists

The Bemidji Community Art Center is taking submissions for their 2009-2010 exhibit calendars.

Applications for exhibit proposals are available at www.bcac.wordpress.com.

For more information, contact BCAC at 218-751-7570.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK

Sept. 5

Oct. 3

Downtown Bemidji

More information in our
"Calendar of Events" under each
participating business or gallery.

SEPTEMBER

Through September

Wild Hare Bistro and Coffeehouse

will feature paintings of Terry Honstead. **First Friday** opening reception 3-5p.m. Sept. 5. 523 Minnesota Ave. NW, downtown Bemidji. 218-444-5282.

Through September and October Bemidji Community Art Center

will present the work of artist and photographer Sean McCroy. **First Friday** Opening Reception for Sean McCroy 5 - 7p.m. on Sept. 5. Also showing in the Main Gallery are exhibits by Gege Holden and Sandra Haff and I Love a Parade. 426 Bemidji Ave N (Carnegie Library). 218-444-7570.

Through September and October

Neilson Place will be featuring the art of Mary Therese Peterson. **First Friday** opening reception 4-6p.m. on Sept. 5. 1000 Anne St. NW. 218-751-0220.

Sept. 2-23 North Country

Museum of Arts, Park Rapids, presents "Designs in Glass" by MaryBeth Vaudrin and Beverlee Olson. Second Friday Reception, 5 - 7p.m. Sept. 12. 218-237-5900.

Sept. 3-4 Headwaters School of Music and Arts Annual Fall

Writers Retreat. Presented by Poet and Writer Dr. CarolAnn Russell.

5-10p.m. both days. 218-444-5606.

Sept. 5-7 Ely's Fall Harvest Moon Festival. Whiteside Park, Ely. Arts, crafts, demos, entertainment and voyageur encampment. Fri. Noon - 6p.m. Sat. 10 - 5p.m. Sun. 10 - 4p.m. Free. 218-365-6123.

Sept. 13 Ethnic Fest, Walker. Craft fair, food and musicians. Noon-5p.m. Cost: \$5.00 218-547-1313.

Sept. 20-21 Goods From the Woods. IRA Civic Center, Grand Rapids. Workshops, demonstrations and community events. 9 - 5p.m. Cost: \$3. 888-649-8705.

Sept. 28 Carl O. Thompson Memorial Concert. 3p.m. Thompson Recital Hall, Bangsberg Hall.

OCTOBER

Through October

Wild Hare Bistro and Coffeehouse presents "My Minnesota Plus," the photography of D. Bjorn Christianson. **First Friday** opening reception 3-5p.m. Oct. 3. 523 Minnesota Ave. NW, downtown Bemidji. 218-444-5282.

Through September and October Bemidji Community Art Center will present the work of Gege Holden, fabric artist, and "The Dolls," a project brought by Sandra Haff and I Love a Parade. **First Friday** Opening Reception will feature I Love a Parade 5 - 7p.m. Oct. 3rd. 426 Bemidji Ave N (Carnegie Library) 218-444-7570.

Oct. 3-5 Bayfield Apple Festival. Downtown Bayfield, WI. Apple harvest festival with arts and crafts, food and live music. 10 - 5p.m. Free. 715-779-3335.

Oct. 7 and 8 The Chester Fritz Auditorium presents "Stomp," an international percussion sensation. Cost: \$32-42 adults, \$25-35 students, \$20-35 children. 3475 University Aveune, Grand Forks. 800-375-4068.

Oct. 10 Gordon Van Wert Artist Reception. Storytelling by Gordon and display of his sculptures. North Country Health Services in Educational Room. Contact: papkelarson@nchs.com

Oct. 11-12 Fall Arts, Crafts & Specialty Show. Paul Bunyan Mall, Bemidji. Sat. 10 - 7p.m.; Sun 12 -

Bemidji Arts Endowment

Oompah for the Arts

5th Annual Fund raiser

Friday, September 19, 2008

6:00 p.m.. Wine and beer tasting
7:00 p.m. German dinner
7:00-10:00 p.m. Music with Tuba Jim Thompson and Dennis Doeden and Friends.

Bemidji Town and Country Club
\$40 per person (\$25 tax deductible)

6p.m. Free. 218-751-3195.

Oct. 12 Bemidji Symphony Orchestra 70th Anniversary Season Opening Concert "American Fanfares!" 3p.m. Bemidji High School Auditorium. Cost: \$15 adults, \$10 seniors and students. www.bemidjisymphony.com

Oct. 25-26 Grand Forks Craft Festival. Alerus Center. Sat. 10 - 5p.m. Sun. 11 - 4p.m. Cost: \$2. 701-746-1212.

Oct. 26 Bemidji Concert Series presents Alexander Ghindlin, winner of the Cleveland International Piano Competition. 7:30p.m. Thompson Recital Hall, Bangsberg Hall. Cost: \$20 adults, all students free.

Oct. 31 "Remember When" Jazz I. 8p.m. - Midnight. Jammers Club. 218-759-1565.

MCAD/Jerome Foundation Fellowships for Emerging Artists

Application Deadline:
4:30p.m. Friday, Sept. 19

The Fellowship program awards \$10,000 annually to five Fellows, allowing each the freedom to pursue his or her own work for a 12-month period.

For more information and to apply, visit www.mcad.edu/jerome

STUDIO TO RENT

The Bemidji Community Arts Center has one studio open for rent.
\$85/month available beginning of September.

Contact Lori at 218-444-7570 or bcac@paulbunyan.net.

ART LEAP 2008

Friday and Saturday

September 27-28

11a.m. - 5p.m. (unless otherwise noted)

Park Rapids Lakes Area Arts Council (PRLAAC) and the **North Country Museum of Arts** once again sponsor a driving tour to 10 culturally rich destinations in the Park Rapids area. For the second year, art lovers can use our map to find their way to area studios and workshops. Also on the "Leap" will be performances, an exhibit at an art museum and a group art show in Park Rapids.

ART LEAP IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC and is funded in part by a grant from the Northwest Minnesota Foundation and Region 2 Arts Council.

Park Rapids/Nevis/Akeley area artists:

Paul Albright - Wood and metal sculpture

Sandra Fynboh, Blue Sky Beads, Studio & Gallery - Handmade glass beads and demonstrations

Raymond Wattenhofer - Landscapes in oil and limited edition prints

White Birch Artists - Watercolor and oil, pastels & mixed media

Gary and Marsha Wolff - Mosaics, pottery, painting, drawing & sculpture. Pottery demonstrations both days.

Terri Young - Original watercolors and pastels feature local landscapes. Wheel thrown pottery demonstrations by Peter Young at 10a.m. and 1p.m. both days.

Roger Kast - non-objective paintings on canvas and paper

For more information and to obtain maps contact:
North Country Museum of Arts at 218-237-5900 or ncma@unitelc.com

*Special thanks to recent R2AC Donors
Betty Masoner*

R2AC Donation Form

Become a **partner** in developing the arts in north central Minnesota. Join R2AC today! Your donation is tax deductible. Please mail your annual donation to: R2AC, 426 Bemidji Ave, Bemidji, MN 56601.

Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____ E-mail _____

LEVELS OF PARTNERSHIP

CONTRIBUTOR _____	\$10	DONOR _____	\$25
SUPPORTER _____	\$50	SUSTAINER _____	\$100
PATRON _____	\$250	BENEFACTOR _____	\$500 & Up



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NORTHERN ARTS NEWS is a free publication of the Region 2 Arts Council, funded by a grant from the McKnight Foundation. Mission: "The Region 2 Arts Council strengthens the presence of the arts by supporting opportunities for arts creation, promotion, education, and funding for the people of Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Lake of the Woods, and Mahnommen Counties."

Noteworthy

Simone Greenleaf, Cass Lake, was one of five first place winners in a writing contest for young American Indians with her essay, "A Grandmother's Story: Surviving Adversity."

Linda Walker, Bemidji, received the Betty King Wright Award (second best in show) for her painting "Cradled in the Past" at the Red River Valley Museum's National Juried Show in Vernon, TX. Her painting, "Elephant Walk," was juried into the Oil Painters of American National Show held at the Dana Gallery in Missoula, MT.

LouAnn Shepard Muhm, Park Rapids poet, was featured on KAXE Radio's "RealGoodWords" program on July 16. The interview is located in the RealGoodWords archive online at www.kaxe.org.

Jane Freeman, Bemidji, has an article in the August issue of "Watercolor Artist" magazine titled "The Color of Light." It will be in bookstores in a few weeks. She was also juried into Watercolor USA in Springfield, MO, with the painting "Midnight Waters."

Mary Therese Peterson, Bemidji, completed a 2 part mural project with the Leech Lake Area Boys and Girls Club of Cass Lake. Four 4-foot panels will be exhibited at the club and an 8-foot star pattern will be permanently installed in downtown Cass Lake. She had two paintings juried into the Genus Elephas Exhibition at the Premier Gallery in Minneapolis through September.

Actors **Greg Gasman** and **Shyler Gasman** and director **Mike Bredon**, Bemidji, created a winning commercial for the Frito Lay "Pull Some Funny, Make Some Money" video commercial contest in which creative filmmakers across the country to submitted humorous Cheetos advertisements. The video clip can be viewed at orangeunderground.com/greatness.

Jayson Knutson, Bemidji, won a \$300 art contest in the "Low Rider Arte" and is nominated for poet of the year for 2008.

Art Groups Receive ArtsLab Grants

Seventeen out of 76 Minnesota arts groups have been selected as participants in ArtsLab. Three out of five applicants from our region received this funding.

ArtsLab provides small arts groups with grants up to \$10,000 along with three years worth of training opportunities and Internet-based seminars.

The organizations selected to participate in the ArtsLab capacity building program from Region 2 are Bemidji Symphony Orchestra, Bemidji Community Art Center and Mask and Rose Theatre Collective.