



Everhart's plans fascinate

Museum slates season full of rich surprises

By Natalie Gelb Solfanelli

I am continually impressed with the quality of cultural assets in our region, not to mention the caliber and dedication of the people who run these organizations that provide enrichment to our communities.

Cara Sutherland, the executive director of the Everhart Museum, has a penchant for thinking outside the box when it comes to appealing to new audiences for that wonderful institution.

With the support of a board of directors willing to take chances, Cara has brought some unique and exciting exhibitions that attract people from many walks of life, often in non-traditional ways!

Exhibitions and programs at the Everhart Museum are guided by its mission statement, as well as the philosophy inscribed on the building's exterior walls: "Science, art and literature record humanities impression of today and its attempt to adjust itself for tomorrow."

Opening on Feb. 5 is "Art of the Brick," featuring imaginative sculpture by New York-based artist Nathan Sawaya whose medium of choice is the LEGO brick. Nearly one million standard LEGO bricks were used to create the 30 works on display. Sawaya's ability to transform this common toy into something meaningful, along with his devotion to spatial perfection and the way he conceptualizes action, enables him to elevate what almost every child has played with into the status of art.

"These works are very personal to me, since they reflect my growth as an artist as I strove to discover my creative identity," said Sawaya. "The museum exhibit is accessible because it engages the child in all of us while simultaneously illuminating sophisticated and complex concepts." "Art of the Brick" will be on display at the Everhart Museum through May 2 and on Sunday, March 14 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. the museum will host a LEGO-inspired Community Day that features activities for all ages.

Coming this summer to the Everhart Museum is "Ancient Bronzes of the Asian Grasslands" (May 21-Sept. 6), on loan from the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation.

Ancient Bronzes reveals how the ancient, horse-riding cultures of Mongolia and Central Asia used the animal world as a source of symbols to indicate tribe, social rank and connection to the spirit world.

This exhibition brings to life these complex nomadic cultures and features more than 80 masterpieces of Eurasian steppe art, including bronze belt buckles, plaques, pendants, ornaments and weapons. Animal motifs such as antlered stags, wild boars and birds of prey are a primary theme and

visitors will be enchanted by the artistic expression found in a functional form.

"Ancient Bronzes" provides a glimpse into a world without a written history. Upon viewing these artists, visitors to the Everhart will be given a context through which they can begin to understand the cultural values of the ancient world.

The Everhart closes out its 2010 exhibit schedule with "For Every Season: Folk Art in Daily Life and Celebration" (Sept. 25 through Dec. 31) which presents a new interpretation of one of the museum's premiere collections.

In this exclusive exhibit created by the museum's staff, the universal stages of life are examined by looking at the rich assortment of hand-crafted objects representing America's cultural heritage, both past and present.

Today, northeast Pennsylvania is home to dozens of diverse groups of European, African, Indian and Asian immigrants who celebrate important rites of passage with their distinctive traditions and folk art objects. "For Every Season" will provide museum visitors with a unique opportunity to interface with contemporary immigrant communities found throughout our region.

The Everhart Museum is located in Scranton's Nay Aug Park and is fully accessible to the general public on a five-day-per-week schedule. In addition to the exhibits, the Everhart Museum serves the public by providing a variety of educational programs including guided tours; lecture and film series; art and craft workshops; reference library and outreach programs to schools; at-risk youth programs; regional cultural institutions; and elder care facilities. For more information, visit www.everhart-museum.org.

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