

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES



We welcome you back to the Fleming Museum this fall after our brief closing, which saw renovations to the Museum's auditorium, side-entrance, roof, and lobby area – improvements that will enhance our visitors' experience of the Museum, as well as better protect our collections. We are delighted to announce the opening of our new coffee lounge and shop where you'll find elegant tables and chairs, comfy reading spaces and meeting areas for small groups, set against the building's decorative brickwork and soaring light-filled space. We invite you to browse the updated Fleming Shop, which will continue to carry art books, cards, and posters, as well as select Fleming merchandise. As part of your next Museum

visit, plan to meet a friend for a cup of coffee after checking out our exhibitions. Or bring your laptop and catch up on email – we're wireless!

We offer a trio of engaging exhibitions this fall. In *Material Pursuits* you'll see cutting-edge contemporary work in low-tech, craft mediums such as pipe-cleaners, Sculpey™, embroidery, and paper. Fourteen artists from across the country create complex, large-scale works that spectacularly defy their humble materials. In the Wolcott Gallery we feature late-19th and early 20th-century travel photographs from the Fleming's collection and UVM's Special Collections. And in the Wilbur Room cases, we present shoes from around the world drawn from the Fleming's collection and lent by local footwear purveyors.

As always, an exciting menu of programs and events accompanies these exhibitions throughout the semester. Mark your calendars for October 25 when *Material Pursuits* artist Devorah Sperber – fresh from a one-person show at the Brooklyn Museum – speaks about her work in our stylishly refurbished auditorium. Check out all that's new at the Fleming this fall!

*Jamie Cohen*  
Janie Cohen, Director

Inside:  
Devorah Sperber (b. 1961), *After Van Eyck*, 2006 (detail). 5,024 spools of thread, stainless steel ball chain and hanging apparatus, clear acrylic viewing sphere, metal stand. Edition 2/3. Courtesy the artist.

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[www.flemingmuseum.org](http://www.flemingmuseum.org)

## FALL RECEPTION

For Fleming Museum Members, the Academic Community & the Public

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20  
5:30 – 7:30 PM

REGULAR ADMISSION  
Cash Bar and Hors D'Oeuvres

Opening:

*Material Pursuits*

*En Route: Travel Photography from UVM Collections*

*Heel to Toe: Shoes from the Fleming Museum*



The UNIVERSITY of VERMONT'S  
**FLEMING MUSEUM**

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Jason Middlebrook (b. 1966), *Tires (3)*, 2006. Tires, fiberglass, tile and grout. Seavest Collection, New York; Courtesy Sara Meltzer Gallery, New York

The UNIVERSITY of VERMONT'S  
**FLEMING MUSEUM**

[www.flemingmuseum.org](http://www.flemingmuseum.org)

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Cover:  
Alisa Dworsky, *A Time to Rend and a Time to Sew*, 2007 (during construction). Polypropylene rope, dimensions variable. Commissioned by the Robert Hull Fleming Museum, University of Vermont.

The UNIVERSITY of VERMONT



**ON VIEW**  
Exhibitions and Events | Fall 2007

# FALL CALENDAR 2007

SEPTEMBER 4 EXHIBITIONS OPEN Material Pursuits and Heel to Toe: Shoes from the Fleming Museum

13 EXHIBITION OPENS En Route: Travel Photography from UVM Collections 20 OPENING RECEPTION Material Pursuits,

En Route: Travel Photography from UVM Collections, and Heel to Toe: Shoes from the Fleming Museum, 5:30-7:30 PM

26 NOONTIME CAFÉ AND PROGRAM The Secret Life of Shoes: Footwear and its Place in Society. Edward Maeder, 12:15 PM

30 SUNDAY GALLERY TALK Material Pursuits, 3:00 PM

OCTOBER 10 NOONTIME CAFÉ AND PROGRAM Material Pursuits. Museum Staff, 12:15 PM

24 NOONTIME CAFÉ AND PROGRAM Exploring the Transatlantic Slave Trade through the Fleming Museum's African Collection.

Moustapha Diouf, 12:15 PM 25 ARTIST'S TALK Devorah Sperber, 6:00 PM

NOVEMBER 3 COMMUNITY FAMILY DAY, 11 AM - 4 PM 7 NOONTIME CAFÉ AND PROGRAM The Power of Collecting:

Travel Photographs from UVM Collections. Bill McDowell, 12:15 PM 11 SUNDAY GALLERY TALK En Route and Heel to Toe, 3:00 PM

28 NOONTIME CAFÉ AND PROGRAM Knotting the Web. Kathleen Schneider, 12:15 PM

DECEMBER 14 EXHIBITIONS CLOSE Material Pursuits, En Route, and Heel to Toe

## EXHIBITIONS

SEPTEMBER 4 - DECEMBER 14  
Material Pursuits

SEPTEMBER 4 - DECEMBER 14  
Heel to Toe: Shoes from  
the Fleming Museum

SEPTEMBER 13 - DECEMBER 14  
En Route: Travel Photography  
from UVM Collections

### Museum Hours:

Labor Day – April 30: Tuesday – Friday, 9 AM – 4 PM Saturday & Sunday, 1 – 5 PM  
May 2 – August 31: Tuesday – Friday, Noon – 4 PM Saturday & Sunday, 1 – 5 PM

**Museum Galleries Closed Mondays and Major Holiday Weekends:** Thanksgiving Week, November 20-25;  
UVM Winter Recess, December 15 - January 13

### Directions and Parking:

Parking is available in the visitor lot located between the Museum and Fletcher Allen Health Care. Additional parking information and directions are available on our web site, in the Museum brochure, or at 656-2090.



The Fleming Museum is wheelchair accessible and provides reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities. Please contact us in advance to arrange accommodations.



## NEW EXHIBITIONS

### Material Pursuits

SEPTEMBER 4 – DECEMBER 14, 2007

Pipe cleaners, paper, Sculpey™, embroidery, quilting, and mosaics are among the media that will be featured in Material Pursuits, a large-scale exhibition exploring how contemporary American artists are creating conceptually based artworks utilizing methods, materials, and strategies usually associated with craft. Material Pursuits presents the work of a new generation of artists who, more than thirty years after craft materials were appropriated into the domain of American art, are unfettered by the longstanding debates that defined the boundaries between art and craft. Instead, their chosen techniques are driven more by their interest in exploring both the conceptual and material potential of these unconventional media. The resulting works reflect a new fascination, even obsession, with the particular and mundane, while offering views that range from whimsical to critical. As part of the exhibition, the Fleming Museum has commissioned three site-specific projects: Alisa Dworsky, a Montpelier artist and architect, will create a series of crocheted sculptures on the trees on the Museum's Colchester Avenue lawn; Sheila Pepe, from New York, will transform the Museum's Marble Court with an elaborate web comprised of a variety of fabrics and found materials, such as tulle, thread, fabric tape, and shoelaces; and Elana Herzog, also from New York, will embed and then deconstruct a chenille bedspread in the East Gallery's wall.

The other participating artists include: Lee Boroson, Lucky DeBellevue, James Esber, Sabrina Gschwandtner, Kirsten Hassenfeld, Jason Middlebrook, Jessica Rankin, Kathleen Schneider, Jane South, Devorah Sperber, and Anna Von Mertens.

We are grateful for the generous support provided by the Kalkin Family Exhibitions Endowment Fund; the 1675 Foundation; Dr. Burnett Rawson '37, M.D. '39 in honor of his late wife, Jessie Rawson; David Beitzel '80; the Walter Cerf Exhibitions Fund; Stephen Kelly '85; Creative Habitat at Ben Franklin, South Burlington, Vermont; and, for support of Alisa Dworsky's installation, the Successful Communities Fund of the Vermont Community Foundation. This project is supported in part by the Vermont Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Sheila Pepe creating Silk Purse, a site-specific installation in the Marble Court commissioned by the Fleming Museum as part of the exhibition, Material Pursuits.

## NOONTIME CAFÉ AND PROGRAMS

Programs begin at 12:15 PM on the Wednesdays listed below. Lunch is available for purchase in the Museum's Marble Court from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM.

### The Secret Life of Shoes: Footwear and its Place in Society

SEPTEMBER 26

Edward Maeder, Director of Exhibitions and Curator of Textiles, Historic Deerfield

### Material Pursuits

OCTOBER 10

Fleming Museum Staff

### Exploring the Transatlantic Slave Trade through the Fleming Museum's African Collection

OCTOBER 24

Moustapha Diouf, Associate Professor, UVM Dept. of Sociology

### The Power of Collecting: Travel Photographs from the Fleming Museum Collection

NOVEMBER 7

Bill McDowell, Associate Professor and Chair, UVM Dept. of Art and Art History

### Knotting the Web

NOVEMBER 28

Kathleen Schneider, Associate Professor, UVM Dept. of Art and Art History

## SUNDAY GALLERY TALKS

### Material Pursuits

SEPTEMBER 30, 3:00 PM

### En Route & Heel to Toe

NOVEMBER 11, 3:00 PM

## SPECIAL PROGRAM

### Artist's Talk: Devorah Sperber

THURSDAY, OCT. 25, 6:00 PM

Sperber's beguiling thread-spool installations explore the science of optics through a sophisticated merging of advanced digital media and iconic portraits from Western art history. Featuring more than 5,000 spools strung on stainless steel ball chains, the final installation reads more like an abstract arrangement of colors until it is viewed through an acrylic sphere, which inverts the image and organizes the field of colors into a remarkably accurate reproduction of the original artwork.

## FAMILY PROGRAMS

### Art Adventures

WEDNESDAYS, 3:30 – 5:00 PM

Ages 6-8: Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, and 10

Ages 9-11: Oct. 17, 24, 31, Nov. 7, 14, and 28

Fee: Museum Family Members \$35; General \$45



Art classes at the Fleming Museum provide an exciting opportunity for children to explore the Museum's collection, experiment with art materials, and create their own works of art inspired by the galleries.

University of Vermont art education students, supervised by their instructor Lisa Brunini Harvey, M.Ed., teach the classes, which offer individualized attention and the chance to experiment with a variety of mediums such as painting, drawing, 3-D sculpture, and mixed media. At the conclusion of each series of classes, there will be a short reception beginning at 5:00 pm along with a display of the art created.

### Saturday Art Studio

SATURDAY AFTERNOONS  
SEPTEMBER 22 - DECEMBER 8

Families are invited to make art together as they experiment with materials used by the artists in the exhibition Material Pursuits. Visit the Museum on Saturday afternoons for an exciting exploration of ideas, methods, and materials inspired by the art on view. No matter what your age, this is sure to spark your imagination!

No need to register; free with regular admission to the Museum.

### Community Family Day

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3,  
11 am – 4 pm



Explore an amazing variety of creative expressions, from the fun to the fantastic, as we celebrate craft materials and processes using paper, Sculpey™, fiber, pipe cleaners, mosaic, and more. Join us for a day of discovery as we transform ordinary materials into extraordinary ways with art-making for the whole family. No pre-registration required; \$3 fee at the door.

### En Route: Travel Photography from UVM Collections

SEPTEMBER 13 –  
DECEMBER 14, 2007

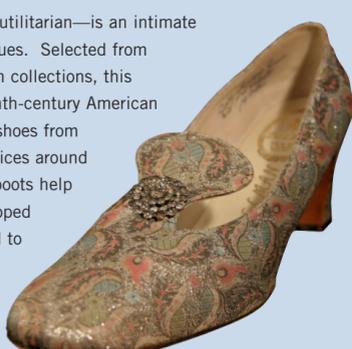
In the second half of the 19th century, the medium of photography and the global tourism industry flourished in tandem with one another. The expansion of railroad and steamer networks enabled Western tourists to venture across Europe, Asia, the Americas, and parts of Africa. Tourists followed ambitious itineraries that were shaped, in part, by early travel

photographs depicting urban centers, archaeological ruins, exotic cultures, and natural wonders. Available for sale at exhibitions, through mail order, or at the sites themselves, travel photographs by both professionals and amateurs were collected for their aesthetic value, their usefulness in planning or dreaming of future journeys, or simply as souvenirs of places visited. As much a document of the photographer's personal aesthetic and the Western cultural imagination as of the people and places that they depicted, travel photographs offer a view onto the ways that this new medium both reflected and shaped the experiences of Western tourists. This exhibition features travel photographs and albums from or promised to the Fleming's collection alongside stereographic images generously loaned by Special Collections at UVM's Bailey/Howe Library.

### Heel to Toe: Shoes from the Fleming Museum

SEPTEMBER 4 – DECEMBER 14, 2007

Footwear—whether viewed as personal, decorative, or utilitarian—is an intimate reflection of personal identity and broader cultural values. Selected from the hundreds of pairs of shoes in the Fleming Museum collections, this exhibition displays a variety of footwear, from nineteenth-century American baby shoes to Native American snowshoes. Wedding shoes from Pakistan and Vermont reveal the diverse cultural practices around marriage ceremonies, while snowshoes, sandals, and boots help us understand how people from various places have coped with their environments. Footwear has also been used to manipulate and change the human body, from China's lotus shoes for bound feet to the Western stiletto heel. Whether worn every day, used only for special occasions, or perhaps donned only a single time, the shoes in the Fleming Museum collections offer a cross-cultural perspective on how humans have used footwear to mold identity and display social values.



Floral pump, ca. 1955, Delman, New York. Fabric, leather, paste, gold thread. Terrill Hall Collection 1987.11.46

## FROM THE COLLECTION



Winged Figure (detail), Iraq (Assyria), ca. 880 BCE. Alabaster. Gift of John Converse 1886.1

### Lost and Found (and lost and found again)

Once part of the extravagant decoration of the palace of Ashurnasirpal II, ruler of the Assyrian Empire from 883 to 859 BCE, the Fleming Museum's carving was but one of hundreds of bas-relief panels adorning the palace's many rooms and halls.

The panel depicts a mythical winged genie—considered a powerful guardian of the king—and is inscribed in the ancient Akkadian language glorifying Ashurnasirpal II's accomplishments as a military leader and builder. The palace, excavated in the 1840s by Englishman Austen Henry Layard, was located at the capital city of Calah (present-day Nimrud), and was one of a cluster of cities of which Biblical hot-spot Nineveh was the center.

An American Protestant missionary living in the area, the Rev. W.F. Williams, became fascinated with the Assyrian reliefs and acquired this panel as a gift for his friend George Whitney of Philadelphia in the 1850s.

In order to transport the heavy sculpture over land, the relief was cut down from its one-foot thickness to just three

inches and then further sawed into three equal-sized pieces before being packed in camel's hair and conveyed by village caravan across the Syrian desert. The genie failed to complete its journey. In a camel near Aleppo, the crates containing the sculpture were abandoned by the merchant with whom they had been entrusted in order to make room for a more valuable shipment.

The sculpture was eventually recovered and slowly made its way to Philadelphia where the boxes remained unopened in Whitney's storeroom (he may never have realized that they had arrived); the carvings remained unseen for another 25 years, until after Whitney's death in 1884. Two years later, the sculpture was purchased by John Converse (UVM class of 1861) who then donated it to the University in 1886. In 1931, the relief was permanently installed in the wall of the newly built Robert Hull Fleming Museum's Marble Court.