

2009 Excellence in Exhibition Label Writing Competition

Excellent exhibition labels are not easily achieved, and writers and editors who craft them often go unrecognized. In an effort to showcase great writing, this competition deliberately separated label text from graphic design. It aimed to identify innovative approaches to label writing and editing, highlight best practices in the field, and help us learn from one another.

Writers and editors from across the United States and Canada submitted a total of 45 labels. Entries were evaluated by a panel of three jurors, representing more than 80 years of collective experience writing, editing, and evaluating museum labels. To be recognized, entries had to be recommended by at least two jurors. During the judging process, however, three labels inspired the enthusiastic support of a single juror. These entries are included as Juror's Choice labels.

Thank you to all who entered labels in the 2009 competition. We commend your efforts to advance label writing practices in order to better serve your visitors. We extend a special thanks to this year's jurors—Barbara Becker, Marlene Chambers, and Phyllis Rabineau. We appreciate the guidance of Brian H. Peterson, the former organizer of this competition. We thank M&G Graphics in Chicago for helping create this display. And, we gratefully acknowledge CurCom for sponsoring this initiative in cooperation with EdCom and NAME.

Thanks for attending the Marketplace of Ideas. We look forward to receiving your entries for the 2010 competition; submission details will be available in August at www.curcom.org.

John Russick

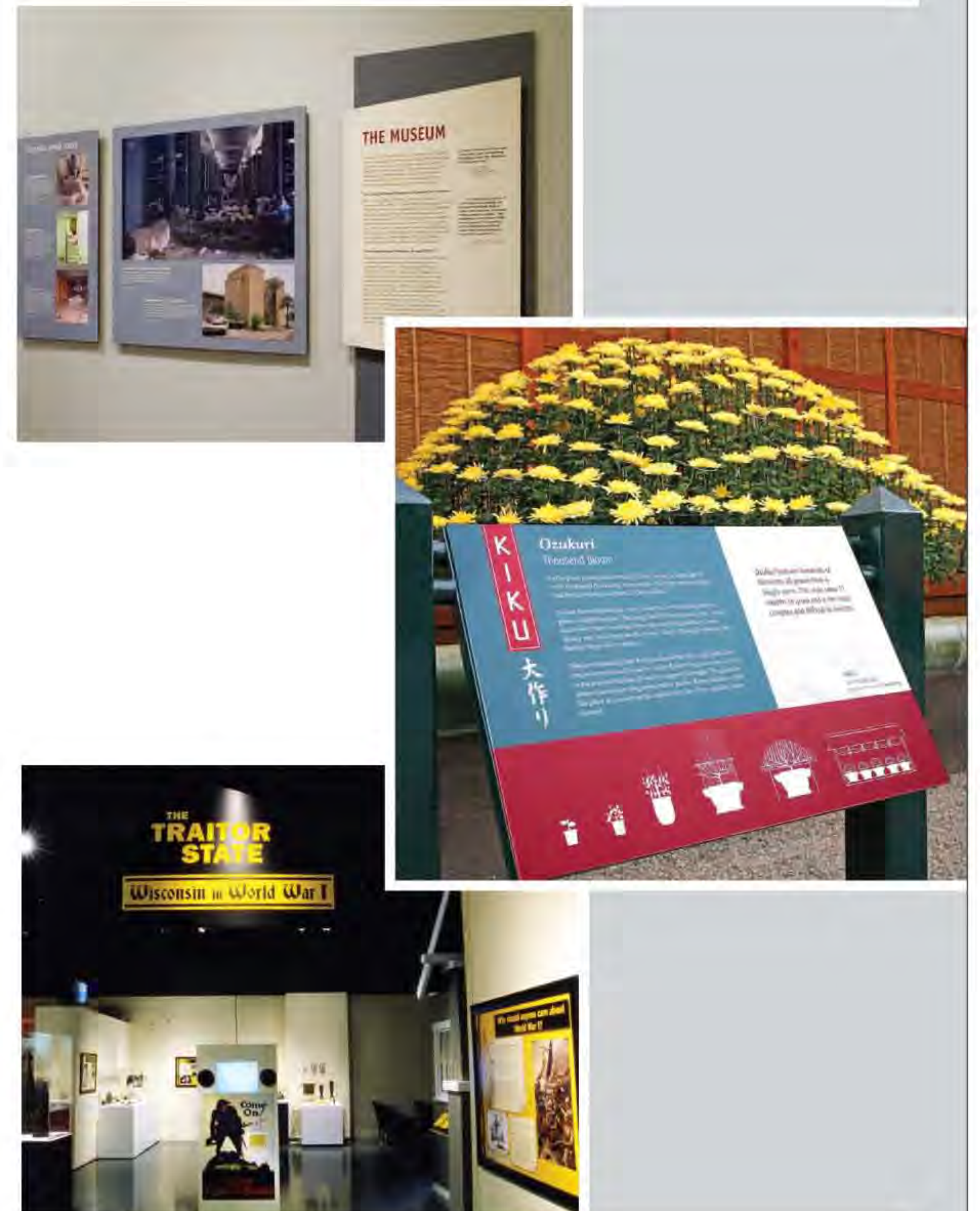
Senior Curator

Chicago History Museum

Emily H. Nordstrom

Editor

Chicago History Museum



The Jurors

Representing CurCom

Barbara A. Becker

Principal, Exhibit Planning & Research, Berwyn, Illinois

"Truly good manners are invisible; they ease the way for others, without drawing attention to themselves."

—Lynne Truss *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*

To me, like good manners, good exhibit labels facilitate visitors' experiences in an exhibition and don't attract attention with pedantry or overly cute language. I look for labels that have a clear and crisp beginning, referring to something I might wonder about, see, or notice. I am attracted by labels that are easy and inviting to read—they pull me through, reward me, and don't require multiple readings to understand. I am engaged by an active voice that brings the subject to life. I enjoy labels that answer questions that I wonder about (and dislike labels posing questions so planners can provide an answer). I am impressed when a writer uses word choice, rhythm, and inquiry in a way that leaves me the psychic space to feel interested, curious, and desiring to learn more and do more in the exhibition.

Representing EdCom

Marlene Chambers

Editor emerita, Denver Art Museum

I believe label writers should think less about the information they want to convey and more about the kind of experience they want to facilitate for visitors. An excellent museum label should point the way to a rewarding experience in the context of the exhibition. At a minimum, as the announcement for the 2009 competition succinctly puts it, "Excellent exhibition labels [should be] clear, concise, and captivating."

DO. Respect the visitor. Give visitors opportunities to think for themselves and to make discoveries relevant to their own sense of priorities. Relate information to something visitors already know, and give them a chance to practice using it. Remember visitors come to museums to see and experience objects, not to read about them.

DON'T. Overwhelm visitors with facts and figures they'll forget in two minutes. Try to impress the visitor with your brilliance and expertise. Make visitors feel stupid by using words they don't know. Refer to objects that aren't on view. Include more information than the bare minimum visitors need in order to feel confident, in control, and exhilarated by enlarging their understanding. Make value judgments or draw conclusions.

Representing NAME

Phyllis Rabineau

Vice president, Interpretation and Education, Chicago History Museum

Visiting an exhibit can be hard work. There's a lot to take in, coming from all directions and in a variety of formats—it can be difficult to absorb everything. Each aspect of an exhibition's spatial and sensory experience has meaning, or "content," and often nonverbal aspects grab visitors' attention first and leave the most lasting impression. Faced with so much stimulation, it's difficult to switch continuously between different channels. I've often left an exhibit realizing that I've either seen/touched/heard it all, OR read it all, but seldom both.

To get my attention, and to do their communication job, labels have to hold their own amid the seductions of a multisensory environment. I appreciate lively writing, presented in digestible chunks, devoid of technical language that's unfamiliar and hard to absorb. Imagery, metaphor, humor, and other verbal tricks can keep my interest, but can also be distracting if they're not in keeping with the exhibition's overall tone and subject matter. The best labels seamlessly fit with the rest of the exhibition, adding layers of meaning instead of a world unto themselves.

Writers: McGuire Gibson, Katharyn Hanson
Editors: Geoff Emberling, Emily Teeter,
Dianne Hanau-Strain

Catastrophe:
The Looting and Destruction of Iraq's Past
Target audience: General public, high school
educators and their students,
and scholars here and abroad
Label type: Concept

Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois



Praise from the Jurors

This label is long, but it tells a good story that works with visuals and pulls me along. Good use of quotes: they tell part of the story and create a tension that propels further reading. Subheads also propel the storytelling, the before and after. The subheads facilitate my looking at the objects (accompanying photos) which in turn could provoke me to read the longer text.

— Barbara Becker

Label copy

THE MUSEUM

In April 2003, the world was shocked by the looting of the Iraq National Museum in Baghdad. The looting triggered an outpouring of anger and concern for the safety of the museum, which houses the world's largest and most complete collection of ancient Mesopotamian artifacts, as well as documentation for all past archaeological excavations in Iraq.

The Iraq National Museum Prepares for Invasion

Prior to the 2003 Iraq war, various scholars and organizations warned of the potential damage to Iraq's cultural heritage. The Iraq National Museum staff took steps to safeguard the collection. Manuscripts and archives were placed in an underground bunker while other valuable artifacts were sealed in the vaults of the Central Bank in Baghdad. Museum staff removed smaller artifacts from the public galleries to a secure secret location. Unfortunately, objects too heavy or difficult to remove remained in the galleries.

The Iraq National Museum in April 2003

Despite the staff's efforts, the Iraq National Museum suffered significant looting. On April 10, 2003, just two days after U.S. troops entered the city, looters broke into the unprotected museum. Some of the looters were professional thieves who stole specific artifacts from the storerooms. A second group of looters stole artifacts from the galleries and storerooms. They also ransacked the museum's archives, offices, and laboratories. On April 12, museum staff drove the looters out and four days later, U.S. forces secured the building. Starting April 22, Col. Matthew Bogdanos led the U.S. investigation of the looting at the museum while museum staff began the enormous tasks of assessing the damage, recovering and restoring objects.

"I have warned you because I am sure that if anything happens, then the museum will be targeted."

Donny George
Former Director
Iraq National Museum
February 2003

"... it's the same picture of some person walking out of some building with a vase, and you see it twenty times, and you think, 'My goodness, were there that many vases?' (Laughter) Is it possible that there were that many vases in the whole country?"

Donald Rumsfeld
Former Secretary of Defense
April 2003

Writer: **Jeanine Head Miller**
Editor: **Donna Braden**

***The Improvisational Quilts
of Susana Allen Hunter***

Target audience: General public as well as the
special niche audiences of
African Americans and quilters
Label type: Object grouping

The Henry Ford
Dearborn, Michigan



Praise from the Jurors

Labeling the objects with quotes from people in the artist’s world helps me make meaning of all these things that I have probably seen in a hundred history museums. I can envision a life and integrate this vision with the quilts that also came from the artist’s world.

— **Barbara Becker**

I liked the use of quotes to humanize a group of mundane objects, connecting them to the life of the quilt maker and her family. I felt that I understood the family’s spare household environment, and I had the sense that Susana created beauty from whatever was at hand and could become part of her practice. The object IDs also make important contributions to the story, showing me precisely how each object was connected to, made, or used by family members. It was also quite powerful to see that the museum has brought most of these modest objects into their permanent collection to document the life of this artist and the context in which the quilts were made. I think the museum accomplished their goal of letting visitors explore Susana’s life through first-person oral histories, without adding an “interpretive voice” to explain the objects’ power.

— **Phyllis Rabineau**

Label copy

“She made her slips, her dresses, her aprons.”
Tommie Hunter *Susana Hunter’s grandson*

Apron
1965–1970
Slip
1940–1965
Made by Susana Hunter
2006.80.18; 2006.80.14
Given in memory of Susana Allen Hunter
by Paul Hunter and Tommie and Susie Hunter

“The only way we found out what was going on, we had a dry cell radio . . . that’s the only news we had. We had two stations on the radio that we could pick up.”
Tommie Hunter *Susana Hunter’s grandson*

Battery-powered Radio
Watterson Radio Manufacturing Co., Dallas, Texas
Used by the Hunter family
About 1940
Courtesy of Tommie and Susie Hunter

“No electricity. I had lamps for when I had to get my lessons for school.”
Tommie Hunter *Susana Hunter’s grandson*

Kerosene lamp
Used by the Hunter family
Mid-20th century
2006.80.28
Given in memory of Susana Allen Hunter
by Paul Hunter and Tommie and Susie Hunter

Wind-up Phonograph
Geib, Chicago, Illinois
Used by the Hunter family
About 1935

Recordings
“That’s All Right” by Arthur Crudup (RCA Victor)
“Love Me or Let Me Be” by James Clark (Columbia)
1945-1949

Courtesy of Tommie and Susie Hunter

“Got water from the spring, about a half mile behind the house.”
Tommie Hunter *Susana Hunter’s grandson*

Buckets and Dipper
Used by the Hunter family
Mid-20th century
2006.80.33; 2006.80.34; 2006.80.36
Given in memory of Susana Allen Hunter
by Paul Hunter and Tommie and Susie Hunter

“We would let the milk turn to clabber. Then we would put it in the churn and churn it.”
Tommie Hunter *Susana Hunter’s grandson*

Butter Churn
Used by the Hunter family
Mid-20th century
2006.80.41
Given in memory of Susana Allen Hunter
by Paul Hunter and Tommie and Susie Hunter

“She’d cook anything. My mom taught me to cook...”
Paul Hunter *Susana Hunter’s son*

Griddle
Frying Pan
Mixing Bowl
Used by the Hunter family
Mid-20th century
2006.80.38-40
Given in memory of Susana Allen Hunter
by Paul Hunter and Tommie and Susie Hunter

Basin
Used by the Hunter family
Mid-20th century
2006.80.35
Given in memory of Susana Allen Hunter
by Paul Hunter and Tommie and Susie Hunter

Writer: **K. Johnson Bowles**
Editor: **Robin Sedgwick**

It's Giving Me the Creeps! Art from the LCVA Permanent Collection that Scares the Staff

Target audience: General
Label type: Object

Longwood Center for the Visual Arts
Farmville, Virginia



Praise from the Jurors

The staff quotes have the potential to “prime the pump” for visitors to examine their own responses to the object (although it has the potential of interpreting for them, too). The biography is relatively brief and engaging enough to pull me through; it brings me into her world by not trying to describe it—it is an unknown. By reading about her life, the object would seem to resonate even more.

— **Barbara Becker**

I find the concept of the exhibition from which this label is drawn compelling: the idea that even the museum staff might find some art off-putting or “creepy” audaciously validates the visitor’s own gut-level emotional responses and opens the door to thoughtful considerations about the significance of such works.

— **Marlene Chambers**

Label copy

MARI A. NEWMAN (b. Esterville, Iowa, 1951)

Untitled (Orange doll), c. 2001
ink on paper

American Art Collection
Gift of Donna and Thomas L. Brumfield Jr.
2005.79.3

What the LCVA Staff Says . . .

“I love this little enchanting orange dust bunny, but I’m scared of it, too. It’s the little monster that lives under the bed. I know this creature is dangerous, but I want to hug it, it looks so cute and cuddly. That’s the eerie allure. As soon as I go in for the hug, rrrriiip—off goes my head!”
—Darbi Jewell, Volunteer Coordinator

“For some strange reason, this figure reminds me of McDonald’s. I believe during the ’80s these were McDonald’s main colors. Clearly, from the figure’s belly, he has gorged himself full of McDonald’s over the years. From his cheery smile and pleasant environment, this image screams McDonald’s.”
—David Overstreet, Assistant Program Manager

“This one is super creepy because you can just hear it in your head saying things like ‘I love you’ and ‘Be my friend.’ Then you decide to take it home and hang it on your wall. Every time you pass by, it seems to have moved a little. Then your pet rabbit Bubbles goes missing and you look at the picture and it seems a little fuzzier somehow. YIKES.”
—Kat Antis, Preparator

“This work is creepy, but I am not sure exactly what makes it so. Perhaps it is the slightly sweet yet demonic gaze of the fantastic creature being depicted. But perhaps equally disturbing is the obsessively detailed method used to create the picture. There is a certain unsettling intensity of color and line that makes this piece mesmerizing and hypnotic in a drug-induced sort of way. It reminds me of movies like *Magic* (1978) or *Child’s Play* (1988) where dolls come alive and start killing people.”
—K. Johnson Bowles, Director

About Mari A. Newman and the Work . . .

Mari A. Newman attended the Minneapolis College of Art but is a largely self-taught artist living in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Newman is legally blind and lives in the house where she grew up. Over the years she has transformed the outside of the house into a work of art in and of itself. Marianne Combs reporting for Minnesota Public Radio in 2004 said, “Mari Newman’s artistic vision is all about intensity.” “The house itself,” she added, “is covered in what Newman calls ‘patterned abstracts,’ small repeated images of flowers or circles, again in a myriad of lively colors. While Newman’s home might look like a giant LEGO toy set, Newman herself at first doesn’t appear as kid friendly. She’s often seen around town wearing all black. Her hair is bleached a pale blonde, and her face is pierced in eight or nine different places. She walks with a bit of a limp, and sometimes talks to herself.”

Until last year, Newman spent every day drawing and painting while sitting in a corner booth of Dunn Brothers coffee shop near her home. Tragically, last year she was hit by a car. Due to the brain injury she sustained, she is no longer able to draw. Unfortunately, when asked about this work, she could not recall what had inspired her. Drew Lamosse, owner of Dunn Brothers, says in the MPR story, “Mari’s different, but you know the reality is that Vincent van Gogh was different, Mozart was different. . . . What makes great art is looking at the world from a different perspective.” Newman’s work has been exhibited throughout the country. Her work can be found in the following museum collections: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota Museum of American Art, North Dakota Museum of Art, New Orleans Museum of Art, Columbus Museum of Art (Ohio), Tampa Museum of Art, Pensacola Museum of Art, Milwaukee Museum of Art, and the Walker Art Center.

Writers: **Jessica Blohm, Margaret Falk, Todd Forest**

Editors: **Jennifer Josef, Jennifer Rothman, Sally Leone**

Kiku: *The Art of the Japanese Chrysanthemum*

Target audience: Adult Garden visitors

Label type: Object

The New York Botanical Garden

Bronx, New York

Label copy

Ozukuri

Thousand Bloom

As the plant grows, unwanted side branches are pinched off its main stem until five strong ones remain. It is then repotted into a traditional wooden container called a *sekidai*.

As new branches develop, each is tied to a vertical stake where it grows straight and tall. The long, flexible branches are then untied and retied onto a complex frame by a team of gardeners. Look closely and you might see the frame, which ultimately provides the domed shape of the *ozukuri*.

Buds are removed from the branches of the *kiku* plant until only one remains on each branch. As the flowers begin to open, a collar is put around the base of each to support its weight. The growers always leave a few long stems with a perfect flower hidden inside the plant in case one of the others fails. See if you can find these flowers.

Ozukuri features hundreds of blossoms all grown from a **single stem**. This style takes 11 months to grow and is the most complex and difficult to execute.

Praise from the Jurors

This text focuses so vividly on the particular form and how it is shaped that I can see it growing. It gives me tools for looking at the plants myself and understanding more.

— **Barbara Becker**

I like the label’s reference to two specific features of the object that the visitor can search out: “Look closely and you might see the frame,” and “See if you can find these flowers [hidden inside the plant].”

— **Marlene Chambers**



Writer: **Eugene Dillenburg**
Editor: **Liza Pryor**

Science Buzz / Object of the Month
Target audience: General; families with children
Label type: Object

Science Museum of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota

Label copy

A chance encounter, frozen in time

A clear blue morning. A broad desert, blooming after a spring rain. Two creatures scamper across the sand. Are they hunting? Fleeing? Simply looking for shade? They meet briefly, shuffle their feet, and move on.

Years pass—260 million of them. The sand turns to stone. A scientist walking the south rim of the Grand Canyon finds the long-forgotten footprints. He identifies the large tracks on the left as belonging to a lizard-like animal called *Laoporus* (lay-OP-er-us). But he doesn't recognize the prints on the right. He takes the rock back to The Science Museum, studies the tracks, and realizes they represent a new scorpion-like species, *Permichnium coconinensis* (per-MICK-nee-um co-co-nee-NEN-sis).

A bustling city. A cloudy November day. You stand in front of an exhibit case, staring at the fossil footprints, and imagining a chance meeting on a cool desert morning, so very long ago.

Fossil animal tracks

near Grand Canyon, Arizona
approx. 260 million years old
SMM P92.3.1



Praise from the Jurors

This label is a lovely experience in itself. Visitors might see the tracks on the fossil immediately and the first paragraph asks them to wonder, along with the scientists, what the animals might have been doing. The writing is vivid and manages to explicate the process of fossilization, as well as the process of discovery and analysis, in an immediate way that makes the viewer equal to the scientist in some ways.

— Barbara Becker

I think the *Science Buzz* label is worthy on two counts, first for evoking imagination and imagery, and second for inviting visitor participation (hello, museum 2.0).

— Phyllis Rabineau

Writer: Trevor Jones *

The Traitor State: Wisconsin in World War I

Target audience: High school to adult
Label type: Instructional; flip labels

Neville Public Museum of Brown County
Green Bay, Wisconsin



Praise from the Jurors

This is a great use of flip labels. By getting the visitor to put himself/herself in the place of a Wisconsin farmer of German descent in making this decision, the label vividly brings home to the visitor the atmosphere of mistrust, coercion, and terror that reigned during WWI. Too often flip labels merely test the visitor’s memory or descend to the level of a guessing game.

— Marlene Chambers

* Since entering this competition, Trevor Jones has accepted a new position as curator at the Mountain Heritage Center, Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina.

Label copy

Would you buy Liberty Bonds?

You are John Deml, a farmer in rural Outagamie County. Your parents came from Germany, but you were born in America.

The government is asking Americans to purchase Liberty Bonds. The bonds will pay money back with interest when the war’s over, but you need cash to buy them and they don’t pay as much interest as the bank does. In October, your neighbors ask you to purchase \$500 worth of bonds, so you do. In the spring, they ask you to purchase \$400 more worth of bonds, but you feel you don’t have the money.

What do you do?

FLIP LABEL 1

Top
Purchase the bonds – even if that means you might not have enough money to buy seed and farm equipment in spring?

Bottom
Many people were intimidated into purchasing bonds even if they could not afford to. People who did not buy “enough” bonds often had their names listed in the paper and their cars or mailboxes painted yellow.

FLIP LABEL 2

Top
Refuse to buy more bonds because you already gave your share this year?

Bottom
Some people refused to buy bonds at all. Although this was their right, they faced the anger of their neighbors and potential vandalism of their property. When John Deml did not buy more bonds, a group of men came to his house in the middle of the night and threatened to kill him!

FLIP LABEL 3

Top
Offer to purchase \$100 worth of bonds, but not the full \$400?

Bottom
This was John Deml’s choice. He wanted to support the war, but felt he didn’t have the money to buy more bonds. A group of men came to his house in the middle of the night, put a rope around his neck and threatened to kill him. Deml said \$100 was as much as he could afford and they finally let him go. The next day he went to the police and reported the attack.

Label copy

ELLIOTT ERWITT: DOG DOGS

According to the Humane Society, Americans own about 75 million dogs. Of course, anyone who has lived with a dog knows that you never really own a dog, the way you own a car or a house. Dogs think. Dogs feel. They see what’s going on around them. They have their own way of doing things. Dogs also make friends easily, and aren’t as picky as we are about our pals. Most dogs are affable with just about anyone, especially if there’s a treat involved or a good scratch behind the ears. Which may explain why we constantly point cameras at the dogs in our lives—we always like to take pictures of our friends.

How many photographs per year do we make of our dogs? Billions? Trillions? And what do most of these photographs look like? There’s Sparky with his favorite toy. There’s Rover running around the back yard. We’re usually not interested in understanding dogs through our pictures, or understanding the complex relationships we have with dogs. We just love our dogs, and use our pictures to remind us of how much we love them.

Elliott Erwitt has other things in mind when he makes pictures of dogs. Erwitt has a sense of humor, and his pictures are often laugh-out-loud funny. But he uses humor to tell us what he’s observed about both dogs and people. Mostly what he sees is that dogs and people are really not that different. No great revelation there—but he communicates this so clearly, with such subtlety and irony and gentle wisdom, that his pictures make you feel like you’re seeing both dogs and people for the first time. He has found a thousand ways to laugh both *at* and *with* our furry friends and their zany “owners,” but he also understands the beauty and pathos of these friendships.

Erwitt loves dogs—but he loves people too, and he loves the way dogs love people, and the way people love dogs. He also loves photography, and he’s very good at it. You can see that in every picture.

Brian H. Peterson, Senior Curator
James A. Michener Art Museum

Writer/editor: **Brian H. Peterson**

Elliott Erwitt: Dog Dogs

Target audience: General public
Label type: Introductory

James A. Michener Art Museum
Doylestown, Pennsylvania



Juror’s Choice

During the judging process, three labels inspired the overwhelming enthusiasm of a single juror. These entries are included here as Juror’s Choice labels.

The writing in this label is filled with humor and expresses the writer’s affection for the subjects of the exhibit, both the artist and the dogs. Although the label is long, I couldn’t stop reading it, the writing just propelled me forward from beginning to end. I had to hold myself back from reading it out loud. I liked the way it sets information about the photographer within the writer’s own perspectives and mixes facts (info from the Humane Society) with personal experience (the author clearly knows where to scratch his dog). I liked the writer’s use of short and long sentence and different constructions to create a sense of fun. I wish I could write like this!

— Phyllis Rabineau

Label copy

Orientalist Photography

On March 23 of this year, The Lab’s website was hacked by a precocious teenager. He peppered the site with snide comments, one of which stated that the exhibitions at The Lab are so “obscure” and “out of touch” that we might as well “show nineteenth century sumo wrestlers.”

So that’s what we’re doing. We contacted Mark Sink, Denver’s photography maven; it turns out that Mark’s great-grandfather, the New York society photographer James L. Breese, had a collection of nineteenth-century photographic prints from Japan. On display is the Yokohama Album, a collection of hand-tinted albumen photographs depicting studio and scenic views of Japan during the Bakumatsu-Meiji period (1868-1912).

El 23 de marzo de este año, el sitio Web de The Lab fue objeto del ataque cibernético de un adolescente precoz. Salpicó el sitio con comentarios sarcásticos, uno de los cuales decía que las exhibiciones en The Lab eran tan oscuras y tan fuera de la realidad que bien podríamos estar exhibiendo luchadores de sumo del siglo XIX.

Bueno, pues eso es precisamente lo que vamos a hacer. Nos hemos puesto en contacto con Mark Sink, experto en fotografía de Denver, y se da el caso de que el bisabuelo de Mark, el fotógrafo de la sociedad de New York James L. Breese, tenía una colección de impresiones fotográficas del Japón del siglo XIX. Les presentamos el álbum Yokohama, una colección de fotografías retocadas a mano con albumen, con vistas escénicas y de estudio de Japón durante el periodo Bakumatsu-Meiji (1868-1912).

Writers: Sarah Kate Baie and Adam Lerner

Orientalist Photography:
Japan in the Bakumatsu-Meiji, 1868–1912

Target audience: Adult museum visitors

Label type: Introductory

The Laboratory of Art and Ideas at Belmar
Lakewood, Colorado



Juror’s Choice

During the judging process, three labels inspired the overwhelming enthusiasm of a single juror. These entries are included here as Juror’s Choice labels.

I love the light-hearted and self-deprecating irony of this label. Even though I don’t think visitors come to museums to read, I believe that what they are given to read should make the experience of the visit more enjoyable. By suggesting, even with tongue in cheek, that the institution has such little pretentiousness and gravitas that the complaints of a “precocious teenager” could subvert and direct its exhibition program, the label sets the visitor free to respond to the art without inhibition.

— Marlene Chambers

Label copy

Why should anyone care about World War I?

Because . . .

- During World War I, the United States became a global power. For the first time it was clear that America’s decisions affect the whole world.
- The war also showed there were limits to what any one country can do. Although the United States helped win the war, the victory failed to create a lasting peace – a mistake that led directly to the rise of Adolph Hitler and World War II.

World War I also showed how hard it is to live up to our democratic ideals. In the United States, the fight against Germany was used as an excuse to attack anyone who disagreed with the government. Many people in Wisconsin were quick to believe that anyone with German ancestors was a traitor.

The American experience in World War I raised important questions that we still struggle with today:

- When is it right for the United States to enter foreign wars?
- Can citizens disagree with their government during a war and still remain “loyal”?
- How should we treat new immigrants to the United States? Should they be required to speak English?

Writer: **Trevor Jones** *

The Traitor State: Wisconsin in World War I

Target audience: High school to adult
Label type: Introductory

Neville Public Museum of Brown County
Green Bay, Wisconsin



Juror’s Choice

During the judging process, three labels inspired the overwhelming enthusiasm of a single juror. These entries are included here as Juror’s Choice labels.

The intentions expressed in this label are notable. The label title immediately confronts a question about relevance—why should I care about this exhibit subject? It goes on to pose answers in easy-to-grasp bullets. Finally it makes a case that this historic subject also has relevance to present day political issues, linking it again to visitors’ lives. While I would have liked to know sooner and more precisely the significance of the exhibit’s title, *The Traitor State*, the principles are hard to beat!

— **Barbara Becker**

* Since entering this competition, Trevor Jones has accepted a new position as curator at the Mountain Heritage Center, Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina.