

E-Release  
CONCORD MUSEUM  
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Photographs and interviews available upon request

## ***A Dedication to Craft: North Bennet Street School @ 125***

**November 13, 2009 through March 21, 2010 at the Concord Museum**

Concord, MA/ In a historic collaboration, the Concord Museum and Boston's North Bennet Street School are celebrating the renowned North End school's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a juried exhibition of the work of fifty-eight distinguished alumni from ten states across the country. Included in the special exhibition, *A Dedication to Craft: North Bennet Street School @ 125*, are over sixty examples of furniture, jewelry, musical instruments and bookbindings, as well as illustrations of the work of the preservation carpentry, carpentry and locksmithing programs. Some of the objects on view draw their inspiration from craft techniques of the past; others bring a fresh look to classic pieces using today's innovative technology. "The Concord Museum has a deep respect for the work of the North Bennet Street School, their students and alumni," said Désirée Caldwell, Executive Director of the Concord Museum. "This special exhibition creates an exciting visual dialogue between craft traditions of the past and present. Working with contemporary craftspeople brings a welcome new perspective to the historical pieces in our collection and others." *A Dedication to Craft* is on view at the Concord Museum from November 13, 2009 through March 21, 2010. The exhibition is supported in part by Skinner, Inc., Auctioneers and Appraisers.

Both institutions have been contributing to the cultural life of Greater Boston for 125 years by preserving and advancing craft traditions and by promoting an appreciation of quality design that transcends time and fashion. North Bennet Street School was incorporated in 1885, a year earlier than the Concord Museum, as the North Bennet Street Industrial School. Pauline Agassiz Shaw, the school's

founder, was committed to teaching the skills needed for immigrants to obtain employment. Today, the school trains students for careers in traditional trades that use hand skills in concert with evolving technology. The Concord Museum's nationally renowned collection of 35,000 objects made or owned in Concord includes important examples of furniture, clocks, silver and other objects made by skilled craftsmen over three centuries. Only a handful of Americana collections are as old or as well documented.

North Bennet Street School President, Miguel Gómez-Ibáñez, also an alumnus of the school, said of the collaboration, "We are very pleased to be partnering with the Concord Museum for this exhibition, which will be the opening event and the most public celebration of our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The missions of the two institutions are remarkably similar. The museum's collection includes some of the finest historic examples of the traditional crafts taught at North Bennet Street School, and has been a resource for generations of students. This exhibition demonstrates that the museum and the school are not only stewards of the past, but also part of a continuing tradition preserving the highest level of craftsmanship and skill."

**North Bennet Street School** offers full-time courses in Bookbinding, Cabinet and Furniture Making, Carpentry and Preservation Carpentry, Jewelry Making and Repair, Locksmithing, Piano Technology, and Violin Making and Repair. In each program, highly skilled instructors teach students in small classes, sharing their knowledge and talent. Students graduate with the proficiency of well qualified professionals in their chosen trade or craft. In addition to full-time programs, North Bennet Street School offers intensive short-term workshops which are open to the public. Professional and beginning craftspeople work side-by-side to strengthen their technical understanding and develop new skills in an environment that is challenging and supportive. North Bennet Street School is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Career Schools and Colleges of Technology.

From the shot heard round the world to the literary revolution of Emerson and Thoreau, the **Concord Museum** brings Concord's remarkable story to life through exhibitions that present ideas relevant to today – concepts of liberty, turning beliefs into actions, self-reliance, independent thinking and environmental preservation. An inspiring collection of American historical, literary and decorative arts treasures includes the famous "one, if by land, and two, if by sea" Revere lantern, immortalized by

Longfellow's poem, Revolutionary War artifacts, the humble desk on which Henry D. Thoreau wrote *Walden* and "Civil Disobedience," and the Study of Ralph Waldo Emerson. The Museum is an educational resource for the region, with public and school programs that foster a life-long love of history, literature, community culture and decorative arts. The Museum is accredited by the American Association of Museums.

*A Dedication to Craft* is included free with Museum admission and is on view from November 13, 2009 through March 21, 2010. Hands-on activities are incorporated into the galleries to enhance learning for adults and children and a full calendar of public programs will be offered throughout the run of the exhibition. The Concord Museum is located in historic Concord, Massachusetts at the intersection of Lexington Road and Cambridge Turnpike. The Museum is wheelchair accessible and has ample free parking on Cambridge Turnpike.

**ADMISSION:** General admission to the Museum through December 3 (and beginning again January 4) is \$10 for adults, \$8 seniors (62 & over), \$8 students with valid id, \$5 youth (6-18). Benefit-month admission prices are in effect from December 4 through January 3 as part of *Family Trees: A Celebration of Children's Literature*: \$15 adults; \$10 seniors; \$6 youth (ages 4-18). WGBH members receive \$2 off adult admission, limit two per MemberCard.

**HOURS:** through January 3: Monday-Saturday 9-5; Sunday 12-5. Beginning January 4: Monday-Saturday 11-4; Sunday 1-4. The Museum is closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter.

## **Associated Programs:**

### **A Gallery Conversation Saturday, November 14**

David Wood, curator at the Concord Museum, and Miguel Gómez-Ibáñez, president and alumnus of North Bennet Street School, engage in a spirited and wide-ranging gallery conversation about craft traditions past and present in the new exhibition, *A Dedication to Craft: North Bennet Street School @ 125* on view at the Concord Museum. 11:00 a.m.; free with Museum admission; Members free, by reservation. (978) 369-9763.

### **Thanksgiving Family Weekend**

Bring the whole family this holiday weekend to the Concord Museum, where craftspeople from the North Bennet Street School (NBSS) will lead you through hands-on activities and demonstrations in two engaging programs in association with the special exhibition, *A Dedication to Craft: North Bennet Street School @ 125*.

- On **Friday, November 27**, children and adults will have the opportunity to make their own books with the assistance of a master bookbinder from NBSS. Using techniques employed by real bookbinders, families will work with the craftsperson to make paper books and decorate the pages. A chance to speak with the bookbinder from NBSS and to see her work completes the experience.
- On **Saturday, November 28**, participate in an activity that shows what it is like to be a woodworker. A master woodworker from NBSS leads families through different stations where they can try their hand at various activities. Come learn how to sand wood, put simple joints together, and decorate a piece to bring home. Watch a master craftsman at his trade and learn about the steps involved in building beautiful furniture.

All ages welcome; sessions begin on the hour 11:00-2:00; free with Museum admission; Members free.

***Shaker Boxmaking: A Hands-on Workshop***

**Sunday, December 6**, at the North Bennet Street School, Boston

In conjunction with the exhibition at the Concord Museum, *A Dedication to Craft: North Bennet Street School @ 125*, this hands-on workshop will teach students to bevel, steam and bend Shaker box bands and fit and tack them to lids and bottoms. Lectures and demonstrations cover a brief history of the Shakers and their woodcraft. Each student will make three Shaker boxes. Instructor Judith Hanson is a 1994 graduate of NBSS. She is a self-employed custom woodworker and has a degree from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, where she also teaches. 8:30 - 4:30; Tuition \$250; Concord Museum Members \$225; students must supply their own handtools (if needed, they can be purchased in the NBSS Store for \$60). Registration through NBSS; (617) 227-0155 x 102.

For further information: (978) 369-9609 (Taped information) (978) 369-9763 (Reservations) E-mail: [cm1@concordmuseum.org](mailto:cm1@concordmuseum.org) Web site: [www.concordmuseum.org](http://www.concordmuseum.org)

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