



Contact: Katrina Carl
Public Relations Manager
805.884.6430
kcarl@sbma.net



Left: Karen Sinsheimer



Griffin Museum of Photography Honors Karen Sinsheimer with Focus Lifetime Achievement Award

November 20, 2015—The Griffin Museum of Photography recently honored Karen Sinsheimer, the Santa Barbara Museum of Art's (SBMA) former Curator of Photography, posthumously with its Focus Lifetime Achievement Award. The Awards Presentation and Celebration was held November 13 and 14, 2015 in Winchester, MA, home of the Griffin Museum of Photography.

The master of ceremonies was nationally recognized photographer Lou Jones. Award presenters included Lisa Volpe; the Curator at the Wichita Art Museum and former Curatorial Assistant at SBMA, who presented Ms. Sinsheimer's award.

Per the press release by the Griffin Museum of Photography:

The Focus Awards recognize individuals making critical contributions to the promotion, curation and presentation of photography. Karen Sinsheimer has been on the Griffin Museum's shortlist of Lifetime Award recipients for at least the past three years. This year in June, the nominating committee decided to present Karen Sinsheimer with the Lifetime Achievement Award. After Karen's death in late July it was decided to still move forward with the award despite the fact that the Griffin has never presented a posthumous award. Through this Focus Award we recognize Karen Sinsheimer's dedication to the photographic arts.

The nominating committee for the Focus Awards chose Karen Sinsheimer because of her innovative spirit in shaping trends within our industry. They were impressed by the list of exhibitions she researched and assembled, the amount of photographers she mentored and whose careers she clearly advanced by exhibiting and acquiring work for the museum's growing print collection. The books that the Santa Barbara Museum of Art produced on photography that Karen took part and the number of essays she wrote for the museum

and individual artists highlight her tireless efforts to advance the medium of photography all the while maintaining a grace that must be remembered.

About Karen Sinsheimer

Karen Sinsheimer was first hired as a consultant by SBMA in July 1990 to organize the exhibition From Watkins to Weston: 101 Years of California Photography, in celebration of the museum's 50th anniversary. Soon after, she became a permanent member of the staff as the first full-time curator of photography, and served in that position for the next 25 years.

During her tenure, Ms. Sinsheimer organized more than 120 exhibitions for the Museum, many accompanied by a publication, and some that have traveled to national and international venues.

Under Ms. Sinsheimer, the photograph collection grew extensively to nearly 7,500 works. She built several areas of particular strength in the photographic collection, notably works from the 19th century, the Americas, and Western Pacific Rim, as well as important photojournalistic and documentary images, and many related to the sciences, especially astronomy, biology, and zoology.

Ms. Sinsheimer received her B.A. in Art History from the University of Redlands, and took graduate courses at UC Berkeley. While married to photographer William Current, she and her husband received NEA and Graham Foundation grants to produce two traveling exhibitions, accompanied by publications, for the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas.

She is survived by her husband, Robert L. Sinsheimer, Ph.D., chancellor emeritus and professor emeritus of molecular biology at UC Santa Cruz.

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art is a privately funded, not-for-profit institution that presents internationally recognized collections and exhibitions and a broad array of cultural and educational activities as well as travel opportunities around the world.

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA.
Open Tuesday - Sunday 11 am to 5 pm, Chase Free Thursday Evenings 5 – 8 pm
805.963.4364 www.sbma.net