

University of Iowa News Release

April 9, 2010

### **Czech & Slovak Museum & Library director will tell story of flood recovery**

The University of Iowa Museum of Art (UIMA) will present a free, public lecture in its Spring 2010 Elliott Society Lecture Series "The Art of Conservation and Preservation," on Wednesday, April 14, at the University Athletic Club, 1360 Melrose Ave.

Guest speaker Gail Naughton, president and CEO of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library in Cedar Rapids, will tell the remarkable story of the museum's recovery from the flood of 2008 in her lecture, "From Conservation to Rebuilding: A Museum on the Road to Recovery." The lecture will be preceded by a brief social at 5 p.m. Naughton will speak at 5:30 p.m.

In June 2008, the Czech & Slovak Museum & Library -- much like the UIMA -- faced devastation from floodwaters as the nearby Cedar River rose. The museum was inundated and its museum and collection center filled with eight feet of water. Five museum-owned buildings in Czech Village were affected, bringing the total flood damage to an estimated \$11 million. Seventy-five percent of the museum's collection was saved from the flood and most of the remaining items are in the process of conservation, which will take several more years to complete.

From conservation of damaged artifacts to a multi-faceted building plan, Naughton has skillfully handled a complex situation and spearheaded the development of a strategy for the museum to emerge even stronger than before. The museum's Board of Directors on Nov. 12, 2009, approved a plan to move and elevate its flood-damaged building, incorporating it into a new and expanded facility. The 15-year-old structure is an architectural icon in Cedar Rapids and the museum's red roof rising above the 2008 floodwaters depicted the Cedar Rapids disaster around the world.

"I am excited to share our vision for the future with the University of Iowa community, especially in light of the shared challenges our museum and the UIMA have faced," said Naughton, who has a bachelor of science degree from Creighton University in Omaha and has completed graduate coursework in textile history and higher education administration at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln and at the University of Iowa.

The lecture comes two weeks after the UI's Envisioning Committee for the UIMA announced its recommendations for the future of the museum. The Committee said that replacing the UIMA must be a top priority so the entire permanent art collection can return to the UI. It also recommended that the new museum enhance the UI's academic and research mission by making its collection and expertise accessible to faculty and students across disciplines, as well as to Iowans.

The UIMA's Elliott Society Lecture Series, for museum donors of \$150 and above, presents special lectures, including one public event, every fall and spring semester. For the first two lectures in this spring's series, "The Art of Conservation and Preservation," Nancy Kraft, preservation librarian at the UI Libraries and Gary Frost, library conservator at the UI, discussed the role of Iowans in the salvage of art and archives and Heather Becker, CEO of the Chicago Conservation Center, spoke on disaster response and recovery of fine art collections.

For more information on the UI Museum of Art, visit <http://uima.uiowa.edu> or call

319-335-1727.

STORY SOURCE: University of Iowa Arts Center Relations, 300 Plaza Centre One, Iowa City, IA 52242-2500

MEDIA CONTACT: Steve Parrott, University Relations, 319-384-0037, [steven-parrott@uiowa.edu](mailto:steven-parrott@uiowa.edu); Writer: Meghan Centers, UIMA Marketing and Media Intern