

Dear Vesterheim Friends,

I am writing to you with important changes in our folk-art exhibits and schedules.

We are excited to announce that we will offer the *National Norwegian-American Folk Art Exhibition* this year! Although the pandemic is not over, we feel we now have safe ways to support the exhibition and its judging component.

While we have missed this treasured exhibition and the ability to offer feedback to artists working toward proficiency in their craft, we were thrilled by the positive response to *Socially Distanced, Creatively Connected*, the pandemic-themed juried folk-art exhibition in 2021. We appreciated both the storytelling offered through the artwork and the diversity of folk art represented in the exhibition. It was inclusive, celebratory, and inspired by the folk-art traditions that are represented in our collection and our courses at the Folk Art School.

In the spirit of diversity and inclusion that Vesterheim is working to model across all departments, we feel that the future of folk art and our mission is best served by continuing to offer both the traditional *National Norwegian-American Folk Art Exhibition* and special-themed juried exhibitions.

This year and in even-numbered years going forward, we will host the traditional *National Norwegian-American Folk Art Exhibition*, which celebrates folk art in five categories (metalworking, rosemaling, weaving, woodcarving, and knifemaking) and includes judging toward Vesterheim Gold Medals. Participating artists may submit three artworks for judging that have been created within the last four years. This summer, we will be undertaking important facilities work on the museum's Main Building to improve the climate and conditions for loaned artworks like yours. Because of this work, we will use the Asbjørnsen Gallery on the first floor of the museum for the exhibit this year. This is a smaller gallery, so in 2022 only, we will exhibit ribbon-winning artworks and one of each artist's submissions. We hope in the future to increase the amount of artwork on view in the exhibit. Submission forms will be posted at on our website after March 15.

Alternating with the *National Norwegian-American Folk Art Exhibition* in odd-numbered years beginning in 2023, there will be a themed and juried exhibition open to all folk-art disciplines. We are excited to explore new opportunities that offer a wider view of contemporary folk art in the Norwegian tradition.

If you have additional questions, I encourage you to reach out to me directly. Thank you for all you do to keep folk art alive and moving forward!

Best,



Chris Johnson,
Vesterheim President/
CEO