A GESTURE OF KINSHIP

Storyteller Eiteljorg Museum Members Magazine

Volume 4 Jumber 2

SUMMER

09

Indian Market 1999





Twenty-year Eiteljorg Museum member Judy O'Bannon in the Facing West exhibition.

Judy O'Bannon

Former Indiana first lady Judy O'Bannon has been an Eiteljorg member since 1989. What makes the Eiteljorg Museum so special to her? We found out.

EJ: What prompted you to join the Eiteljorg? JO: Living in Indiana makes vou ask, "What are we named for? And where is our heritage?" Before the Eiteljorg, we really didn't have an institutionalized way of honoring our indigenous people. My mother grew up on an Indian reservation, in the Winnebago, Nebraska area. I think I've always been trying to figure out who my mother was and where she came from. I was very pleased then, that we (Hoosiers) were going to organize our thoughts

about the Native people who live around here when the Eiteljorg was built.

EJ: What have you really enjoyed about being a member?

JO: One thing that really sticks in my mind is when the totem pole was raised outside. The day they put the big totem pole in the pit with the gravel and people threw big rocks of limestone around the base of the pole to support it, that spoke to me a lot about community development. Everyone was working together. And the leader from the North American tribe that had created the totem pole stood and called commands. I tried to replicate that when I built my barn. It was quite significant to me.

EJ: What are your favorite exhibitions or events at E1? JO: When the first collections came they were focused on the Eiteljorg collection and Southwestern art. But what I have appreciated is watching the museum expand into a broader range of understanding of who the indigenous people are and who we are because of them. I do a lot of community work globally, but it really only can impact me when I bring it home. The Eiteljorg is bringing home those past experiences so we can see who we are today.

To listen to the full interview go to www.eiteljorg.org and click on EM Radio.

