

Art Beyond Sight Awareness Month October 2011

POLAR VISION: SEEING BEYOND LIMITS

In late 2003 Alan Lock began to suffer from Macular Degeneration, which rapidly destroyed much of his vision and cost him his military career. Despite this, Alan has completed ten marathons including the 151-mile Marathon Des Sables in the Sahara Desert. In 2008, Alan set a Guinness World Record and raised over \$80,000 for charity when he became the first visually impaired person to row across the Atlantic Ocean. Most recently, he and two colleagues, Richard Smith and Andrew Jensen, decided to take on one of the toughest endurance challenges in the world: to trek, unsupported, from the coast of Antarctica all the way to the South Pole. They are calling this endeavor Polar Vision. The British-American team will cover a distance of nearly 600 miles, expending over 7,000 calories per day and taking on one of the harshest environments on the planet. In a recent phone interview with ABS, Alan shared some of his experiences in museums across the world.

"When it comes to museums, I am a typical guy with an engineering background. I prefer history and science museums to art galleries. I like big machines and the history behind them. I love boats, so I very much enjoyed the USS Pampanito, a submarine museum in San Francisco, and HMS *Belfast*, a museum ship, operated by the Imperial War Museum in London.

"As a kid I liked building things and enjoyed handling objects in museums. More generally, I enjoy museum experiences that include objects that could be handled or manipulated especially since now my vision does not allow me to see the objects as well. I went to a science museum in Japan recently, and was fascinated by its hands-on robotics exhibits that allowed visitors to control these devices. California aquariums were also really fun as water magnifies everything 33%, and there were touchable objects as well.

"Strolling through San Francisco Botanical gardens, and exploring Yosemite and other national parks is one of my and my wife's Esther favorite pass times. She often reads the signage for me."

For information on the Polar Vision's project and the team, visit <http://polar-vision.org/>

NEWS FROM PUERTO RICO

The Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico in Santurce held a Family Program to celebrate Art Beyond Sight Awareness Month 2011. Yarimil Figueroa, a museum educator, narrated the *Seven Blind Mice* by Ed Young. It was followed by a talk with Hugo Mardales, museum goer and consultant for MAPR. Hugo, who is legally blind, shared

stories and experiences with participants and most importantly communicated valuable information about etiquette and people first language. Afterwards, participants took part in an art workshop using clay to create mice.



Hugo Mardales with participants



Yarimil Figueroa reading the *Seven Blind Mice*

YOU WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY ADDED TO THE OCTOBER 2012 LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Starting in 2012, all 2011 Art Beyond Sight Awareness Month participating organizations will automatically be listed as celebrations of the next year. If you do not wish to be listed as part of Awareness Month 2012, please send an email to aeb@artbeyondsight.org titled "Unsubscribe me" and with the name of your institution.

Awareness Month has grown from Awareness "Week" in 2003, when it was celebrated by 35 organizations, to a month-long initiative with some 230 participating museums, performing art centers, galleries, libraries, schools and service groups. Please help us grow by contacting other arts and service organizations in your area and urge them to join, too.

Here's a form for you to cut-and-paste into an email, and then to send to: aeb@artbeyondsight.org.

_____ Yes, sign us up for Art Beyond Sight Awareness Month: October 2012

Your name: _____

Name of Institution: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip or Country Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

Colleague's emails: _____

SAVE-THE-DATE: Friday-Sunday, October 26-28, 2012

The next Art Beyond Sight International Conference, cosponsored by Art Beyond Sight and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, will be held October 26 to 28, 2012 at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The registration form and schedule will be posted on the conference's blog:

<http://artbeyondsightconference.blogspot.com/>

If you would like to receive automatic updates on the conference, please send an email to aeb@artbeyondsight.org with your name and title it "conference".

PROJECT ACCESS FOR ALL: GET ON BOARD!

If you're a museum or cultural organization and haven't yet registered on www.projectaccessforall.org – now's the time to do it. It's free, it's easy, you control the content and can update as often as desired, and you will be sending a positive message to your community and funders that you believe in and support access to art and culture for all!
