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GRIFFIN MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY ANNOUNCES 2011 FOCUS AWARD RECIPIENTS

Prestigious Event Moves to Boston's Historic Waterfront at Exchange Conference Center

WINCHESTER, MA – JUNE 29, 2011 – The Griffin Museum of Photography (<http://www.griffinmuseum.org/>) today announced the recipients of its sixth annual Focus Awards, and for the first time since its inception, this nationally recognized event is being held in Boston on the city's historic waterfront. The Phoenix Media/Communications Group is a media sponsor of the Griffin Museum Focus Awards.

The Museum created the annual awards in 2006 to recognize individuals who have made critical contributions to the promotion of photography. They are one of the few to recognize the work of those who have been instrumental in building greater awareness of the photographic arts in the general public.

The Focus Awards are presented in three categories: The Life Time Achievement Award, given to an individual whose ongoing commitment to photography has created far reaching impact; the Rising Star award given to an emerging force that the photographic community is watching with great enthusiasm; and the New England Beacon, recognizing a local individual whose work brings prominence to the local photographic scene. This year's recipients are:

- Life Time Achievement – Dr. Alison Nordström, Curator of Photographs and Director of Exhibitions at George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography and Film
- Rising Star – Eileen Gittins, Founder, President, and CEO of Blurb; and
- New England Beacon – Susan Mosser, Special Services VP of the New England Camera Club Council

"Each year the Focus Award selection process is a humbling experience and an exciting challenge. As always, we're very fortunate to be in such wonderful company," said Paula Tognarelli, executive director, Griffin Museum of Photography. "Moving this event to Boston is a significant milestone for the Museum and coupled with the new satellite gallery at A Street Frames in the South End, it provides new opportunities and further expands our reach."

Dr. Alison Nordström

Alison Nordström was born in Boston, educated in public schools and at Boston University. She traveled extensively throughout Europe and Asia in her 20's and early 30's, including an overland journey from Turkey to India, a five-year stay in Japan, and a long walk through Indonesia. Since 1979, she has worked in museums of art, history, ethnography, and photography, focusing simultaneously on contemporary photographic art and 19th century vernacular photographs.

On return to the U.S. after her travels, Nordström found her interests in cross-cultural understanding (and its lack) piqued by early photographs and films made or used with ethnographic intent, which led to her initial jobs in the cultural sector: first as Director of the Robert

Flaherty Centennial Film Festival in Brattleboro, Vermont, and later as a Research Associate in the 19th century photograph collection at Harvard's Peabody Museum. In 1984, Nordström became Director of the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center; in 1991 she was appointed Founding Director and Senior Curator of the Southeast Museum of Photography in Daytona Beach, Florida; and in 2002 and 2003 she was Director of the New Hampshire Humanities Council. In 2004, Nordström became Curator of Photographs at George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography and Film in Rochester, New York, a position that was expanded in 2008 to include Director of Exhibitions.

Nordström holds a BA in English Literature and MLS (museum emphasis) and a PhD in Cultural and Visual Studies. She is a regular participant in portfolio reviews, academic conferences, and other photographic gatherings. As a faculty member and journal editor at universities in Canada, England, and the United States, Nordström has mentored a generation of image-makers, critics, and museum workers.

Eileen Gittins

Eileen Gittins is founder, president, and CEO of Blurb, the creative publishing and marketing platform that enables anyone to design, publish, market, and sell bookstore-quality books. She has been at the intersection of Internet, consumer, and enterprise software, imaging systems, search, and digital photography throughout her career.

Blurb was born because Gittins wanted to create a beautifully-designed and produced photo essay book—something that looked like a book you'd buy at a bookstore—but she only needed 40 copies. It turned out to be a remarkably painful, expensive, and time-consuming experience. She thought that was just wrong so she founded Blurb.

Since its 2006 launch at the DEMO emerging technology conference, Gittins has led Blurb from a startup, to a high-growth company, reaching profitability with revenues of more than \$45M in 2009. In 2010, Blurb was ranked as the #1 fastest-growing media company on the Inc. 500 list. With more than one million books produced, well over one million registered users, and a global footprint that extends to 72 countries, Blurb continues to experience high growth amidst challenging economic times.

Gittins says this is the most fun company she's ever run, which is saying a fair amount since she has lived and worked all over the world with Kodak and as VP at Wall Data (before and after the IPO), CEO of Personify and Verb, outside Board Director at Qbiquity and Popular Demand, and even a stint at a boutique investment bank. In her spare time Gittins still photographs, is a voracious reader, avid traveler (both physical and virtual), and former competitive swimmer who occasionally dips back into the pool.

Susan Mosser

Susan Mosser, FPSA, HonNEC, has organized photographic programming for single events, all day seminars, and larger, multiple day conferences throughout New England and the U.S. for more than 30 years. Her willingness to volunteer on behalf of the photographic community, and a can do attitude have earned her recognition from several organizations. Mosser has served as program chairman for the Photographic Society of America (PSA), the New England Camera Club Council, Yankee Photographic Society, and the Greater Lynn Photographic Association, and has served as President of all except the PSA. She has organized and led photo safaris to Africa and across North America, and her eye for an image has earned her four stars as an exhibitor in PSA color and nature slide exhibitions.

In 1978 Mosser began doing organizational work for the Greater Lynn Photographic Association, a North Shore, Mass. organization. The Association awarded her its highest Honor of Service Award and an Honorary Life Vice Presidency for her numerous contributions, most notably for chairing the Greater Lynn International—America's largest, single division PSA-approved color slide exhibition—for more than 32 years. The exhibition is an annual event, which receives entries from more than 1,300 photographers around the world and is affiliated with national and international organizations such as the PSA, The Canadian Association for Photographic Art (CAPA), IIFW of Germany, and the Fédération Internationale de l'Art Photographique (FIAP).

In 1993, the PSA awarded Mosser an "FPSA," a fellowship in the society for holding a variety of responsibilities, most notably serving as program chairman for multiple international conferences. The New England Camera Club Council also awarded her an Honorary Membership for chairing several committees, serving as Council President, and chairing or co-chairing its annual, three-day photographic conference at the University of Massachusetts on eight occasions.

Awards Presentation and Celebration

This year's event is being held on Boston's historic waterfront on Saturday, October 1 at 7:00 p.m. at the Exchange Conference Center. The master of ceremonies is photographer Lou Jones. Guests will enjoy the awards presentation followed by wine and hors d'oeuvres from Best of Boston caterer East Meets West, while mingling with award-winning editors, curators, and gallerists.

For more information and event tickets, please call 781-729-1158 or email info@griffinmuseum.org. Tickets will be available for \$85 per person. Griffin Museum Facebook friends will be given the opportunity to purchase tickets before they go on sale to the general public.

Arthur Griffin and the Griffin Museum of Photography

Arthur Griffin was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts on September 12, 1903. Originally trained to be an illustrator, in 1929 he picked up his first camera—a second-hand folding Brownie—and thus began a passion that would last a lifetime. By the mid-1930's, Arthur Griffin had become the exclusive photographer for the newly created Boston Globe Rotogravure Magazine and the New England photojournalist for Life and Time magazines. He went on to become a pioneer in the use of color film and provided the first color photographs to appear in the Saturday Evening Post, a two-page layout on New England.

Opened in 1992, the Griffin Museum is the embodiment of founder Arthur Griffin's passion—to promote an appreciation of photographic art and a broader understanding of its visual, emotional, and social impact. Arthur's goal was to share with visitors his enthusiasm for a medium that is diverse, imaginative, and informative. We are committed to continuing to promote Arthur's vision through the works we exhibit, the programs we offer, the artists we encourage, and through Arthur's own work, which we proudly display. The Griffin Museum houses three galleries dedicated solely to the exhibition of photographic arts, as well as four satellite galleries: Atelier Gallery at the Stoneham Theater (Stoneham, MA); The Griffin Museum at The Aberjona River Gallery (Winchester, MA); The Griffin Museum at The Cambridge Homes (Cambridge, MA); and as of July 7, 2011 a new location in Boston, The Griffin Museum by Digital Silver Imaging.

Visit www.griffinmuseum.org and <http://www.griffinmuseum.blogspot.com/>