



## Concept Plans for Military Gallery at the ND Heritage Center & State Museum Unveiled

*Concept plans for the North Dakota Military Gallery addition feature a reconfigured and expanded outdoor amphitheater.*  
Rendering by Zerr Berg Architects

Designs for the North Dakota Military Gallery are beginning to take shape. Fargo-based Zerr Berg Architects recently unveiled concept plans detailing a 54,000-square-foot expansion to the ND Heritage Center & State Museum, which includes the 20,000-square-foot Military Gallery as well as an event center and storage area. As part of the project, slated to break ground in fall 2025, the existing James River Café will expand to include patio seating overlooking the stunning state Capitol grounds. The addition will connect to the ND Heritage Center on its south side.

Featuring immersive exhibits and engaging experiences, the ND Military Gallery will tell stories of our military history from early Native American practices before statehood to today. A tribal advisory committee is being formed to help shape the content. Personal stories of those who have served will bring North Dakota's military history to life through the eyes and voices of individual soldiers.

A collaboration of the North Dakota National Guard, the State Historical Society of North Dakota, and their respective foundations, the roughly \$58 million project is being funded through a mix of public and private funds. The state Legislature has authorized up to \$20 million in credit from the Bank of North Dakota, with a ND National Guard Foundation capital campaign currently underway to raise the remaining funds.

## Field Trip Season Approaches With New Offerings, Virtual Programs

Dozens of new tour options are now available at the ND Heritage Center & State Museum. Parents and teachers can book field trip experiences via the State Museum website for students on topics ranging from “Energy of North Dakota” to “German-Russian Immigration” to the “French Gratitude Train.” The offerings can be tailored to duration, theme, and age range and combined to create a half-day or full-day program of activities. Field trips are also available at Pembina State Museum and eight state historic sites including Fort Totten, Camp Hancock, and the Chateau de Morès. And if you can’t make it to the site, select state historic sites, such as the 1883 Stutsman County Courthouse in Jamestown and the Ronald Reagan Minuteman Missile site near Cooperstown, offer Ask-An-Expert programs and virtual tours.

For more information and to book a visit to the State Museum, go to [bit.ly/MuseumFieldTrips](https://bit.ly/MuseumFieldTrips). Schedule a field trip to a historic site at [ndstudies.gov/field-trips](https://ndstudies.gov/field-trips).



Pembina State Museum Outreach Coordinator Brian Hardy teaches students about the fur trade at the ND Heritage Center.



## Superheroes to Descend on ND Heritage Center in Upcoming Exhibition

Icons of the comic book universe will touch down at the ND Heritage Center & State Museum when *Marvelocity: The Art of Alex Ross* opens March 16. The exhibition, organized by the Dunn Museum in Illinois, showcases Ross’ renditions of classic Marvel characters such as Spider-Man, Captain America, Storm, and Black Panther and includes paintings, drawings, and 3D busts. Ross, who was first hired by Marvel Comics at the age of 23 to illustrate the four-issue *Marvels* comic book, has depicted some of their most famous heroes and villains during his 30-year career. The new exhibition, which runs through June 9 in the James E. Sperry Gallery, will follow the artist’s trajectory from young comic book fan to student at the American Academy of Art in Chicago to creator of some of Marvel’s most well-known images.

*Spider-Man Marvelocity Cover, 2018. Marvelocity: The Art of Alex Ross was developed by the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County, [www.dunnmuseum.org](http://www.dunnmuseum.org)*

## “Travels With Darley” Takes a Road Trip to the State Museum



We were thrilled that Emmy-nominated host Darley Newman dropped by the ND Heritage Center & State Museum in Bismarck on her recent swing through North Dakota to film two episodes for her popular TV travel series, “Travels With Darley.” The “North Dakota Sunflower Trail” episode, featuring the ND Heritage Center, highlighted the state’s history, food, and culture, including stops at the Lewis & Clark Riverboat, the Bismarck Art Alley, and popular eatery Butterhorn. It aired Jan. 28 on Prairie Public.

While at the ND Heritage Center & State Museum, Newman got a behind-the-scenes look at treasures from the State Archives and took in our exhibits, including one of the oldest fossils on display, the roughly 67-million-year-old Dakota the Dinomummy!

**Did you know?** We love to give tours and show off all that the ND Heritage Center & State Museum has to offer. We are constantly hosting bloggers, media personalities, school groups, and others seeking the inside scoop on the state collections.

*From left: Head of Archival Collections and Information Management Lindsay Meidinger, Head of Reference Services Sarah Walker, and Audience Engagement & Museum Department Director Kim Jondahl with TV host Darley Newman at the State Archives. “Travels with Darley”*

## Stutsman County Courthouse State Historic Site To Celebrate New Additions

Check out recent updates to North Dakota’s oldest existing courthouse aimed at improving the visitor experience. In addition to installing an elevator at the Stutsman County Courthouse State Historic Site in Jamestown, a street-level entrance added to the north side of the building and a new sidewalk leading from Fifth Street SE offer enhanced accessibility to visitors. The community is invited to an open house celebration marking the completion of these renovations May 10 and 11.

While at the courthouse (built in 1883), visitors can immerse themselves in a hands-on exhibit about civics and local government featuring period office equipment, judges’ robes and other attire, and even a jail cell escape room. The Junior Sheriff Program leads younger visitors on a scavenger hunt, helping them engage with the site.

Located in the basement, the escape room takes its inspiration from Limpy Jack Clayton, a colorful 19th-century character who would often sleep at the jail on nights when he came into town to patronize the saloons. “The premise of the escape room is that Jack has gone missing, and Archibald McKechnie [the sheriff] wants everyone to find him fast because the last time he went missing he fell off his horse and got frostbite and lost some of his fingers,” says Steve Reidburn, site supervisor. Participants must complete a series of puzzles and challenges leading them to a note with Limpy’s location. The escape room will be available for bookings later this spring.

Through May 23, the site is now open Wednesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and by appointment.



*Help the sheriff find Limpy Jack Clayton at Stutsman County Courthouse State Historic Site’s escape room.*

# National History Day in North Dakota Expands Regional Contests

Regional competitions in Dickinson, Bismarck, and Williston have been added to the 2024 National History Day in North Dakota contest. The public is invited to attend regionals held at Dickinson State University Student Center March 13; Bismarck State College National Energy Center of Excellence March 19; North Dakota State University in Fargo March 20; and Williston High School March 27. Winners will advance to the state competition April 17 at the ND Heritage Center & State Museum in Bismarck. The National History Day in North Dakota contest is open to all students grades 6-12.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of National History Day, with the theme focusing on "Turning Points in History." Thanks to a generous donation from Jim and Gerd Tuchscherer, an endowment has been established through the State Historical Society of North Dakota Foundation to offset travel costs for state winners attending the June national contest in the Washington, D.C., area. Contact the Foundation at [statehistoricalfoundation.org](http://statehistoricalfoundation.org) to learn more about ways to give. For more information on how to register or volunteer, visit [nd.nhd.org](http://nd.nhd.org).



A student presents her work at last year's National History Day state contest in Bismarck.

## Preserving the News

When KFYP in Bismarck and WDAY in Fargo celebrated their 70th anniversaries last year and were looking for historical footage to mark the occasion, the State Archives was happy to lend a hand. After all, the Archives' television news collections comprise a whopping 3.5 million feet of film and video spanning from 1953 to 2015. The collections include WDAY, KXJB, and KTHI/KVLY in Fargo; KXMB and KFYP in Bismarck (as well as KFYP's satellite stations across the state); Prairie Public; and the North Dakota Farmers Union "Focus on the News" program. Audiovisual Archivist Greta Beck says the footage offers a unique perspective on history, showing "how things change, like fashion and businesses that aren't around anymore."

Look for TV news footage from the State Archives' holdings on KFYP's weekly on-air "History Talk" segment, also available on their YouTube channel and website.



Footage from the respective first TV broadcasts of KFYP on Dec. 19, 1953, left, and WDAY on June 1, 1953. At right, broadcaster Earl Reineke introduces WDAY-TV after 32 years of radio. Meyer Broadcasting Company Records SHSND SA 10983-04041 and WDAY-TV Records SHSND SA 10351-02078



## Cultural Heritage Grants Awarded



The Bruflat Lutheran Church in Portland received \$26,525 to restore its water-damaged church bell tower, whose twice-daily chimes are a mainstay of the community. Courtesy Steve Gunderson

More than \$470,000 in Cultural Heritage Grants for the 2023-2025 biennium have been awarded by the State Historical Society to 20 organizations across the state.

Selected projects include Strengthen ND's "Prairie Roses" initiative to research and write the stories of 12 notable North Dakota women; Cass County Historical Society's repair and preservation of key historical structures at Bonanzaville in West Fargo; and the Pioneer Trails Regional Museum's development of the upcoming permanent exhibit *The Romance of His Life: Theodore Roosevelt in Bowman and Slope Counties*.

Supported by the North Dakota Legislature, Cultural Heritage Grants provide funding to nonprofit organizations as well as to city, county, and tribal governments. Eligible projects include capital improvements, exhibits, special projects or events, educational activities, and collections.

## Scandinavian Folk Art on View at the State Museum



### Baby, It's Cold Outside

Gallery Guide Tom Chase helps a young visitor make a Scandinavian-style paper heart during a Vinterfest crafting event at the ND Heritage Center in January. The State Historical Society partnered with the Sons of Norway Sverdrup Lodge and the Northern Plains Heritage Foundation to help produce this month-long celebration of winter on the northern Plains.

The traditional Scandinavian artforms of rosemaling, dalmåling, and bonadsmåling come to life in exquisite detail as part of the new exhibition *Fantastical Flourishes: The Folk Art of Pieper Bloomquist* at the State Museum. In her work, Bloomquist, a Grand Forks-based artist and recipient of a Governor's Award for the Arts, draws on folk art imagery to render a fanciful modern world inspired by family traditions, her experiences as an oncology nurse, rural life in the Upper Midwest, and current events such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

On view in the North Dakota Artists Gallery through November 2024, the exhibition features paintings, cabinetry, and ceramics, including examples from Bloomquist's sizeable personal collection of hand-thrown dishes. "People think we are the Weasleys from Harry Potter," quips Bloomquist, "with our wonky stacks of plates."



Pieper Bloomquist's art captures contemporary life using traditional styles, as seen in the acrylic painting "Saturday Morning Pancakes," 1998.

## New to the Collections

### A Whole New World

When Bismarck-based artist Jessica Wachter was working on her painting "Rocket Ship," the album "Rainbow" by singer and songwriter Kesha was playing nonstop. "In a song, [Kesha] mentions rocket ship, so that's why I titled it that," Wachter notes, adding that she hopes the painting transports viewers to "another world place."

In 2023, Wachter's colorful abstract expressionist paintings, featuring thick, textured brushstrokes, were exhibited in both Bismarck, North Dakota's capital, and Washington, D.C., the nation's capital. The State Historical Society is pleased to add a Wachter original to its museum collections.



Artist Jessica Wachter with her "Rocket Ship" painting. SHSND 2023.68.1

### Bone Throne

This armchair, made of moose and elk antlers from Olaf A. Olson's farm in the early 1900s, is one of a set of four donated to the state museum collections that may have once adorned the Lexington Hotel at Central Avenue and First Street NW in Minot.

Eccentric furnishings may not have been the establishment's only unusual feature, however. In 1917, Olson, the hotel's proprietor, was arrested for accepting proceeds from prostitutes and running a "bawdy house" out of the Lexington. According to *The Fargo Forum and Daily Republican*, he quit the hotel business shortly thereafter, leasing the Lexington to C.E. Danielson, who renamed it the Grand Hotel.

Armchair, 1900-1910. SHSND 2023.54.1

### Smurf on a Shelf

After an action-packed experience as a delegate to the 1981 Girls State at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, Susan Nissen returned home to Fargo with this Papa Smurf, a gift from her roommate that week. Nissen, who donated the Smurf along with the dresses she wore at Girls State and later Girls Nation in Washington, D.C., notes that the Smurfs were "all the rage" at the time; they would soon have their own TV series and breakfast cereal. Not long after the item arrived in our collections last fall, a group of visiting children happened to be passing through and were delighted to encounter the Smurf patriarch, recalls Assistant Registrar Elise Dukart. "I could hear [them say] as they were leaving, 'Oh, Papa Smurf is here,'" with one little girl wondering aloud, "Papa Smurf, are you doing a job?"



Papa Smurf stuffed toy, 1979. SHSND 2023.83.1

We thought she was onto something and put him straight to work.



### "Barbenheimer" in Bismarck

In July 2023, the release of two much-anticipated blockbusters and future Oscar nominees, Christopher Nolan's "Oppenheimer" and Greta Gerwig's "Barbie," on the same day sparked an internet craze known as "Barbenheimer," with moviegoers flocking to theaters to watch the films back-to-back. Audiences dressed in "Barbie"- and "Oppenheimer"-style costumes or donned commemorative T-shirts, like the one donated by Photo Archivist Matt Ely (pictured at left). Ely, who attended the films along with fellow State Historical Society colleagues on July 22 at the Grand 22 Theatres in Bismarck, paired his "I Survived Barbenheimer 2023" shirt with a snazzy pair of electric pink athletic shorts.

From left: State Historical Society staff DeAnne Adaire, Elise Dukart, Megan Steele, Matt Ely, and Ashley Thronson in their matching "Barbenheimer" T-shirts. SHSND 23.78.1-2 and SHSND SA 11552-00025

## North Dakota Properties Listed in National Register

An auditorium and a historic district in Grand Forks as well as a barn near Hettinger were recently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register of Historic Places is the federal government's list of properties it considers worthy of preservation and recognition. North Dakota nominations are coordinated by the State Historical Society.

The **Chester Fritz Auditorium** at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks is a late-modernist building designed by architect Myron Denbrook and built in 1972 using precast concrete panel technology. Denbrook consulted with acoustical engineer Robert C. Coffeen to design a building capable of facilitating performances and educational events as the university expanded its curriculum and created the College of Fine Arts.



Grand Forks' Chester Fritz Auditorium. Photo by Susan Caraher

The **Baukol Historic District** includes 41 properties, reflective of the modern movement and constructed between 1946 and 1962, in the Baukol Addition in Grand Forks. Built by the Baukol Construction Company to address housing needs following World War II, the residential district makes up the first postwar multiple property development in Grand Forks. More than half the modestly sized homes were owned by military veterans in 1950.

The **Andrew Erickson Barn** near Hettinger is used for dairy and beef cattle. Built in 1952, the barn has a low concrete sidewall with a Gothic-arched roof. As was common with most barns, the Erickson barn also housed family celebrations. The barn attests to trends in the development of agriculture in North Dakota.



A typical home from the Baukol Historic District in Grand Forks. Photo by Susan Caraher



The Andrew Erickson Barn. Photo by Kari Mayer

## The “Masters of the Air” North Dakota Connection



Apple TV+ and 100th Bomb Group Foundation

Oscar-nominated actor Austin Butler hits the small screen this winter as Maj. Gale “Buck” Clevon in Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks’ new World War II miniseries “Masters of the Air” now streaming on Apple TV+. The real-life Clevon, pictured at right in 1943 in the cockpit of a B-17 bomber, later retired for a short time to Dickinson to be near a close friend and former fellow prisoner of war. He makes a rare appearance on film discussing his experience of being shot down and captured as part of the 19th Cowboy Opry Veterans Day Videotapes (MSS 21523) in the State Archives. Featuring the recollections of veterans, the footage, filmed in Clevon’s birthplace of Lemmon, South Dakota, is likely the only recording of the event.

## Trailblazing North Dakota Female Filmmaker Showcased at Long Island Festival



Angela Murray Gibson in the comedy “That Ice Ticket.” The film was part of a recent program on “Pioneering Women Filmmakers of the Silent Era” held in New York state. Snyder Film Collection, SHSND SA 10782-03501

Two short films from 1923 directed by silent filmmaker Angela Murray Gibson were featured at New York’s Sag Harbor Cinema Festival of Preservation in November.

“The Adams’s Boys,” named after a poem by North Dakota poet James Foley, traces the juvenile hijinks of the Adams brothers. Meanwhile, “That Ice Ticket” also starred Gibson as a woman pursued by three men until a prank by her brother reveals their true colors. The films, housed in the State Archives’ Snyder Film Collection, are among those reflective of a “forgotten era” when “women were major players in the film industry,” according to the festival website.

Over the course of her career, the Scottish-born Gibson wore a number of hats both in front of and behind the camera, including writer, director, camerawoman, producer, and actress. Her Gibson Studios in Casselton produced educational, industrial, and entertainment films throughout the 1920s. Gibson later worked as a drama and elocution teacher in Casselton and for the Works Progress Administration.

## The Curious Case of the Not-So-Cowhide Coveralls

Earlier this winter, Assistant Curator of Collections Lori Nohner came across a listing for a pair of hand-sewn cowhide coveralls in our museum artifact collection believed to be missing. “I thought, that’s interesting because I know we have a pair of bearskin coveralls that we point out a lot on tours” in the museum storage area, Nohner says. But those coveralls had no known documentation.

“In my brain it was easy enough to mistake one for the other,” adds Nohner, who pulled the donation file for the so-called cowhide coveralls. In the folder she discovered a 1938 photograph of Jacob J. Tesky wearing the coveralls he made. He wore them while delivering rural mail in McIntosh County. According to Tesky’s daughter Octavia, the coveralls came in handy on long cold routes in the winter, which could last up to 14 hours by horse and carriage.

Though the details of the bearskin coveralls appeared to match those in the photographs, Nohner asked fellow State Historical Society team members in Bismarck about whether the worn, matted fur was from a cow or bear. Opinions differed so she called in state furbearer biologist Stephanie Tucker to take a look. “She’s like, ‘It’s bear, no question, it’s bear.’” A small hole on the bottom left leg of the coveralls is likely where the black bear was shot.

With the mystery solved, Nohner says it will be easier to display the item in future exhibitions. “It produces a rich story, a particularly North Dakota story, which was a history we didn’t have before.” Now if only we knew where Tesky got that bear!



From left: Assistant Curator of Collections Lori Nohner confers with state furbearer biologist Stephanie Tucker and technician Emily Onderbeke of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department about the type of animal fur used in the coveralls. Inset: Jacob Tesky delivering mail in the no longer “missing” coveralls, 1938. SHSND 1981.66.1

## Agency Webpage Details Repatriation Work

A new Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) page on our website provides the public with an overview of how the agency is complying with this federal law. The 1990 law, whose regulations were recently revised, provides a process for the return of funerary, sacred, and cultural

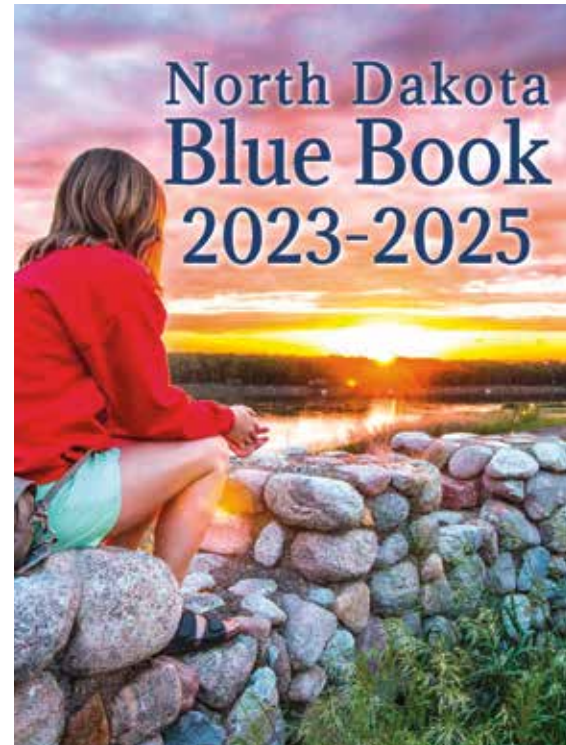
patrimony objects or human remains to tribal nations and related individuals. The State Historical Society has been a leader in working on repatriation even before NAGPRA took effect, and our NAGPRA committee will continue to build on this work with tribal nations. Visit the NAGPRA webpage, [history.nd.gov/nagpra](http://history.nd.gov/nagpra).

# North Dakota Blue Book Spotlights State Historic Sites and Museums

The 2023-2025 North Dakota Blue Book is now available for purchase online and in-person at the ND Heritage Center & State Museum's store in Bismarck. A digital version is accessible on the State Historical Society's website.

Published by Secretary of State Michael Howe, the Blue Book contains a wealth of information about all things North Dakota, including its branches of government, elections, natural resources, educational system, tribal-state relations, and key industries. In addition to the featured chapter on North Dakota's 60 state museums and historic sites, State Historical Society staff penned a concluding chapter exploring 150 years of Bismarck history in commemoration of the capital city's sesquicentennial celebration in 2022.

*Double Ditch Indian Village State Historic Site near Bismarck appears on the cover of the new Blue Book.*



## Understanding the Archaeology of Farmsteads

North Dakota's abandoned farmsteads and ranches are set to get a fresh appraisal. The ND State Historic Preservation Office is seeking applications from qualified consultants to develop a historical context for the archaeology of rural domestic places across the region.

"People were undervaluing farmsteads if there were no standing structures, and they have relevance even if you might not be able to see it on the surface," says State Archaeologist Andrew Robinson, adding that "the stuff that's not standing" can teach us about everything from the layouts of farms to the ethnic background of the people who worked the land.



*A context document for the archaeology of farmsteads could be useful for future work at Strasburg's Welk Homestead State Historic Site.*

The project aims to create a detailed understanding of the historical development, spatial organization, material culture, and social aspects of farmsteads, homesteads, and ranch locations in North Dakota from an archaeological perspective. The resulting document will serve as a key resource for preservation, planning, and research purposes.

Find the full grant details at [history.nd.gov/hp/grants.html](http://history.nd.gov/hp/grants.html). For more information, contact Grants & Contracts Officer Amy Munson, [amunson@nd.gov](mailto:amunson@nd.gov) or 701.328.3573. Applications must be received by March 27, 2024.



**Milestones.** The State Historical Society of North Dakota Foundation extends its appreciation to two distinguished individuals who recently concluded their tenure on our board of directors. Barb Lang of Jamestown served as treasurer and was a member of the board since 1992. Bob Horne of Fargo is a former board president and has been a member since 2003. Both leave an indelible mark on the Foundation. Lang and Horne were pivotal in providing guidance during our capital campaign for the expansion of the North Dakota Heritage Center & State Museum, which opened in 2014.

*From left: Foundation Executive Director Dale Lennon, outgoing board members Barb Lang and Bob Horne, and Development & Systems Manager Kris Hockett.*

**Mission Accomplished.** The North Dakota National Guard Foundation hosted a successful kickoff event for the North Dakota Military Gallery at Gate City Bank's Swiontek Center in Fargo Oct. 17, 2023. This gathering offered a first look at the impressive design of the upcoming Military Gallery addition to the ND Heritage Center & State Museum. We are pleased to partner with the ND National Guard and its foundation and the State Historical Society of North Dakota on the gallery initiative.



*From left: Col. Brock Larson; State Historical Society Director Bill Peterson; retired Brig. Gen. Robert Schulte; retired Brig. Gen. Gregory Bowen; retired Maj. Gen. Michael Haugen; retired Maj. Gen. Alex Macdonald; Maj. Gen. Alan Dohrmann, the adjutant general; Brig. Gen. Jackie Huber; retired Lt. Col. Shirley Olgeirson; and Dale Lennon.*

**Keeping Pace.** A grant from the Statewide Greatest Needs Fund of the North Dakota Community Foundation (NDCF) allowed us to replace outdated computer stations in our offices and meet our computer infrastructure goals. We are grateful for the support!



*From left: Dale Lennon with NDCF board members Ken Hall and Dean Anagnost.*

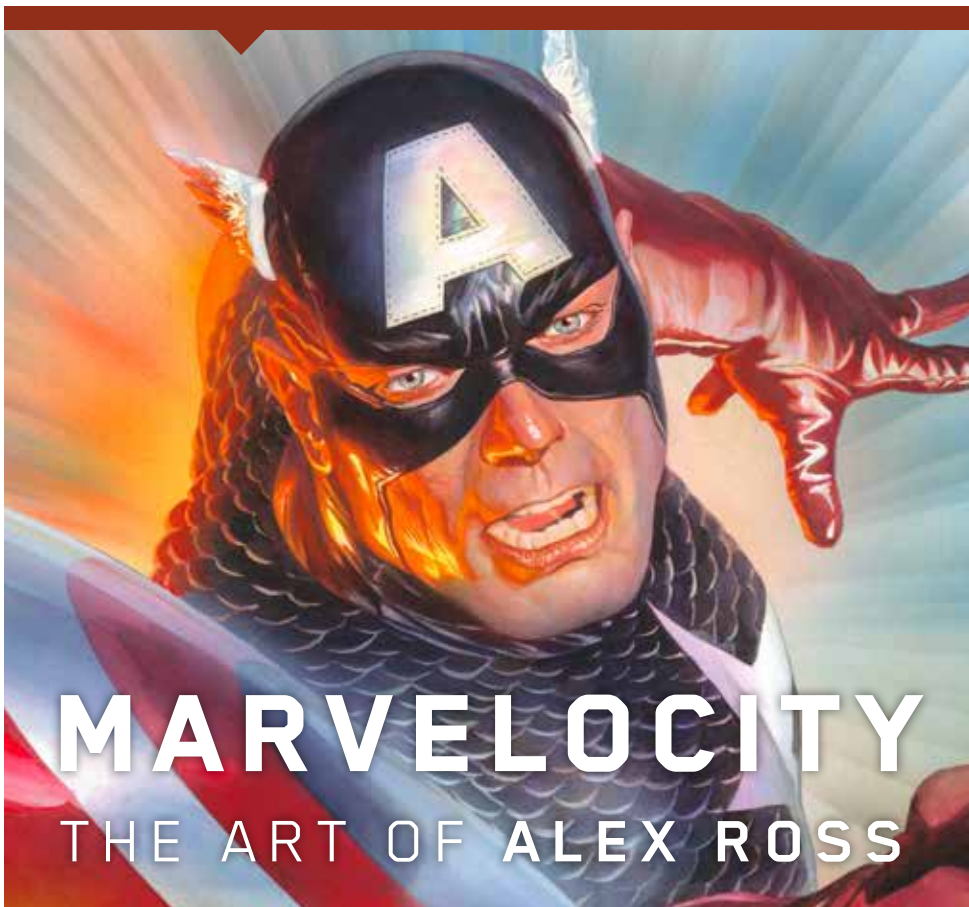
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# MARVELOLOCITY

## THE ART OF ALEX ROSS

**March 16-June 9**  
**North Dakota Heritage Center  
& State Museum**

See original art from Alex Ross's book *Marvelocity*, and learn about how he developed into a great illustrator through his childhood drawings, preliminary sketches, paintings, and 3-dimensional head busts of characters in the Marvel Universe.

*Marvelocity: The Art of Alex Ross* was developed by the Bess Bower Dunn Museum of Lake County, [www.dunnmuseum.org](http://www.dunnmuseum.org).



HISTORY FOR  
*everyone.*

*Plains Talk* is published by the State Historical Society of North Dakota, ND Heritage Center, 612 E. Boulevard Ave., Bismarck, ND 58505/701.328.2666/history.nd.gov. Bill Peterson, Director; Bree Hocking, *Plains Talk* Editor. *Plains Talk* is a benefit to members of the SHSND Foundation.

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