

# press release

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Julie Ziegler, Interim Executive Director  
Humanities Washington  
206.682.1770 (office) or 206.227.5020 (cell)  
Julie@humanities.org

## **2009 Humanities Washington Award Honors Metaline Falls Educator Donovan Johnson and the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture**

*2009 marks 1<sup>st</sup> year award given to an individual and an organization*

SPOKANE – Donovan Johnson, a musician and teacher in the Selkirk School District, and the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture were honored with the Humanities Washington Award at a reception Thursday, June 4 at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane. The Humanities Washington Award is an annual award recognizing outstanding achievement in the public humanities in Washington State.

For the first time in 2009, Humanities Washington chose recipients from a specific geographic area (Northeast Washington). 2009 is also the first year the award has been given to an individual and an organization.

**Donivan Johnson**, K-12 Music Teacher, Selkirk School District, is being honored for his exemplary and inspirational commitment for bringing the humanities –music, literature, theater and visual art – to the people of the Inland Northwest. In his nomination letter, Gonzaga Professor Tod Marshall described Johnson as a ...”one-person humanities department for Metaline Falls... always speaking of ideas to bring the arts to students.” A full biography on Johnson’s achievements may be found at the end of this press release.

**Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture** was chosen for their ongoing commitment to responding to community needs and developing diverse programs which serve a variety of audiences. The selection committee noted the Museum’s collaboration with Native American Tribes and the mutual trust they have established, enabling the Museum to provide The Sacred Room, a unique storage facility for sacred objects. A full biography on the MAC may be found at the end of this press release.

The Humanities Washington Award recognizes outstanding and exemplary achievement in the public humanities and is presented annually to an individual and/or organization whose time and talents enlarge the meaning of the humanities in peoples’ lives. Honorees are recognized at a public reception and also have the opportunity to direct a \$1000 award to the humanities project of their choice.

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## **ABOUT HUMANITIES WASHINGTON**

Humanities Washington is a statewide organization dedicated to improving life for individuals and their communities through interdisciplinary cultural education programs that nurture creativity, promote dialogue and spark critical thinking. Humanities Washington's programs include Motherhead, a family literacy program; Inquiring Mind, a speakers' bureau featuring dynamic presenters on a broad array of humanities topics; an Exhibits program which brings Smithsonian exhibitions to small museums; and grants to support local humanities projects in Washington State. For more information on Humanities Washington visit <http://www.humanities.org>.

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### **Donivan Johnson** **Biography**

Johnson received his Master of Arts in Composition from California State University, Northridge. He serves as the only K-12 music instructor for the Selkirk School District (Ione, WA). For his dedication to students, Johnson is listed in *Who's Who Among American Teachers*.

In 2001, Selkirk was designated as: "One of the 100 Best Communities for Music Education in America." The Selkirk music program was featured on Morning Edition and All Things Considered for National Public Radio.

As a composer, his cantata *Arise, My Love* received its premiere in Basel, Switzerland on June 5, 1999; Lindisfarne *Ground* (piano and un-pitched bells) was selected for performance at the Society of Composers Region VI Conference, University of Texas, San Antonio in February, 2005. His children's piano piece entitled *Kinderstück Nach Webern: Laughing Man* received its premiere during March 2005 in San Francisco.

Johnson has been invited to present his original research on and his unique approach to the music of Anton Webern (1883 – 1945) and Helmut Lachenmann (1935 - ) a number of times. He has presented at: Regional and National Conferences for the Society of Composers, Inc; National Conference for the Christian Fellowship of Art Music Composers; Southwest Contemporary Music Festival and Conference; and at Whitworth College, where he delivers the annual Hans Moldenhauer Memorial Lecture.

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### **Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture** **Biography**

The Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture (MAC) is a multidisciplinary museum, serving over 100,000 visitors and 12,000 school children in the Inland Northwest each year. Since opening its new building in 2001, the MAC has hosted dozens of exhibitions and programs featuring Regional History, American Indian Culture, and the Inland Northwest's historical and contemporary Art.

Founded in 1916 as the Eastern Washington State Historical Society and chartered by the State of Washington in 1926, the MAC was one of the first museums in the state to be accredited by the

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American Association of Museum's (AAM) in 1972. Accreditation confirms that the MAC upholds the highest standards of collections management, conservation and exhibitions. This, together with its Smithsonian Affiliation, means that, in addition to providing expertly researched and interpreted exhibits from its own collections, the MAC has been able to bring outstanding traveling exhibits and programs from around the country to the region.

Education at the MAC enhances the museum's changing exhibits and explores its three disciplines: Regional History, Art, and American Indian Culture. Programs for students and teachers are highly interactive and directly support Washington State's public school curriculum. Family programs emphasize fun intergenerational learning experiences. Adult programs highlight recognized scholars, experts, authors, and artists.

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