

## **Welcome to *Objects of Wonder and Fascination*, a new exhibit with public input!**

The Beach House Wonder Cabinet (the display case in the Event Hall Gallery) is accepting objects for display during the summer months. Taking inspiration from the Renaissance-to-Victorian eras of the “wunderkammer” and “curio cabinet”, the display is entitled *Objects of Wonder and Fascination*, and will showcase small objects submitted by Beach House guests throughout the summer season.

For the Beach House Wonder Cabinet, we seek to display, in a grown-up game of show-and-tell, the mysterious, beautiful, and storied items that each of us have in our possession. The impulse to preserve and collect can take many forms; Marion Davies’ famous companion W.R. Hearst was known as an omnibus collector of antiquities, for example. This project uses as its point of departure the collections many of us began as children – seashells and mementoes of family vacations – underscoring the idea that the most fascinating things are not necessarily the most conventionally valuable. Just as the journey makes the destination, the story makes the object!

The historical Wonder Cabinet dates from a time before there was a demarcation between the arts and the sciences. Scholarly and wealthy collectors amassed rarities that spanned the fields of natural history, geology, ethnography, archaeology, pseudoscience, and art. Some kept intricate cabinets that held collections of small objects, such as the [Augsburg Display Cabinet](#) currently showcased at the Getty Museum, and others filled whole rooms with medals, coins, sculptures, specimens, paintings, miniatures, and oddities. These collections inspired advancements in the sciences and the development of the modern museum.

Modern descendants of the Wonder Cabinet include the [British Museum](#), which started as the collection of physician, naturalist and collector [Sir Hans Sloane](#) in 1753. Several of these collections exist untouched in Europe; for a perfectly preserved example, take a look at [Teylers Museum](#) in the Netherlands. From a contemporary perspective these collections charmingly juxtapose the real and the fake; a piece of polished jade might be displayed next to a “unicorn horn”, which shares space with cleverly carved wooden boxes; Audubon’s stuffed finch might sit next to a stuffed mermaid (a monkey sewn to a fish). This inclusive sensibility is carried forward in the work of Los Angeles’ own [Museum of Jurassic Technology](#) or, farther afield, Wisconsin’s [House on the Rock](#). There is an online collection of wonder cabinets at the [Atlas Obscura](#).

Showcase an unusual, wonderful, bizarre, or storied object of your own at the Beach House! If you have a meaningful object you’d like to share with the public, please fill out the Entry Form on the next page and email back to [isanaomi.okuyama@smgov.net](mailto:isanaomi.okuyama@smgov.net) (they can also be dropped off at the Guest Services desk at the Beach House). This form is available for download at <http://annenbergbeachhouse.com/cultural-programs>.

### **Object guidelines:**

We will consider submissions from May 31- July 16, 2010. Please note that not all objects can or will be accepted, as there is limited space in the display. We are looking for items that are intrinsically fascinating, or have a remarkable story. There are reference examples in the current display at the Beach House. Please only submit one object per applicant. Applicant must be the owner of the object proposed.

The object is limited in size and weight to 5”x5”x5” and 1 lb., and we ask that it not be expensive (no gold, precious gems, expensive technology, etc.) or otherwise inappropriate for public display. Items accepted in the case will be indemnified against damage/loss up to \$50 per object. Accepted objects will be kept on display through September 15. You are responsible for dropping off and picking up the object, coordinating with Naomi Okuyama. We will not ship any items. Questions? Contact Naomi Okuyama by email [isanaomi.okuyama@smgov.net](mailto:isanaomi.okuyama@smgov.net) or phone (310) 458-2257 (answering machine).

# Annenberg Community Beach House

AT SANTA MONICA STATE BEACH



## **Objects of Wonder and Fascination – Entry Form**

*Exhibit to take place June - September 2010 at the Annenberg Community Beach House.*

Please attach 2 digital photographs or scanned images of the object, with a front & side view. If accepted, we will contact you to set up a drop off time. Entries accepted through 7/16/10.

**Please do not submit the object with this form.**

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Alt: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Dimensions: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Material(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Declared value (not to exceed \$50): \_\_\_\_\_

When did you acquire the object, and what do you know/were told it is?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why is it remarkable/curious?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What would you like other people to know about it?

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If it weren't what you say it is, what would it be? (tall tales encouraged)

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