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**Grand Rapids Art Museum to mark 100th Anniversary
with award-winning exhibition *Diana, A Celebration***

On loan from Althorp Estate in England, *Diana, A Celebration* chronicles the life and work of Diana, Princess of Wales

Grand Rapids, Mich., Jan. 25, 2010 – The Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) today announced that it has secured the *Diana - A Celebration* exhibition as part of its 100th Anniversary celebration. The exhibition will be open to the public beginning Nov. 7 and run until Feb. 16, 2011. Details on tickets sales will be announced soon. The opening event will also celebrate the contributions of 30 local women to GRAM throughout its 100-year history.

Established in 1910 by a City Federation of Women’s Clubs, the Grand Rapids Art Museum has served the region by presenting original, authentic works of art. Past GRAM exhibitions have included *Sculpture Off The Pedestal, Perugino, Master of the Italian Renaissance* and *Mathias Alten: Journey of An American Painter*. In 2009, to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the installation of *La Grande Vitesse* in downtown Grand Rapids, GRAM opened the *Calder in the Collection* exhibition to display the museum’s permanent and pledged collection of Calder works.

“I can think of no better way to celebrate our past heritage and the contributions of the many important women to GRAM’s history than an exhibition that celebrates the life of Princess Diana, one of the most influential women of our time,” said Pamella DeVos, GRAM honorary life trustee. “This compelling exhibition is also a wonderful way to attract women of all ages who might lead our museum for the next 100 years.”

More than a decade after her death, Princess Diana’s memory still stirs interest and emotion. The exhibition *Diana – A Celebration* presents the life and humanitarian work of one of the 20th century’s most remarkable women through nine galleries containing 150 objects-ranging from her royal wedding gown and 28 of her designer dresses to family heirlooms, personal mementoes, paintings and rare home movies and photos. The exhibition is on loan from the Althorp Estate, the Spencer family’s 500-year-old ancestral home.

The exhibition is produced by Arts and Exhibitions International in association with Althorp Estate and presented by the Grand Rapids Art Museum. All profits generated to the Althorp Estate from exhibition support the ongoing work of the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund to benefit communities living with the legacy of landmines, cluster bombs and other explosive remnants of war. Since 1998 the exhibition has generated more than \$1.8 million for charities supported by the Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund.

The exhibition showcases the life and work of one of the most remarkable women of her time – certainly one of the most photographed, with over one billion television viewers who watched the 1981 Royal Wedding. Her charm, beauty and easy grace touched people worldwide during her short and complex life.

A series of 150 stunning objects chronicle her life and invite the visitor to share the milestones of her many roles: as a youngster, schoolgirl and athlete; as the shy kindergarten teacher who captured the heart of the Prince and the public; as the young, ravishing royal bride; as the devoted mother, sister and daughter; and as the tireless charity advocate and spokeswoman. The strength of the Spencer women and their roots in the bucolic 500-year-old Althorp Estate form the backdrop for Diana’s formative years.

Also featured in the exhibition are portraits of her ancestors, family jewels, heirlooms, paintings, artifacts and photos, which provide the historical context. Home movies filmed by her father and scenes from her childhood, her engagement to Prince Charles and the events leading up to the Royal Wedding are remembered and animated with video clips, personal possessions, photos, displays and letters. The glorious Royal Wedding features her resplendent gown, diamond tiara, veil and 25 ft. train, shoes and parasol, her bridesmaid’s dress among other items.

One entire section is devoted to her energetic and multi-faceted public life and the myriad of charities and causes, including her pioneering efforts in AIDS, the homeless and landmines. A three-screened video presentation highlights the hundreds of associations that continue to benefit from her patronage and energetic dedication. The world’s grief at her untimely death is dealt with sensitively, in a display of books of condolence and space for reflection and remembrance.

A few of the many dazzling items on display include:

- More than 20 dresses, suits and evening gowns worn by the Princess during her public life, accompanied by photos and designer details from the event at which the outfits were worn.
- Two diamond tiaras and other priceless family jewels.
- The original text of the Earl Spencer’s moving tribute to his sister at the funeral in Westminster Abbey.
- The score and lyrics of the Elton John/Bernie Taupin composition, adapted from “*Candle in the Wind*.”
- Original heritage family paintings.
- Diana’s magnificent Royal Wedding gown (as described above).

Diana -A Celebration is produced by Arts and Exhibitions International, in association with the Althorp Estate and presented by the Grand Rapids Art Museum.

Further details are available online at dianaexhibition.com.

About the Grand Rapids Art Museum

The mission of the Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) is to provide a gathering place where people of all ages and backgrounds can enrich their lives through interaction with works of art in a thought-provoking and creative way. Established in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids, the new art museum is internationally known for its distinguished design and LEED Gold certified status. Established in 1910 as the Grand Rapids Art Association, GRAM has grown to include more than 5,000 works of art, including American and European 19th and 20th century painting and sculpture and more than 3,000 works on paper. Embracing the city's legacy as a leading center of design and manufacturing, GRAM has a growing collection in the area of design and modern craft.