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**GRAND RAPIDS ART MUSEUM CELEBRATES ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY WITH YEAR LONG
FRIDAY NIGHT CONVERSATIONS AND LOCAL COLLABORATIONS**

Monthly Themes Focus on Diverse Artistic Expression

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., January 5, 2010 – The Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) celebrates its 100th Anniversary in 2010. Special events, programs, and exhibitions recognizing the milestone are planned throughout the year. The Centennial provides an opportunity to look back at GRAM's past century and envision its next 100 years.

Friday Nights at GRAM will celebrate the Centennial by introducing *GRAM Conversations: 100 Years of Inspired Art Dialogue*. Art inspires art, and the Grand Rapids Art Museum asks the question "What inspires you?" GRAM invites the community to join the conversation and contribute their voice to the diverse artistic expression highlighted at the Art Museum each month.

For centuries artists have found inspiration in those that came before, and each generation pushes the boundaries for the next. The Art Museum preserves that history and makes it accessible to the community. Throughout the coming year at GRAM, each month highlights a different mode of expression. Local organizers working in different mediums such as theater, jewelry design, and dance will collaborate with the Art Museum to create Friday Night events featuring performances, discussions, interactive workshops and more. The community is invited to join the conversation by finding the month and medium that suits them, meet with others during Friday Nights at GRAM to share ideas and information, stay connected with social networking forums and meet-up schedules, and participate in the organized events.

Monthly themes are listed in the schedule that follows.

The schedule is (interested participants are encouraged to check the GRAM website regularly and become a GRAM Facebook fan to stay up to date as scheduling announcements are made):

January **ArtPrize: Continue the Conversation**
Get the creative juices flowing with the ultimate conversation about art: ArtPrize! Matthew Kluber's massive video plays on the lobby screen, the *Nessie* and *Grand Dance* teams will be here, and Ran Ortner, winner of ArtPrize 2009, visits GRAM to speak about *Open Water no. 24* while his work is on view at the Art Museum.

January 8: The *Nessie* Team

January 15: Ran Ortner, *Open Water no. 24*

January 29: David Lubbers and the *Grand Dance* Team

February **Conversation: Theater**
Calling all playwrights to the Art Museum for the month of February. Enjoy the performance created for *Calder Jewelry* exhibition; meet other scribes partial to the stage, and head up to the galleries to get ideas going. GVSU writing

professor Austin Bunn collaborates with Malinda Petersen of MP Talent and many others in the theater community to organize a full month of Friday Night events.

February 5: *Considering Calder*, short plays and essays by GRAM Theater Group, playwright Randy Wyatt, writer Tommy Allen, and arts organizer Fred Bivins celebrating the new exhibition *Calder Jewelry* and GR's connection to the artist (Part of "Party of the Century").

February 12: *The Art Plays*, site-specific (performed in galleries) short plays written by local playwrights based on favorite artwork choices by GRAM guests randomly selected the week before.

February 19: *Works in Progress*, excerpt readings of plays from Stephanie Sandberg, Austin Bunn and others.

February 26: *Panel: Theater in Grand Rapids*. Founders and managing directors of local theater—from Actors' to Super Happy Fun Time Burlesque—participate in a panel discussion about the state of theater in our community today and where it might be heading. Moderated by Shelley Irwin, WGVU Radio.

March

Conversation: Jewelry Design

Jewelry makers will delight in discovering Calder's extraordinary exhibition. Gather at GRAM in the month of March for a fun and informative performance about "The History of Jewelry" on the 5th, plus additional Friday Night discussions, gallery walks, and mixers. Further scheduling details to be announced.

April

Conversation: Poetry

Poetry floats through the open spaces of the Art Museum in the month of April. Meet up with fellow poets and share ideas and inspiration every Friday Night, where poetry readings and activities abound. Finish up on Friday the 30th with a night of live music and poetry slams from the diverse voices of West Michigan. Poets unite at GRAM, get connected and join the conversation. Scheduling details to be announced.

May

Conversation: Music

If music is your mode of expression, then this month is for you. Music makers have long been a muse for painters over the years, and certainly visual art has inspired musicians as well. The Art Museum will take a look at this interesting combination through images, films, discussions and presentations during Friday Nights at GRAM. Scheduling details to be announced.

June

Conversation: 2D & 3D

Paintings, prints, photographs, and sculpture are the focus of this month's attention. From Festival of the Arts to the artists of Ox-Bow, regional art is celebrated at GRAM. Join in on the panel discussions and idea sharing for maintaining a strong voice in the community. With many regional works in the collection, from Matthias Alten to Stephen Duren, artists' inspiration can focus on the local if they choose. Scheduling details to be announced.

July

Conversation: Dance

For those whose medium is the body, whose work of art is the movement from that medium, this is your time to express yourself at the Art Museum. Join others during the month of July to discuss topics such as the influence between Martha Graham and Andy Warhol, different ideas about modern and traditional dance, and enjoy performances in the Cook Auditorium. Scheduling details to be announced.

August

Conversation: Film

The Art of Cinema returns to GRAM celebrating all things film related. Meet up with other cinephiles on Friday Nights to talk film, discuss opportunities, and network. Late night movies in the park keep the party going in to the evening. Stroll through the galleries and discover just how much composition translates from canvas to film frame. Scheduling details to be announced.

September

October

ArtPrize Returns

The Art Museum partners with ArtPrize and reserves space in the main galleries for the event, much is planned before, during, and after to celebrate this art phenomenon.

Get connected at www.artmuseumgr.org and link to e-mail, facebook, and twitter.

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 over 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.

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