



---

**CONTACT**

Kerri VanderHoff  
Grand Rapids Art Museum  
616-831-2914  
[kvanderhoff@artmuseumgr.org](mailto:kvanderhoff@artmuseumgr.org)

MICHIGAN FILM, ART & LITERATURE SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULED  
FOR NOVEMBER 12 & 13, 2011 AT THE GRAND RAPIDS ART MUSEUM

*Scholars, Artists and Community Leaders Gather for a Conference Centered on the Michigan  
Perspective in Creative Expression*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., June 10, 2011** – The Grand Rapids Art Museum, in partnership with the Grand Rapids Pubic Library and Grand Valley State University School of Communications, presents the Michigan Film, Art & Literature Symposium. The Symposium, scheduled for November 12 & 13, 2011 at the Art Museum, brings together scholars, artists and community leaders from around Michigan for a two-day conference focused on a theme: identifying and understanding the Michigan perspective in creative expression. A significant component to the discussion is defining the region from within the Michigan community along with an awareness of how others perceive and represent it.

The Symposium provides a platform for critical discourse about the Michigan perspective and aesthetic in film (including cinema and photography), art and literature. In a world with communications and economic interconnectivity, understanding and projecting regional distinctness creates opportunity for progressive inclusion on a larger stage.

Since 2009, the Art Museum has collaborated with area organizations including the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, West Michigan Film Video Alliance, and Grand Valley State University to create a lecture and discussion program regarding filmmaking in and about Michigan. In the summer of 2010, a lecture series in collaboration with Ox-Bow School of the Arts included scholars who addressed similar topics in the visual arts. As the greater artistic and literary community became increasingly engaged in the discussions, it became apparent that the common theme of the Michigan perspective runs through all forms of regional creative expression. To strengthen the Michigan-centered creative presence in film, art and literature and to strive for a more authentic representation than those that are created or influenced by remote centers of cultural production (i.e. New York City and Los Angeles), this Symposium encourages participants to collectively identify the traits and attributes of the state's creative voice—leading to a clearer definition and representation, articulated from within, of the Michigan perspective.

Concurrent events highlighting the practice of film, art and literature will allow Symposium attendees the opportunity to experience Michigan creative works. A selection of Michigan-made films, organized in part by GVSU, will be presented at a nearby venue, the Grand Rapids Public Library will highlight Michigan authors, and the Grand Rapids Art Museum will present a three-

week, guest-curated exhibition in its regional art gallery that highlights Michigan visual artists, so the work being done in these disciplines can be explored.

As the re-imagining of Michigan gains momentum in the economic and political arenas, it is important to include humanities. The unique and innovative Michigan perspective in creative expression strengthens with collaboration and critical discourse. The Michigan Film, Art & Literature Symposium helps create an environment for connecting, focusing and developing the progress of that continuing conversation.

### **About the Grand Rapids Art Museum**

The mission of the Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) is: to inspire discovery, enjoyment, and learning about art; to serve as a welcoming and inclusive cultural resource; to collect, conserve, and interpret authentic works of art of the finest quality. 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 3,500 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.

### **About Grand Valley State University School of Communications**

The School of Communications and its major programs, in agreement with the university's mission, educates students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies. The School of Communications curricula strive to accomplish this within a framework that integrates liberal and professional education. Grand Valley State University attracts more than 24,400 students with high-quality programs and state-of-the-art facilities. Grand Valley is a comprehensive university serving students from all 83 Michigan counties and dozens of other states and foreign countries. Grand Valley offers 77 undergraduate and 28 graduate degree programs from campuses in Allendale, Grand Rapids and Holland, and from regional centers in Muskegon and Traverse City. The university is dedicated to individual student achievement, going beyond the traditional classroom experience, with research opportunities and business partnerships.

### **About the Grand Rapids Public Library**

The Grand Rapids Public Library (GRPL) is the community's foremost source for information, viewpoints, resources and programs. GRPL is free, welcoming, flexible, and empowering. GRPL inspires the public's trust through strong library service, transparent accountability, sound financial stewardship, and sustained productive partnerships. All library events are free and open to the public. Visit [www.grpl.org](http://www.grpl.org) or call 616-988-5400 for branch hours and locations. The Grand Rapids Public Library connects people to the transforming power of knowledge.



###