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**GRAND RAPIDS ART MUSEUM CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL YEAR IN 2010**

*Special Exhibitions, Events and Programming are Scheduled to Recognize 100 Years of Art, Legacy and Vision Beginning with the "Party of the Century"*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., September 28, 2009** – The Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2010. Special events, programs and exhibitions recognizing the milestone will begin this fall and continue into 2010, with Founding Day activities planned for June 1. The Centennial provides an opportunity to look back at GRAM's past century and envision its next 100 years.

**PARTY OF THE CENTURY**

Beginning October 2, 2009, the Art Museum will host a series of special Friday Nights at GRAM with a "Party of the Century" theme celebrating the centennial 1910 – 2010 and progressing through the decades with innovative live music, art dialogue, dinner and drink options, social games and galleries open late. The progressive party is October through April with a special "New Year's Eve Party of the Century" on December 31. Dates are: October 2, November 6, December 4, New Year's Eve December 31, February 5, March 5 and April 30.

The schedule for October 2 "Party of the Century" is:

<b>5:00 to 9:00 pm</b>	Galleries open, special admission price of only \$5 non-members
<b>5:00 to 9:00 pm</b>	Sketching, social games and self-guided tour material available
<b>5:30 to 8:30 pm</b>	<b>Music:</b> David Hall, Marimba Music
<b>7:00 to 7:45 pm</b>	<b>Panel Discussion:</b> <i>Artists Pushing Boundaries: Past, Present, Future</i> Grand Rapids is abuzz with the question "What is Art?" Attend this lively discussion about that timeless question, asked of artists 100 years ago and still relevant today.
<b>5:30 to 8:30 pm</b>	Buffet Dinner available in Museum Café, Cash Bar in Lobby

**FALL EXHIBITIONS LAUNCH CENTENNIAL WITH HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

The first "Party" on October 2 highlights the opening of the fall exhibitions, which feature late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century works, a time when great cities were an inspiration to artists a century ago and when citizens of Grand Rapids founded their own art organization, today known as the Grand Rapids Art Museum.

The exhibitions opening October 2, 2009 are:

**Tissot's London 1871 – 1882: The Art and Culture of City Life**  
**James McNeill Whistler and the Romance of Great Cities**  
**American Impressionism from The Phillips Collection**

A special video program on the Museum's history opens October 2 in the main gallery. Many wonderful people have made the Museum the important institution it is today. The program is an opportunity to remember, recognize and thank everyone who has cared so much about the Art Museum and its role in the lives of people who live in the area.

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Visit [artmuseumgr.org](http://artmuseumgr.org) for more information regarding “Party of the Century” schedule and additional Centennial Year events. December 4 is the “Christmas Party of the Century,” and will feature the traditional Tree Lighting Ceremony and Opening of Rosa Parks Circle Ice Skating Rink. Reservations for New Year’s Eve Party dinner reservations are open to members beginning October 1 and non-members beginning December 1 at 616-831-2925.

#### **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 gold LEED 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 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 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.