



## **CONTACT**

Cia Segerlind  
Grand Rapids Art Museum  
616-831-2917  
csegerlind@artmuseumgr.org

## **GRAND RAPIDS ART MUSEUM PRESENTS *EDWARD BURTYNSKY: WATER***

*60 photographs explore humanity's relationship with world's most vital natural resource*

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**GRAND RAPIDS, MI, January 7, 2014** – The Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) is proud to present *Edward Burtynsky: Water*, which will be on view from February 1, 2015 through April 26, 2015.

Over a five-year period between 2009 and 2013, acclaimed fine art photographer Edward Burtynsky traveled the globe, shooting from the skies above North America, China, India, Iceland, and Spain, creating a body of work that addresses the various roles water plays in the world today. The images that he captured explore humanity's increasingly mediated relationship with our world's most vital natural resource: water. Sixty of these large-scale photographs will fill the first and second floor galleries at GRAM in the exhibition *Edward Burtynsky: Water*.

"*Water* is a beautiful exhibition, and I am so pleased that we are able to bring it to Grand Rapids," said Dana Friis-Hansen, Director & CEO. "Water is universal. It connects humanity across the globe. As Michiganders we are fortunate to be surrounded by The Great Lakes, which contain 21% of the world's supply of fresh water. This exhibition prompts us to examine the worldwide importance of the stewardship of this precious resource."

These enormous images—some as large as seven feet across—accentuate the aerial perspective and a strong visual relationship to painting; some of the pictures appear to be almost completely abstract.

"This exhibition presents photography in its most creative and persuasive form," noted Ron Platt, Chief Curator. "These photographs are powerful visual evidence of how much we rely on water to develop and live in the world, and how much stress we put on our environment. The artist is asking each of us to consider our relationship to the environment by using the waters of the world as his subject."

Burtynsky's representation of water focuses on the increasingly fragmented roles that it plays in modern society: as a source of healthy ecosystems and energy, as a key element in cultural and religious rituals, and as a rapidly depleting resource. These images—sometimes elegant and sometimes haunting—form a compelling global portrait of water that functions as an open-ended question about humanity's past, present, and future relationship with the natural world. His images address several facets of the world's vital resource, exploring the source, collection, control, displacement, and depletion of water.

The exhibition is categorized into 6 themes:

- Distress: landscapes where water is scarce or forever compromised
  - Control: large-scale incursions upon the earth to harness and divert the power of water
  - Agriculture: the impact of the largest human activity on the planet
  - Aquaculture: places where land and sea have been shaped to serve the purposes of growing and harvesting water-based crops
  - Waterfront: the way we shape land to create manufactured waterfront properties
  - Source: places where a critical stage in the hydrological cycle takes place
- \* Unlike most of the images in the exhibition, this section showcases generally pristine wilderness, rather than human imposition upon it.

*Edward Burtynsky: Water* is organized by the New Orleans Museum of Art. Its exhibition at GRAM is made possible through generous sponsorship from the Wege Foundation. Additional sponsors of GRAM's presentation of *Edward Burtynsky: Water*, include The Louis and Helen Padnos Foundation, Shelley Padnos and Carol Sarosik, Glen Johnson and Tom Merchant, Bill and Kate Scarbrough, Miller Johnson, and Mitchell and Karen Padnos.

### ***Edward Burtynsky: Water* related programming and events**

#### **Exclusive Member Event: GRAM Member Preview Party**

Friday, January 30, 2015

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Free, members only

Celebrate the arrival of *Edward Burtynsky: Water* by attending an exclusive opening before the exhibition opens to the general public. Learn more about *Water* from GRAM docents stationed in the galleries, enjoy complementary refreshments, and a cash bar. Please RSVP by phone, 616.831.2909, or online at [memberpreview.kintera.org](http://memberpreview.kintera.org).

#### **Exclusive Member Event: GRAM Member Day**

Saturday, January 31, 2015

10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Free, members only

GRAM's members-only celebration of *Edward Burtynsky: Water* continues! The exhibition is open to members all day. GRAM docents will be available in the galleries for an in-depth look at the exhibition. After exploring the galleries, visit the Museum Store for an additional 10% discount on regular priced merchandise. For more information, please contact Missy Bush at 616.831.2912 or [mbush@artmuseumgr.org](mailto:mbush@artmuseumgr.org).

#### **Exclusive Member Event: Lecture w/ Edward Burtynsky and Russell Lord**

Saturday, January 31, 2015

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Free, members only

Join us for an on-stage conversation between photographer Edward Burtynsky and Russell Lord, organizing curator of *Edward Burtynsky: Water*. The two will discuss the creation and intentions of Burtynsky's ambitious five-year project, *Water*, a series of large-scale photographs through which he examines and reveals the complex interaction between humankind and our most precious natural resource. Not a member yet? Join us at the Guest Services desk!

#### **Sooper Art Contest 2014-2015**

Call for entries! Teachers and parents are invited to submit their student or child's artwork to GRAM during Museum hours through April 25, 2015. This 5th annual children's art contest is inspired by *Sooper Yooper: Environmental Defender*, a children's book about the ongoing struggles to protect the Great Lakes, written by Mark Newman and illustrated by the late artist

Mark Heckman. An awards ceremony will be held for winners from each age category on Saturday, May 16, 2015 in GRAM's Cook Auditorium from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. Entries can be submitted by bringing them to GRAMStudio during regular Museum hours. The Wege Foundation makes this program possible through its generous sponsorship. For contest rules and guidelines, please visit [artmuseumgr.org/sooper-art-competition-2014/](http://artmuseumgr.org/sooper-art-competition-2014/), or contact Katie Williams for more information at 616.831.1000 or [katiwilliams@artmuseumgr.org](mailto:katiwilliams@artmuseumgr.org).

### **GRAMStudio Drop-in Family Saturdays**

Saturdays

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

*February: Ice Paintings*

*March: Dry Ice Drawings*

*April: Water Colors*

Free for members, free with general admission

The next time you visit the Museum on a Saturday, be sure to drop in to GRAMStudio to enjoy hands-on art making and gallery activities. This is a great all-ages activity for the whole family to enjoy. We are able to offer this program at no additional cost to our visitors thanks to generous sponsorship from Amway. For more information, please contact Katie Williams at [katiwilliams@artmuseumgr.org](mailto:katiwilliams@artmuseumgr.org).

### **Jewelry Workshop: Designing with Beach Glass**

Saturday, March 28, 2015

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

\$10 members, \$15 non-members

Dive in to the creative process with this hands-on workshop for adults inspired by *Edward Burtynsky: Water*. Learn about the science of beach glass and apply ancient and contemporary jewelry making techniques to create a one of a kind accessory.

### **Parent & Child Workshop**

Saturday, April 11, 2015

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

\$20 per child, \$5 per parent for members

\$25 per child, \$8 per parent for non-members

Explore the world that lives below the surface to create an underwater scene using watercolor techniques. Celebrate the bright and vibrant colors of the season with a spring break workshop specifically designed for parents and children. Work alongside your child and creating a special memory together as you learn from instructors about the different effects water can have in the creative process.

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

Focusing on art, design, and creativity, GRAM provides diverse platforms for experiences, ideas, and dialogue that enrich the human spirit and build practical learning skills. Through dynamic exhibitions, collections, learning initiatives, and community collaborations, GRAM increasingly serves as a cultural beacon and civic anchor. Established in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids, the 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.

For GRAM's hours and admission fees, visit [artmuseumgr.org](http://artmuseumgr.org) or call 616-831-1000.

**Concurrent Exhibition:**

*David Greenwood*

On view February 12, 2015 through May 17, 2015.

GRAM's presents recent sculptures by Grand Rapids artist David Greenwood in its latest installment of the *Michigan Artist Series*. The exhibition includes an array of Greenwood's inventive, realist works that demonstrate his confident handling of wood, metal, and other materials. Greenwood was recently honored with the title of Professor Emeritus upon his retirement from Kendall College of Art and Design, where taught Sculpture and Functional Art for over 30 years.

**Museum Hours:**

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday: 10am-5pm

Thursday: 10am-9pm

Sunday: 12pm-5pm

Closed Mondays

**Museum Admission:**

GRAM Members - Free

Adults - \$8.00

Senior Adults & College Students (w/ID) - \$7.00

Youth (ages 6-17) - \$5.00

Children under 6 - Free

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