



Annual Report 2016-2017



artmuseumgr.org



Dana Friis-Hansen

**2016 - 2017
LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Dana Friis-Hansen
Director & Chief Executive Officer

Elly Barnette-Dawson
Director of Advancement

Robert L. Branch
Chief Financial Officer &
Chief Operating Officer

Christopher Bruce
Director of Learning and Creativity

Maria Davis
Director of Human Resources

Ron Platt
Chief Curator



Dear members, donors, and friends of the Museum,

As another year at the Grand Rapids Art Museum has come to a close, it is my pleasure to share our 2016-17 Annual Report with you. Last year marked the start of our new mission—connecting people through art, creativity, and design—which guides us in shaping our priorities for community impact.

I hope you'll enjoy reading about the many highlights and accomplishments from the past fiscal year—none of which would be possible without you, our supporters and friends.

The 2016-17 season has included some of our highest attended exhibitions in recent years, including *Iris van Herpen: Transforming Fashion* and *Finders Keepers: West Michigan Collects*. *Transforming Fashion* captivated GRAM visitors with haute couture works by internationally acclaimed designer Iris van Herpen, who gained international acclaim for her combination of traditional craftsmanship with futuristic, innovative techniques like 3-D printing. *Finders Keepers* was a community-driven exhibition which explored the human impulse to collect objects, and the interplay between collecting and one's identity. Organized by GRAM from West Michigan collections, this exhibition was comprised of hundreds of diverse objects from local residents and several community organizations, displayed in a lively and unique gallery installation.

The Museum was delighted to serve tens of thousands of people through our learning and public programming. New programs such as Story Time Tours, created in partnership with the Grand Rapids Public Library, as well as our popular Baby & Me Tours have helped us develop new and more diverse audiences, especially young children and families. For busy adults, we initiated a monthly community Lunch and Learn series. We also continued serving the community through core GRAM programs such as Language Artists: Create Connections, our award-winning arts and literacy program for third graders; GRAM Early Learners, our early childhood program; Gazing at GRAM, our therapeutic arts program for people who have been affected by memory loss; the Sunday Classical Concert Series, GRAM on the Green, and so much more.

Thank you for your support and participation and for being part of the GRAM family! While we reflect on the 2016-17 season, we are excited about expanded programming and lively exhibitions during 2017-2018. I hope to see you at the Museum soon!

Warm regards,

DANA FRIIS-HANSEN
DIRECTOR AND CEO

Strategic Leadership

Grand Rapids Art Museum has completed the first year of a five-year strategic plan, Vision 2021, which will guide the Museum through a new mission and vision.



Mission

Connecting people through art, creativity, and design.

Vision

Leading and inspiring West Michigan to be the most creative and imaginative community in the world.

Strategic Priorities

- ▶ Develop diverse audiences
- ▶ Create exceptional art and learning experiences
- ▶ Build institutional strength

Develop Diverse Audiences

AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Conducting audience research to understand better and improve the museum experience is a central component of GRAM's strategic plan. A grant from the Grand Rapids Community Foundation enabled the Museum to complete the first phase of a multi-year audience research project. Slover Linett, a leading research firm for the arts and cultural sector, conducted qualitative research of current and potential visitors through observation and face-to-face interviewing. The findings from the study helped GRAM understand better, serve, and engage existing and potential audiences, including diverse and underserved communities. At the conclusion of the study, GRAM presented and shared the key findings and research techniques with other arts and cultural organizations in the community.

PARTNERSHIP WITH GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

GRAM has partnered with the Grand Rapids Public Library (GRPL) on several new community initiatives. The Story Time Tours program provides toddlers and preschool age children with interactive art and learning experiences at the Museum that blend literacy and the visual arts. During their visit, children participate in a story-time session led by a youth librarian. They also engage in an art-making activity and receive a docent-guided tour in the galleries, with a discussion centered around specific works on view. The story time, docent-led tour, and art activity all focus on a particular early childhood theme, such as colors, shapes, and animals.

As part of GRAM's commitment to providing visitors with welcoming

interactive spaces to view, learn, and think about art, the Museum has begun offering Book Nooks in the galleries. Visitors can access children's and adult books, carefully selected by Grand Rapids Public Library librarians, that relate to the themes and subject matter of the exhibition on view.

Together, the new Story Time Tours and Book Nooks support GRAM's effort to build connections with children and families while promoting community literacy.

MEIJER FREE TUESDAYS AND THURSDAY NIGHTS

Meijer Free Tuesdays and Meijer Free Thursday Nights help GRAM break down barriers to access and serve new audiences. Over this past year, GRAM received 10,075 visitors on the Meijer Free Tuesdays and 8,047 visitors on Meijer Free Thursday Nights. The Tuesday attendance held steady over the prior year, while Thursday Night attendance grew by 32%.

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"Great art on Free Thursdays is a no-brainer for us!"

— A couple visiting on a Meijer Free Thursday Night
.....



Above: Story Time Tour



GROWING MEMBERSHIP

- 70% retention rate
- 10.3% revenue growth over the previous year
- 4,249 member visits
- 621 new member households

DIVERSIFYING THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

As GRAM continues to grow its collection, it seeks to strengthen the diversity of artwork by acquiring art by artists who are reflective of the Grand Rapids community. Over the past year, all purchases of artwork by the Museum were from ethnically diverse artists. GRAM purchased Dario Robleto's digital photography

diptych from ArtPrize 2016 and acquired two embroidered laser-cut works on paper by Pakistani-American artist Anila Quayyum Agha. Agha's work draws inspiration from Islamic tradition and art. Students studied her artwork as part of the *Language Artists: Global Perspectives* program.

Below: Chief Curator Ron Platt with Dario Robleto's *Survival Does Not Lie in the Heavens*



GRAM ON THE GREEN

The Museum’s annual free outdoor concert series, GRAM on the Green, features live music from a diverse lineup of local and regional artists, dancing on the terrace, art activities and games on Wege Plaza, as well as a variety of food trucks. Concert-goers are invited to visit the Museum galleries throughout the evening at no charge as part of Meijer Free Thursday Nights. For six evenings last July and August, GRAM on the Green energized the city and transformed Rosa Parks Circle and the urban downtown landscape into a dynamic and inclusive gathering space. Over 4,000 people attended, enjoying concerts from bands performing various musical genres, from salsa to indie-rock.



Above: GRAM on the Green

SUNDAY CLASSICAL CONCERT SERIES

The Museum’s Sunday Classical Concert Series connects guests to a diverse range of performers and musical styles. GRAM collaborates with local and regional musicians and groups, including orchestra members of the Grand Rapids Symphony. The concert series weaves together the performing and visual arts as concert attendees are invited to view the latest exhibitions and works from the collection before and after each concert. Docent-guided tours are available following most concerts. This past season, GRAM presented 18 concerts in the fall and winter, entertaining a total of 2,848 people, representing a 23% increase over the



Above: Sunday Classical Concert Series

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“The instrumentalists are always of the highest quality. We love how there’s a mixing of classics with more contemporary styles.”
— Concert attendee
.....

Create Exceptional Art and Learning Experiences



Above: Finders Keepers: West Michigan Collects

ANNUAL VISITORS

GRAM served 242,450 people last year, with attendance holding steady over the prior year. Approximately 43% of guests were first-time visitors.



Above: The Art of Rube Goldberg interactive space

FINDERS KEEPERS: WEST MICHIGAN COLLECTS

Finders Keepers: West Michigan Collects (February 5 - April 30, 2017) explored the human impulse to collect objects and the interplay between collecting and one’s identity. This community-driven, GRAM-organized exhibition, was comprised of hundreds of artifacts from the collections of local residents and community institutions, from rare jewelry and vintage carpet sweepers to pinball machines, vinyl records, sneakers, and sheet music. The Museum collaborated with 14 local collectors and five community organizations, including the Grand Rapids African American Museum and Archives, the Gilmore Car Museum, and the Grand Rapids Public Museum.

THE ART OF RUBE GOLDBERG PARTNERSHIP WITH OAISD AND GHAPS

GRAM partnered with Ottawa Area Intermediate School District and Grand Haven Area Public Schools to present an interactive gallery space during *The Art of Rube Goldberg*. As part of their STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math) curriculum, elementary school students studied Goldberg’s work and then created Goldberg-inspired “chain-reaction” machines. These seven Goldberg-inspired creations comprised an immersive gallery space for visitors during the exhibition. Seven teams of seven-fourth grade students participated, working on the project in the classroom and during multiple visits to the Museum’s Education Center.



Above: Language Artists: Creature Connections

Students and their families attended *The Art of Rube Goldberg* opening, where the creators explained the inspiration behind their creations and demonstrated how to use them. The completed contraptions were on display for the duration of the exhibition with wall labels explaining the project and the student teams who had participated in the project. Visitors had the opportunity to test these creative installations during select Saturdays throughout the exhibition.

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“The students were absolutely full of ideas for their Rube Goldberg machine. They worked independently, as a team, testing ideas for several days before deciding on a direction. Each student brought his or her strengths to the table; some were phenomenal at brainstorming while others were essential in decision making. There were cheers, and there were frustrations because a Rube Goldberg machine almost never works the first (or the tenth) time, but when it does it is worthy of a celebration! This was a true test of persistence for all students involved in the making of Rube Goldberg machines for GRAM.”

— Grand Haven Area Public Schools
Elementary School Teacher
.....

.....
“My favorite part of this project was trying out all the Rube Goldberg machines. It feels great that others will get to try our machine. I really enjoyed using my imagination and being creative.”
— Harper, a fourth-grade student at
Grand Haven Area Public Schools
.....

**LANGUAGE ARTISTS:
CREATURE CONNECTIONS**

Language Artists integrates literacy and the visual arts through a year-long unit of study that promotes academic and cultural achievement among third-grade



students. Developed in partnership with Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS), the nationally-recognized program positions GRAM as an extension of the classroom to enhance student learning of the language arts. Students develop core academic proficiencies through a curriculum that centers on works of animals from GRAM’s collection. Students participate in enriching museum experiences, unique classroom activities, and proper test preparation, and teachers participate in professional development workshops led by GRAM staff. According to data from GRPS, 44% of students improved on writing prompts over the course of the program.

This past year, the program delivered an enriching cultural learning experience to nearly 1,900 students from nine school districts across West Michigan. Participating schools were diverse in ethnicity and socioeconomic status, with 75% of the participating students receiving free or reduced lunches. Language Artists impact students by building a foundation of the literacy and 21st-century skills necessary to reach graduation and succeed in the global economy.

**LANGUAGE ARTISTS:
GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES**

GRAM and GRPS have completed the second year of a two-year pilot of Language Artists: Global Perspectives. The program combines the arts and social studies and promotes empathy, respect, and learning about various cultures through a focus on diverse works of art representative of the five major world religions. The program was co-created by GRAM and GRPS after the district approached the Museum about partnering on a program that would deepen student engagement with the social studies curriculum, in which students learn about Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism as required by the State of Michigan Department of Education.

As part of a sequence of arts-integrated learning, Global Perspectives helps build on the writing skills and core competencies students developed in third grade through their participation in Language Artists: Creature Connections. Over 400 seventh grade students participated in the pilot program. Students received docent-led tours at GRAM, engaging in constructive dialogue and completing a series of exercises for each artwork studied.

GRAM EARLY LEARNERS

GRAM Early Learners promotes kindergarten readiness in children up to age five. Through arts-integrated learning, children build cognitive, social, and fine and gross motor skills. GRAM partners with the downtown Grand Rapids YMCA and several other local early learning centers; collaborating with educators from these early learning centers to develop age-specific lesson plans, which center on select works of art from the Museum collection. Educators incorporated the lesson



plans into their early learning curricula, teaching the content over a period of several months. Children then participated in hands-on skill building activities during outreach visits made by GRAM staff to the early learning centers, and during trips to the Museum’s Education Center.

This past year, GRAM expanded participation by 55% and collaborated with 71 educators from six early childhood centers. GRAM continued partnerships with Grand Rapids YMCA, Explore and Grow Christian Learning Center, Orchard Hills Christian Preschool, and Eastminster Preschool, while forging new partnerships with Kelloggsville Early Childhood Learning Center and Children’s Workshop. Most children served by Early Learners were from low-income neighborhoods, and their participation is helping to prevent disparities in access to early childhood education.

DROP-IN STUDIO

Drop-in Studio is a hands-on, art-making program for people of all ages to learn about and create art in GRAM Studio. Offered each Saturday afternoon, as well as during school spring and winter breaks, the program has a variety of offerings designed for both children and adults. Through instruction from GRAM staff and volunteers, participants engage in art projects in GRAM Studio, drawing inspiration from the artists, themes, and works of art on view at the Museum. A total of 3,301 people took part in the program this past year, marking a 10% increase over the previous year.

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“My grandson normally has trouble staying focused for longer than five minutes, but he spent 30+ minutes quietly working on his art project today.”
— GRAM Studio Visitor
.....



a 10% increase over the prior year and the highest attendance since the program began in 2007. To promote equal access to learning, 35 children from low-income households received full-tuition scholarships, accounting for about 1 of every 4 campers this past year.

.....
"You can create anything you want at camp. It doesn't have to be something you've seen before. You can use your imagination and creativity."
.....

— Summer Art Camp participant

"Summer Art Camp at GRAM was a wonderful experience for my child. The kids participated in problem-solving activities and the art process and critique, all of which have tremendous value at an early age. It was great to see the kids' exhibition at the end of the week and their excitement about it. Thank you for such a great program!"
.....

— Parent of Summer Art Camp participant
.....

SUMMER ART CAMP

GRAM's Summer Art Camps are immersive, week-long experiences that promote creativity and innovation for children ages 4 to 17. GRAM offers a 7:1 student-to-instructor ratio, which amplifies learning and the development of new skills. Instructors used the Museum collection to introduce children to a diverse range of artists and artworks. Moreover, campers viewed and discussed works of art in the galleries, created art in GRAM Studio, and participated in collaborative problem-solving processes with their peers. At the conclusion of each camp, participants produced an exhibition of the work they created during the week.

Based on public demand and feedback from families, GRAM expanded its Summer Art Camp to include a week of camp for teenagers in addition to its offerings for children ages 4 to 12. A total of 146 children participated in camp, representing



SCHOOL TOURS AND WORKSHOPS

The School Tours and Workshops program provides K-12 and college students with docent-guided tours and hands-on studio workshops. Students explored works of art from the Museum's exhibitions and collection and created art of their own in GRAM Studio. The tours and seminars supported art-integrated learning and promoted creative expression. Tour and workshop themes included art and history, formal qualities and elements of art, and the relationship between nature, sustainability, and creativity. Over the past year, 6,811 students from 52 school districts experienced tours at GRAM—a 38% increase, and nearly half also participated in hands-on workshops in GRAM Studio. A majority of the students served were from low-income or geographically underserved school districts.



.....
"Thank you for showing us around the Museum and teaching us about the pieces of art. My favorite part was the Blunt Tail Dog because it was detailed and cool. Love, Spencer"
.....

— 3rd Grader
.....



GRAM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATORS

GRAM’s Professional Development for Educators program provides valuable learning opportunities for K-12 teachers. The program was developed in collaboration with local teachers and school administrators in 2010. The professional development consists of workshops, tours, and conferences and is organized and conducted by GRAM’s education staff. The program contributes to teachers’ professional development by preparing them to teach arts-integrated curricula in the classroom and introducing them to new teaching strategies. Last year, GRAM served 632 educators, a 44% increase over the prior year.

.....
“This was a great night that gave me resources and ideas for how design thinking can be applied in the classroom and many different aspects of our lives. It was nice mixing with teachers from other districts, too.”
— Grand Rapids Public Schools Teacher
.....

ART OF FAMILY LIVING

In partnership with Gatherings of Hope, Art of Family Living served 1,239 people last year, a 26% increase over the prior year. The program is designed to help families from local congregations build a framework for discussion, growth, and discovery through art. Participants studied works of art in relation to themes that are central to Gatherings of Hope such as spirituality, friendship, honesty, respect, and love. The program was enhanced with a bilingual welcome video for families and free admission passes for families to make return visits later in the year.

.....
Here are some comments from some of the participating families:

“The time we spent at the GRAM was great! We really loved the opportunities for fun and family bonding.”

“This was a great opportunity to introduce my family to art.”

“Our family enjoyed drawing and creating art.”
.....



Above: Art of Family Living

GAZING AT GRAM

Gazing at GRAM is a therapeutic arts program for people who have been affected by memory loss such as Alzheimer’s disease and dementia. The program also serves people who have sustained a traumatic brain injury (TBI), and GRAM is one of only a handful of art museums in the country providing art therapy for the TBI population. The program, which first began in 2011, has served 200 participants from seven residential care centers and assisted-living facilities, including Spectrum Health, Clark Retirement Community, and Hope Network, among others. Museum docents lead group tours and facilitate observation, discussion, and engagement with the art on view, providing participants opportunities for intellectual and creative stimulation.

.....
“This is an amazing resource for the individuals in our community diagnosed with progressive dementia. Our docent was open and patient as she guided our group experience. Everyone talked about how comfortable and wonderful the experience was and that they would like to return in the future. Thank you so much!”
— Gazing at GRAM participant caregiver
.....



Above: Baby & Me Tours

BABY & ME TOURS

GRAM launched monthly Baby & Me Tours last year, serving 101 children and 114 adults and caregivers, with many of these tours reaching maximum capacity. Baby & Me Tours are specialized experiences geared for babies and their moms, dads, caregivers, and grandparents. These interactive tours offer rotating themes, such as animals, colors, and shapes. To date, nearly all participating families have been first-time or infrequent museum visitors, aiding GRAM in reaching new audiences, particularly young families.

GRAM AFTER DARK

GRAM After Dark was a late-night quiet clubbing event that kicked off the Museum’s ArtPrize 2017 exhibition. Over 420 people attended the sold-out event, and danced throughout the night to music from three battling DJs and enjoyed a sneak peek at the art of the 16 contemporary artists in *ArtPrize Nine at GRAM*.



Above: GRAM After Dark

Institutional Strength

Philanthropic Gifts 64%

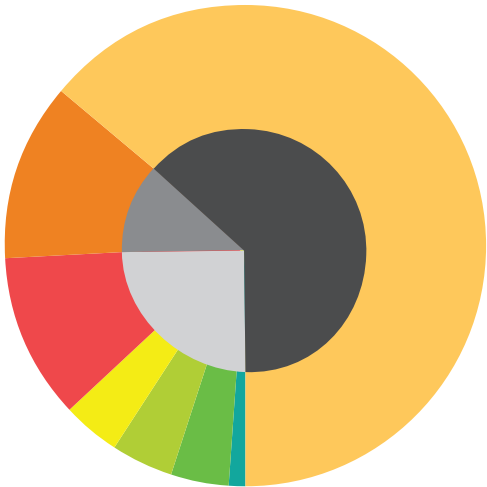
Contributions and Fundraising Events 65%

Endowment Income 12%

Foundation Support 11%

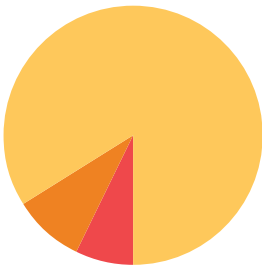
Earned Income 24%

- Special Events 11%
- Membership 4%
- Retail 4%
- Admissions and Program Fees 4%
- Other 1%



Expenses

- Programming 84%
- Administration 9%
- Fundraising 7%



Above: Ritsu Katsumata

**BOARD MEMBER HIGHLIGHT:
RITSU KATSUMATA**

At age 11, Ritsu Katsumata was classically trained in the violin and playing at Carnegie Hall. Katsumata felt there were boundaries in the classical music world, and as she grew into adulthood she wanted to break free from those guidelines and create her own set of rules. When leaving for university, Katsumata shifted her focus toward the advertising world and soon landed clients like Nike, Microsoft, and Bloomingdale’s, showcasing her intellectual talent. When she married her husband, the couple decided to move to Portland, Oregon where Katsumata was ready to reinvent her musical practice. Today, Katsumata is no longer playing other people’s compositions; she takes the masters—classical, modern, and everything in between—and finds ways to synthesize them. Katsumata stresses that letting go of the rules and breaking free from set boundaries allow for the freedom to make new discoveries. Katsumata’s own mission aligns with GRAM’s “Connecting people through art, creativity, and design.” She believes that art, music, and creativity can help anyone become a better world citizen and that art enhances empathy because it shows perspectives that we may not have considered before.



Above: Christopher Bruce

**STAFF HIGHLIGHT:
CHRISTOPHER BRUCE,
DIRECTOR OF LEARNING
AND CREATIVITY**

How does the Museum serve as a resource for the community?

GRAM is entrusted with some of the most exquisite art objects in our community. With these fantastic resources comes the privilege of sharing them with Grand Rapids. I encourage everyone to walk through our doors and see what we have to offer, and I guarantee that you will find something engaging. You will find something that sparks your creativity. You will leave seeing differently, and you will return.

Art education is just for kids, right?

While it is true that art education gets the most attention when we discuss its impact on young children, and there is no denying the profound influence it has on growing minds, art education is essential for everyone, regardless of age. Art teaches empathy and understanding. It allows us to see the world through the eyes of someone else and share their experiences. I believe it’s

critical for our society to understand that everyone has an individual perspective and those different perspectives deserve celebration.

You’ve been at GRAM for eight years. What different responsibilities have you had at the Museum?

I feel very fortunate that I have been able to grow throughout my career at GRAM. When I started in 2010, I was one of two interns serving in the education department. I quickly

fell in love with museum education, something I had never considered before, and with the passion that GRAM had for trying new things, taking risks, and reaching out to engage our community. Since that initial experience I have served as an education assistant, a studio staff member, a summer camp counselor, a school programs coordinator, and then manager. Now I am incredibly proud to serve GRAM and Grand Rapids as the Director of Learning and Creativity.

What kind of work are you doing in the community?

In the past, I’ve served on local committees, judged art shows for local organizations, and curated exhibitions during ArtPrize. Currently, I am focusing my attention on the presidency of the Michigan Art Education Association. MAEA is the professional association for all art teachers in Michigan. I am proud to lead the organization in providing the highest quality professional resources to our members, ensuring that Michigan students receive a high-quality arts education.





Above: GRAMMY's Gala

GRAMMY'S GALA

Rock and roll met black tie on May 6, 2017, at the GRAMMYs Gala, the Museum's annual fundraising gala. Our five hosts for the evening, Stacie Behler, Erin Gravelyn, Diane Griffin, Lizbeth O'Shaughnessy, and Kate Pew Wolters welcomed 350 guests to music's biggest night of the year, raising \$256,250 in support of GRAM's artistic and educational programming.

FIFTH ANNUAL LIVE ARTFULLY DINNER

Live Artfully is an annual event that applauds the vibrant culture of our community, and the individuals whose leadership, support and collaboration make it possible. On October 27, 2017, GRAM's fifth annual Live Artfully Dinner honored Pamella and Dan DeVos for their leadership and contributions to the artistic and cultural life of our community. The evening also commemorated GRAM's 10th Anniversary at 101 Monroe Center with a celebratory opening of two exhibitions, *Christian Marclay: Video Quartet*—from the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art—and *Andy Warhol's American Icons*. The event exceeded its goal and raised \$374,600, which directly helps GRAM to present audiences with educational programs and exhibitions and enables us to continue our collaborative efforts with the many cultural institutions in our community.



From left to right: Live Artfully Co-Chairs Stacey and Mitch Watt, Live Artfully Honorees Pamella and Daniel DeVos

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended and supported this year's Gala. *Salute!* Your continued support allows GRAM to provide our audiences with artistic and education programs, and to continue our mission of connecting people through art, creativity and design.



Above: Miner S. & Mary Ann Keeler Legacy Society Luncheon

LEGACY SOCIETY

The Legacy Society is a group of donors who have taken their commitment to the Museum one step further by including GRAM in their estate planning. Estate gifts are essential to ensuring that the Museum thrives and grows beyond each of our individual lives. If you love the Museum and believe in the value of art or in the importance of preserving history, consider becoming a Legacy Society member today. Joining can be as simple as writing a bequest into your will, donating a piece of artwork, or leaving the Museum a percentage of your estate.

For more information, please contact Elly Barnette-Dawson, Director of Advancement, at elly@artmuseumgr.org

CORPORATE PARTNERS

Over the course of the fiscal year, the Corporate Partner Program grew from 72 members to 88. We welcomed 16 new partners while maintaining an 83% renewal rate and have enjoyed numerous corporate events throughout the year such as Wine Down and Get Cheesy, Tap into GRAM, and Enhanced Exhibition Preview events.



EXHIBITION SOCIETY

The Exhibition Society is a dedicated group of Museum patrons whose generosity provides the annual support necessary to ensure growth and sustainability for the Museum's dynamic exhibition calendar. Exhibition Society members receive prominent recognition before, during, and after the run of their preferred exhibition(s); along with unique opportunities to engage directly with artists and exhibition curators, invitations to special events, and much more. Contributions help support the costs of exhibitions at GRAM, allowing the Museum to offer affordable admission costs, secure loans from private and public collections worldwide, and produce exquisite presentations of these works. The Exhibition Society began with six donors in 2015 and has expanded to 40 donors today.



ART FOR LIFE

Art for Life is an annual giving program dedicated to sustaining and growing the vital work of the Learning and Creativity Department. These investments will enable GRAM to strengthen our educational programming and amplify our impact on the next generation of art lovers. The financial support generated by the Art for Life contributions will help sustain the multifaceted, award-winning programming that GRAM provides for broad audiences. This ranges from pre-kindergarten children and their caregivers to schoolchildren and teachers to families and older adults. Under Bill and Marilyn Crawford’s philanthropic leadership, Art for Life was launched in 2015. Since then, it has grown to 52 donors who are empowering GRAM to engage the community in enriching art and learning experiences.



NEW GALLERY ATTENDANTS

After receiving feedback from GRAM visitors as well as participants from the Slover Linett audience research, the Museum debuted a new gallery attendants program. Gallery attendants are professionally trained museum professionals who replace traditional security guards in the galleries. Gallery attendants interact with and assist guests during their time in the galleries and can help people deepen their experience with the exhibitions and collections on view. The new program has improved the visitor experience and promotes a culture of inclusivity at the Museum.

ENHANCED EXTERNAL SIGNAGE

GRAM has used the audience research findings to improve the Museum experience through the installation of a permanent exterior sign at the entrance of GRAM’s Education Center. The new signage increases the Education Center’s visibility, making it easier for visiting students and teachers to locate the entry doors.

VISITOR SURVEYS

After working alongside audience researchers from Slover Linett, GRAM has enhanced its evaluation methods by transitioning from paper surveys to self-serve, iPad-based polls accessible in the galleries. The surveys elicit feedback from visitors on their overall experience at the Museum in addition to evaluating featured exhibitions.



Above: Christina Weinman

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: CHRISTINA WEINMAN

“After moving to Grand Rapids for school, I wanted to get involved in the city’s art culture and began volunteering at the GRAM last September. I appreciate getting into the gallery space and gaining a better understanding of how museums function and their role in a city. The variety of exhibitions and events have been a highlight to engage with—from ArtPrize to the Sunday concert series. In the future, I hope to pursue a career in environmental visual communications, so it has been illuminating to interact with the general public as they relate to different works of art and the different message those pieces communicate. Involvement with the GRAM has been a valuable part of my time here and a great way understanding and getting to know the city.”

VOLUNTEER STATISTICS

Volunteers are crucial to GRAM’s service to the community and help expand the Museum’s impact on a daily basis throughout the year. Volunteers act as ambassadors for GRAM’s programming and exhibitions within the museum and throughout the greater Grand Rapids area. Volunteers are serving in a variety of roles, such as docents and GRAMBassadors for ArtPrize, Festival of the Arts, special events, youth and family programs, visitor services, and more.

Those interested in becoming a GRAM volunteer, please contact Allison Bazaire, Volunteer Services Manager, at abazaire@artmuseumgr.org.

Number of volunteers during the fiscal year: **458**
Collective volunteer hours contributed: **10,667**



Top row, left to right: Rita Bailey, Bruce Bailey, Paul Chardoul, Kris Shannon, Chris Overoorde
Bottom row, left to right: Mary Loupee, Carol Cordes, Katy Leedy, Betts Casey

VOLUNTEERS

Cathy Allore	Carlie Couzens	Janice Hauk	Alena Maigniant	Kathy Page	Ruth Stubbs
Jan Andre	Linda Cox	Rosemary Hayes	Andrea Maison	Laurie Piersma	Eddie Tadlock
Diane Astourian	Elizabeth Deforest	Jacqueline Heaney	Leo Markfort	Ann Preidis	Dee Tokarski
Bruce Bailey	Chelsi Degennaro-Spencer	Lyndsey Hicks	Marilyn Martin	Deb Rabitoy	Judy Tyner
Rita Bailey	Jeremy DeVos	Holly Hill	Victoria Martinez	Madeleine Rabitoy	Joy Uddin
Tamara Bailey	Joe Dyer	Dirk Hoffius	Mary Masters	Sarah Radeck	Robyn Van Dyke
Judy Batts	Debbie Eggerding	Jim Horman	Janet McCasey	Harry Rinker	Barbara Van Leeuwen
Ruth Beaver	Mary Elliott	Brian Howland	Sharon McGowan	Garrick Rollert	Laura Van Wyk
Margaret Benefiel	Jim Engelking	Nancy Huhn	Steve McGowan	Debbie Roper	Joni Vander Till
Chloe Benzer	Pam Estrada	Libby Jawish	Jan McLaughlin	Chris Rosmarin	Benjamin Vlietstra
Patti Betz	Sue Ferrell	Lia Jensen	Gerald Mears	Therese Rowerdink	Mary Ann Walters
Rajene Betz	Bernadene Francis	Jack Johnson	Jane Meilner	Beth Samp	Elizabeth Wassink
Helen Beuker	Lysandra French	Andrea Jordan	Tom Merchant	Erin Sarber	Mark Wassink
Bonnie Bigler	Aldiana Ganic	Michael Keating	Meg Miller Willit	Carol Serosik	Mitch Watt
Sherry Blair	Joseph Garber	Janet Kenny	Geraldine Molyneux	David Saylor	Catherine Waugh
Alexis Boyden	Ken Gatchel	Heather Klare	Karen Mosier	Kathy Saylor	Christina Weinman
Peggy Bransdorfer	Kelly Gest	Joanne Knape	Karen Mouw	Erin Schregardus	Harmony Welch
Susan Brems	Barbara Gibbs	Cordayo Knapp	Ricardo Navarrete Mendez	Richard Schwallier	Sally Wierda
Jeremy Brizuela	Jared Gibson	Robert Koenen	Pat Nelson	Ilma Seperovic	Kathy Wilson
Jodi Brown	Tonya Gibson	Sharon Lantinga	Ashley Newton	Marsha Shade	Ruth Wilson
Anne Budnick	Alice Gilbert	Alana Latour	Joanne Nicola	Tom Shannon, Jr.	Mary Ann Yaeger
Jonathon Butler	Rachel Giles	Susan Ledy	Ashley Nink	Gayle Sherk	Ann Zoellner
Betts Casey	Jackie Granger	Katy Leedy	Anna Marie O’Brien	Terri Shoemaker	
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Exhibitions



ARTPRIZE NINE AT GRAM

September 13, 2017 – October 8, 2017

Sixteen artists participated in *ArtPrize Nine* at the Grand Rapids Art Museum. The exhibition included a diverse group of artists hailing from six different U.S. states and Germany, competing within every ArtPrize category—2D, 3D, time-based, and installation. GRAM’s ArtPrize artists explored humankind’s relationship with our ever-changing environment, the obstacles to communication, approaches to representing personal identity, and the ability of art to convey meaning.

OFF-SHORE AND ON THE BEACH

July 7, 2017 – August 27, 2017

The 2017 statewide exhibition, organized by the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA), juxtaposed two 19th-century seaside scenes by French painters Édouard Manet

and William Adolphe Bouguereau from the DIA’s world-renowned collection. This exhibition provided the opportunity to compare an impressionistic painting by Manet alongside the meticulously realistic canvas by Bouguereau.



THE ART OF RUBE GOLDBERG

May 20, 2017 – August 27, 2017

The Art of Rube Goldberg was the first comprehensive survey exhibition in nearly 50 years that highlighted the artistic talent and endless imagination of the legendary American cartoonist and illustrator, Rube Goldberg (1883-1970). *The Art of Rube Goldberg* brought together more than 75 drawings, rare photographs, sketches, and animated films, as well as unique personal photographs and memorabilia from the Goldberg family archives, bringing to life one of 20th century America’s most talented innovators.

Left: William Adolphe Bouguereau (French, 1825-1905). *Sisters on the Shore*, 1896. Oil on Canvas. 56 x 36 inches. Gift of Charles Willis Ward.



Left: William Merrit Chase, *Lady in Opera Cloak (Portrait of Miss C)* with floral design from Alyssa Ferguson/Fleurology Designs

FINDERS KEEPERS: WEST MICHIGAN COLLECTS

February 5, 2017 – April 30, 2017

From fine art to Victorian jewelry, rare and precious minerals to antique rifles, sneakers to carpet sweepers, decorative glass, and more, *Finders Keepers: West Michigan Collects* celebrates the passion and drive that fuel the collecting bug. Organized by GRAM’s curatorial team in collaboration with local residents in the community, the exhibition included hundreds of objects drawn from both private and institutional collections in a lively and unique gallery setting.

BLACK WAVES: THE TATTOO ART OF LEO ZULUETA

February 5, 2017 – August 27, 2017

Black Waves: The Tattoo Art of Leo Zulueta was a visual biography of the man primarily responsible for the popularization of tribal tattooing. The exhibition’s narrative format drew on Zulueta’s personal and cultural history, as well as the historical cultures that greatly influenced his work. His range of imagery and projects were presented in the form of photographs, texts, hand-drawn tattoo “flash,” tattoo-inspired drawings, and a large-scale mural created specifically for GRAM’s lobby.

ART IN BLOOM

March 24, 2017 – March 26, 2017

Art in Bloom is a biennial, one-weekend-only exhibition that celebrated the combined beauty of art and floral design. Our region’s most talented floral designers created thought-provoking and elegantly designed arrangements inspired by works from the Museum’s collection. These floral sculptures emphasized, challenged, and built upon elements and concepts within the original work of art, creating an extraordinary dialogue between the two pieces. Visitors were invited to select the People’s Choice Award Winner by casting a vote for their favorite floral sculpture. Over 2,700 people participated, making it GRAM’s highest-attended *Art in Bloom* ever. Save the date for the next *Art in Bloom*—March 22-24, 2019.



Left: *Black Waves: The Tattoo Art of Leo Zulueta*



Above: Iris van Herpen: *Transforming Fashion*

PRINTS AND PROCESSES

January 24, 2017 – June 25, 2017

Drawn entirely from GRAM’s collection, this thematic exhibition revealed the depth and quality of the Museum’s holding of prints, a group that spans the 16th century to the present. Works by well-known artists such as Albrecht Dürer, Rembrandt van Rijn, William Blake, Mary Cassatt, and Andy Warhol were on view, organized by printmaking method. Each section of the exhibition provided information about the different techniques, tools, and materials that illuminate the production of the most common print forms which include woodcuts, lithographs, etchings, screenprints, and monoprints.

**IRIS VAN HERPEN:
TRANSFORMING FASHION**

October 23, 2016 – January 15, 2017

Iris van Herpen: Transforming Fashion featured 45 haute couture outfits carefully selected from 15 of van Herpen’s collections designed from 2008 through 2015. She gained international acclaim for her combination of traditional craftsmanship and futuristic, innovative techniques—including some of the world’s first examples of 3-D-printed fashion. Her visually impressive sculptural designs have often featured unusual materials such as umbrella ribs and synthetic boat riggings. Designs by van Herpen have been worn by style icons such as Lady Gaga, Beyoncé, and Björk, and have electrified the runways of Amsterdam, London, and Paris.

**A SELECTION OF AWARD
RECIPIENTS FROM THE
2017 FESTIVAL OF THE
ARTS REGIONAL ARTS
COMPETITION**

July 18, 2017 – August 27, 2017

GRAM proudly partnered with *Festival of the Arts* to bring a selection of the 2017 Regional Art Competition winners to the Museum this past summer. The regional artists featured included Candice Chovanec, Richard Deming Jr., Henry Droski, Susan Ellison, Jeff Grill, David Huang, Megan Klco, Colleen O’Rourke, and Kelly Walkotten.

Acquisitions

Berenice Abbott (American, 1898-1991)
Flatiron Building, New York, 1938
Gelatin silver print
13 1/8 x 10 inches
Gift of John and Lynn Vinkemulder, 2016.30

Anila Quayyum Agha
(American, b. Pakistan 1965)
Intersections Gold, 2016
Embroidery and encaustic on laser-cut paper
22 x 14-1/2 inches
Museum Purchase, 2016.29

Anila Quayyum Agha
(American, b. Pakistan 1965)
Intersections Teal, 2016
Embroidery and encaustic on laser-cut paper
22 x 14-1/2 inches
Museum Purchase, 2016.28

Josef Albers (American, 1888-1976)
Variant V, 1966
5-color serigraph on paper
17 x 17 inches
Gift of Mary Jean Waddell, 2016.26

Gisela Colon (American, b. 1966)
Ovoid Glo-Pod (Iridescent Lilac), 2016
Blow-molded acrylic
23 x 15 x 8 inches
Gift of the Artist, 2016.25

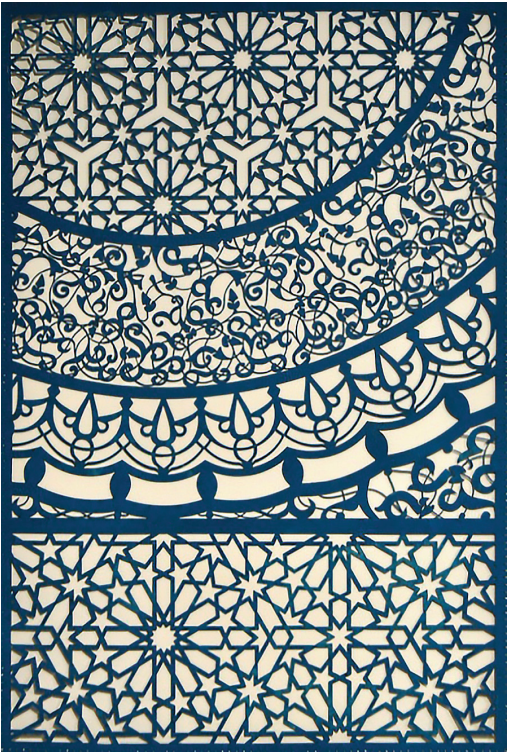
Janet Fish (American, b. 1938)
Daffodils and Cereal, 1994
Oil on canvas
38 x 36 inches
Gift of Miner S. and Mary Ann Keeler, 2017.1

Rockwell Kent (American, 1882-1971)
Bacchus Cigarette Box
Brass
5-1/4 x 6-1/4 x 1-3/4 inches
Gift of Peter M. Wege, 2017.2

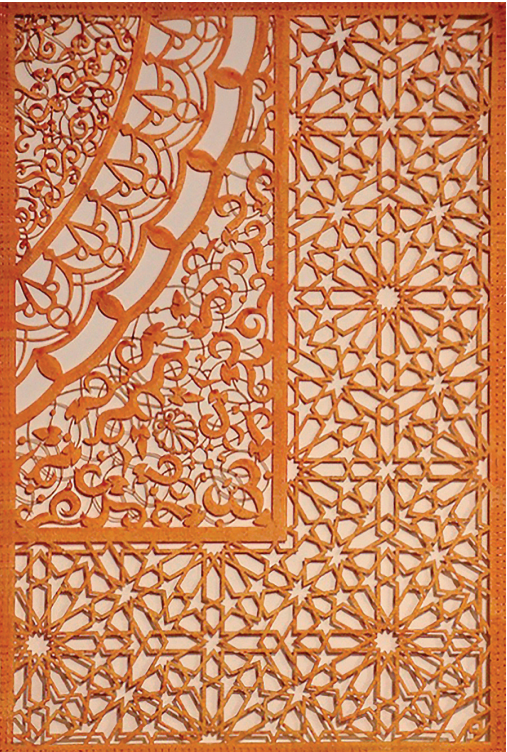
Sol Lewitt (American, 1928-2007)
Loops & Curves (Small), 1999
Color sugar lift aquatint with aquatint on paper
11-1/2 x 9-1/2 inches
Gift of John and Lynn Vinkemulder, 2016.31

Emil Nolde (German, 1867-1956)
Face of a Woman, c. 1918-1920
Aquarelle on paper
Sheet 19-7/8 x 15-1/8 inches
Gift of Thomas H. and Anne Gerth Logan, in memory of Hans H. Gerth, 2016.24

Dario Robleto (American, b. 1972)
Survival Does Not Lie in the Heavens, 2012
Digital inkjet print mounted on Sintra, a collection of stage lights taken from the album covers of live performances of now-deceased Gospel, Blues, and Jazz musicians
Triptych: 31 x 31 inches, 46 x 46 inches, 31 x 31 inches
Museum Purchase, 2016.27a-c



Above: Anila Quayyum Agha, *Intersections Teal*



Above: Anila Quayyum Agha, *Intersections Gold*

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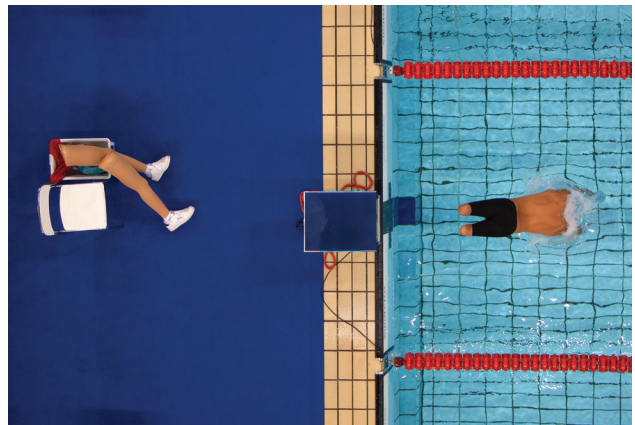
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Bob Martin (British, born 1959). *Avi Torres of Spain sets off at the start of the 200m freestyle heats, Paralympic Games, Athens, September 1, 2004*, printed 2016. Inkjet print, 14 x 9 1/2 in. (35.6 x 24.1 cm). Courtesy of Bob Martin/*Sports Illustrated*