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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Des Moines Art Center awarded Student Arts Education Investment Grant**

**DES MOINES, IA (October 2020)** The Des Moines Art Center is thrilled to announce it has been awarded a Student Arts Education Investment Grant from Bravo Greater Des Moines and the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines. The grant was developed to support local arts, culture, and heritage non-profit organizations to quickly optimize virtual arts, culture, and heritage education opportunities for first through fifth-grade students in Greater Des Moines.

The \$8,000 award will enable continued development of the Art Center's virtual content of the museum's collections, including Virtual Viewing videos, Creative Connection lessons and virtual tours.

"Our objective with all our virtual programming is to inspire learning through exploration of modern and contemporary art at the Des Moines Art Center," said Director of Development Tiffany Nagel Spinner. "The Art Center is proud to have provided museum tours for thousands of students, including all fourth-grade students in Greater Des Moines, for more than 25 years. This project will allow us to continue providing virtual tours and art experiences to our fourth-grade school partners and to expand opportunities to additional grade levels."

The three main components of the project include:

- **Virtual Viewing videos** are two to five-minute-long, docent-led videos accessed through the Art Center's YouTube channel. Students practice the art of slow looking with assistance of a Des Moines Art Center Docent and an artwork from the Art Center's collection. Looking closely at the works, students see, learn and think about artwork, artists and how it all applies to their own lives.
- **Creative Connection lessons** will be designed around one work of art and an accompanying theme. Students will build critical thinking, cultural awareness, empathy and a connection to artwork and the human spirit. Each Creative Connection is offered in a six-part lesson format: view, dig, discuss, create, relate and wonder.
- **Virtual tours** have been a goal for the Art Center for many years, both to increase accessibility across the metro and to expand the ability to connect with audiences across the country and globe. The tours will allow visitors to click through the extensive collections as if they were at the museum.

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### Des Moines Art Center

Recognized by international art critics as a world-class museum in the heart of the Midwest, the Des Moines Art Center, an AAM-accredited institution, has amassed an important collection of art from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present, with a major emphasis on contemporary art. Focused on quality and global in scope, it includes major works by Henry Ossawa Tanner, Edward Hopper, Georgia O’Keeffe, Francis Bacon, Andy Goldsworthy, Henri Matisse, Wangechi Mutu, Ai Wei Wei, and Kara Walker, among hundreds of others. The collection is housed in three major buildings, each designed by a renowned architect—Eliel Saarinen, I. M. Pei, and Richard Meier. With the exception of special events, admission to the museum is free.

In September 2009, the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park opened in Des Moines’ Western Gateway Park. Philanthropists John and Mary Pappajohn provided funding for and donated 31 sculptures by internationally acclaimed contemporary artists to the Des Moines Art Center. The collection of sculptures by such artists as Martin Puryear, Louise Bourgeois, Deborah Butterfield, Willem de Kooning, Mark di Suvero, Olafur Eliasson, Keith Haring, Robert Indiana, Ellsworth Kelly, Yayoi Kusama, Jaume Plensa, and Richard Serra, and Joel Shapiro is the most significant donation of artwork to the Art Center in a single gift in the museum’s history. The Pappajohn Sculpture Park is a collaboration of the Pappajohns, the City of Des Moines, the Des Moines Art Center, and numerous corporate and private donors.

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