To say that 2020 was an unusual year would be an understatement. Among the many challenges that confronted our museum and school was the COVID-19 pandemic and its resulting financial ramifications. Additionally, many social justice issues confronted our community and the country. The pandemic forced the institution to close to the public on March 17, only to reopen with safety precautions in place for visitors as well as staff on July 7. During the first half of the year, we addressed five overriding challenges:

- To model financial scenarios for the future
- Engage and maintain the involvement of our members and patrons through communication and information sharing
- Connect with and inspire audiences in innovative ways
- Monitor and maintain the security of our facility, its systems, and our art
- Prepare for the reopening via visitor services, programs, and exhibitions

We were successful in these efforts, even though it sometimes meant making hard financial decisions. We pivoted to new ways of operating, including the creation of virtual gallery tours, classes, and member group programs. Our docents found new ways to continue their educational work with Zoom tours and discussions.

The social justice issues that consumed our community during 2020 caused all of us to reevaluate the past and the present and to reconsider how we function. In response, the Art Center created an inclusion statement to solidify our future efforts. It reads, “Every voice belongs in contemporary art. The Des Moines Art Center commits to value and represent the unique experiences and perspectives of every visitor and staff member. Working toward equity and inclusivity within the museum, school, and community strengthens our ability to create better, together.” We acknowledge the immensity of the challenge of fighting the systematic barriers to inclusion that exist, and are committed to continued steps forward in the fight for equity for all.

The exhibition and book, *Black Stories*, took a step toward transforming the way we traditionally operate. Although planned in the spring of 2019, *Black Stories* proved to be a timely mechanism to form a collaboration with the community and to invite new partnerships. This effort marked a fundamental change in how the Art Center operates and moves us toward a more inclusive future.

Through all these challenges we remain thankful to our donors and multiple audiences. We could not maintain our role in the community without donor support. Thanks for sticking with us through 2020. We will come out of this stronger, better, and more in touch with our community, ready to face the future together.

Jeff Fleming  Graham Cook  
DIRECTOR  PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Art Center’s new inclusion statement was introduced larger than life, projected on the outside of the Richard Meier building during a free community event on the front lawn on September 24.
In 2020, the Art Center presented major exhibitions that demonstrated a commitment to inclusion, while also being responsive to the upheavals and uncertainty that marked the year.

Karla Black: 20 Years showcased the artist’s unconventional use of materials. When it became clear the exhibition itself would be unconventional due to the closure of the museum in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Art Center quickly introduced new virtual tours so that visitors could continue to interact with the works. Following Karla Black, two permanent collection exhibitions highlighted the diverse works in the Art Center’s holdings, while also speaking to prevailing social issues. Black Stories presented an opportunity for audience members to share their personal stories and experiences in response to the artworks in the show, allowing for a time of reflection and re-evaluation.

All exhibitions were organized by the Des Moines Art Center.

Hedda Sterne: Imagination and Machine
January 10 – April 15, 2020
Blank One Gallery
Romanian-born artist Hedda Sterne was commissioned to create impressions of John Deere tractor parts by Fortune magazine in 1961. This exhibition marked the first time all seven paintings have been shown together outside Moline, Illinois.

Anna Gaskell: Judith Loves Martha
January 17 – May 17, 2020
Pamela Bass-Bookey and Harry Bookey Gallery
In this film, Iowa-born artist Anna Gaskell speaks with abstract painter Judith Godwin (born 1930) about her relationship with dance pioneer Martha Graham. Funny, romantic, and personal, this film celebrates the memories of one extraordinary woman speaking about another and emphasizes the importance of recording women’s stories.

All exhibitions were organized by the Des Moines Art Center.

Exhibitions

Karla Black: 20 Years
February 8, 2020 – May 17, 2020
Anna K. Meredith Gallery, Upper I.M. Pei Gallery, and Lower I.M. Pei Gallery
Karla Black: 20 Years at the Des Moines Art Center was the artist’s first major solo museum exhibition to include both site-specific works and a representative selection of sculptures made over the course of her career. Karla Black creates large sculptural forms using ordinary, but unconventional materials in a pastel color palette, allowing her to investigate play, tactility, and creative expression.

Researchers: Women Artists Inspired by Science
February 14 – May 10, 2020
John Brady Print Gallery
Researchers: Women Artists Inspired by Science explored the influence of various sciences on the work of women artists from the 17th century forward. These artists used research into biology, physics, engineering, astronomy, and other fields as fertile ground for aesthetic inspiration.

Landscapes in Watercolor
July 7, 2020 – January 3, 2021
John Brady Print Gallery
Landscapes in Watercolor showcased over thirty works from the Des Moines Art Center’s collections and considered how artists have utilized watercolor to depict the natural world. Ranging in date from 1885 to 1980, the artworks featured rocky seashores, wooded forests, grasslands, and farmlands that have been produced from meticulous marks, broad brushstrokes, or methods in between.

Anna Gaskell: Judith Loves Martha presented an opportunity for audience members to share their personal stories and experiences in response to the artworks in the show, allowing for a time of reflection and re-evaluation.

EXHIBITIONS

From Hedda Sterne: Imagination and Machine
Hedda Sterne (American, born Romania, 1910 – 2011)
Six Cylinder Engine, 1961
Oil, spray paint, and oil stick on canvas / 34 x 26 inches (framed)
Image courtesy of John Deere

From Researchers: Women Artists Inspired by Science
Mary Mattingly (American, born 1978)
Over and Over and Over and Over, 2018
Chromogenic dye coupler print
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of Mary Mattingly, 2018.14

Karla Black: 20 Years mesmerized visitors young and old with the artist’s use of unusual materials unexpectedly installed throughout the museum galleries, shown here in the I.M. Pei building.

From Researchers: Women Artists Inspired by Science
Mary Mattingly (American, born 1978)
Over and Over and Over and Over, 2018
Chromogenic dye coupler print
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of Mary Mattingly, 2018.14
Selections from the Permanent Collections
July 7–September 8, 2021
Anna K. Meredith Gallery

To welcome visitors back into the museum, staff selected a mix of old favorites and exciting newcomers to fill the Meredith gallery.

Black Stories
October 3, 2020 – January 17, 2021
Anna K. Meredith Gallery, Upper I.M. Pei Gallery, and Lower I.M. Pei Gallery

Co-curated by artists Mitchell Squire and Jordan Weber

Black Stories presented artwork by Black artists in the Art Center’s permanent collections and aimed to connect and partner with the community in the process. The exhibition was organized into four sections: In Living Color, In Black and White, In Wakanda, and a shrine room showcasing traditional African works.

Iowa Artists 2020: Rachel Cox
October 16, 2020 – January 10, 2021
Blank One Gallery

Photographs from Rachel Cox’s “Mors Scena” series explored how the décor of funeral homes function within the grieving process. The artist conducted research to not only capture these unique spaces but also delve into how notions of class and social expectation all play in role in how such places come to look and feel. The resulting photos are part documentary, part formal exploration, and part arranged fiction.
NEW ACCESSIONS

To advance the Art Center’s goal of celebrating and expanding the diversity of the collections, the museum accessioned 47 works of art in 2020 by artists from diverse backgrounds.

Many of these works are from artists new to the Art Center’s collections. Purchases included major works of photography, mixed-media, prints and drawings, and works on paper. The following represents a selection of these works. Acquisition and endowment funds, the Des Moines Art Center Print Club, and gifts from generous donors made these accessions possible.

1 | HENRY TAYLOR (American, born 1958)
Portrait of Oscar Murillo 2019
Acrylic on canvas
45 3/4 x 35 1/4 x 1 inches
Harriet S. and J. Locke Macomber Des Moines Art Center Endowment Fund, 2020.1

2 | HEDDA STERNE (American, born Romania, 1910–2011)
Anthropograph #19 1949
Oil on linen
41 1/4 x 31 1/2 x 2 inches
40 x 30 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Purchased with funds from the Edmundson Art Foundation, Inc., 2020.2

3 | LUIS GISPERT (American, born 1972)
Jimmy Page 2015
Polychrome stone, gold chains
60 1/2 x 49 1/4 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of Robert Feldman, 2020.4

4 | VAN PEI-MING (Chinese, active France, born 1960)
Self-Portrait 2007
Lithograph on paper
29 7/8 x 22 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.6

LEONOR FINI (French, born Argentina, 1908–1996)
N’AS110 “Tu verras si nous sommes difficiles” 1940–1950
Ink on paper
8 x 6 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.8

FRANK BIG BEAR (American, Anishinabe, born 1953)
Multiverse: Spin Off VI 2013
Collage on found paper
Frame: 36 x 36 x 1 3/4 inches
Other (collage, each): 8 1/2 x 6 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.10.a–.j

ELIZABETH MURRAY (American, 1940–2007)
Radish 2001
13 color lithograph and screenprint on hand-cut paper
Overall (plexi box): 24 1/8 x 26 1/4 x 6 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.13

HANS BELLMER (German, 1902–1975)
Les Infortunes de la Vertu, from the portfolio “Petit Traité de Morale,” 1968
Etching on paper
15 x 11 1/8 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.18

All accessions photos by Rich Sanders unless otherwise noted.
ELIZABETH CATLETT
(American, active Mexico, 1915–2012)
Links Together 1996
Lithograph on paper
29 1/2 x 23 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of the Des Moines Art Center Print Club, 2020.19

WENDY RED STAR (Apsáalooke/Crow, born 1981)
Fall, Indian Summer, Winter, and Spring,
from “The Four Seasons,” 2006, printed 2020
Series of four archival prints on paper
21 x 22 inches (each)
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Purchased with funds from Jim and Ellen Hubbell
and the Rusty Hubbell and Ellen and Jim Hubbell
Photography Acquisition Fund, 2020.20.1–.4

DAVID HOCKNEY (British, born 1937)
A Lot More of Ann Combing Her Hair 1979
Lithograph on paper
49 1/2 x 36 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.21

ROGER SHIMOMURA (American, born 1939)
American Guardian 2007
Lithograph on paper
31 1/2 x 43 1/8 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.23

WALT KUHN (American, 1877–1949)
Mirabell 1925
Lithograph on paper
14 5/8 x 9 1/2 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.26

CECILY BROWN (British, active United States, born 1969)
Aujourd’hui Rose 2005
Four-color lithograph on paper
38 7/8 x 29 3/8 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.31

JULIE BLACKMON (American, born 1966)
Cupcake 2007
Archival digital print
22 x 22 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.32

6 | RICHARD DIEBENKORN (American, 1922–1993)
Green Tree Spade 1982
Color sugar lift aquatint with flat bite etching on paper
18 1/2 x 23 1/4 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.34

RENÉ MAGRITTE (Belgian, 1898–1967)
L’Art de Vivre, frontispiece for “Le Lien de Paille”
by Louis Scutenaire, 1968
Color etching on paper
11 x 9 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.35

JULIE MEHRETU (American, born Ethiopia, born 1970)
Unclosed 2007
Color hard ground etching with spit bite aquatint
and drypoint on paper
41 x 50 1/8 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of Jim and Ellen Hubbell, 2020.36

7 | CARA ROMERO (Chemehuevi, born 1977)
Evolvers 2019
Archival pigment print
19 x 61 1/2 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Purchased from the artist with funds from
Steven J. and Keely Rosenberg, 2020.37
With your support in 2020, the Art Center was able to serve 81,674 individuals and families through in-person activities and virtual experiences, transforming the challenges faced due to COVID-19 into new opportunities for engagement.

**VIRTUAL TOURS**

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 allow visitors to click through the extensive collections as if they were at the museum. Tours of gallery spaces hosting works from the permanent collection are available, as well as several major exhibitions including Karla Black: 20 Years and Black Stories.

**CREATIVE CONNECTIONS**

The Museum Education + Interpretation department answered the call to pivot to virtual resources and focus on community educators, parents, and caregivers when the need arose due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A major effort to offer support to teachers and folks at home with elementary-aged learners was through the creation of downloadable lesson plans available on the Art Center’s website called Creative Connections. The use of this program helps students build critical thinking, cultural awareness, empathy, and a connection to artwork and the human spirit. Honoring that in art there are no wrong answers, experiencing artworks provides students a chance to safely explore their own creativity and understanding of the world around them.

**DAY OF THE DEAD**

This year the Art Center celebrated twenty years of hosting Day of the Dead festivities. Unable to hold a live celebration, to support the community and in the spirit of honoring this international tradition, the Art Center offered a host of activities, including free Ofrenda starter kits at local libraries, a Facebook Premiere featuring a commemorative film created by Vince Valdez that highlighted members of the Latinx community honored at the event over the last two decades, photo galleries, free Day of the Dead downloadable commemorative posters, and a virtual conversation with author Lori Erickson on how different cultures process death.

**VIRTUAL VIEWING VIDEOS**

Docent-led Virtual Viewing Videos are a new way for visitors and students to closely explore artworks in the museum’s collection from practically anywhere. Exploring art with others, pointing out details often left unnoticed, facilitating meaningful conversations about art—these are some of the things that docents do best. When COVID-19 caused an abrupt suspension of in-person tours, docents began writing and recording introductions to some of their favorite works in the collection as an avenue to continue sharing art. Videos were created with the help of Museum Educator Mia Buch and a generous grant from Bravo Greater Des Moines. “Field trips to the Art Center are a major highlight for many area educators and students. Our hopes are that these videos can create similar moments of wonder and curiosity, bringing our museum to students anywhere,” Buch said. The videos created this year are accessible on both the Art Center’s website and YouTube channel.

“Virtual Viewing Videos are a valuable tool to teach students how to analyze and interpret art. The videos are not too long and offer great prompting questions to ignite the curiosities of the viewer.”

KATIE LIEPER Art Teacher at Walnut Creek Campus
West Des Moines Community Schools

Undeterred by the inability to hold one of the Art Center’s largest community events in person, this year’s Day of the Dead 20 year anniversary celebration offered a host of virtual and at home art activities.

**ART ACCESS**

Art access programs provided many of our community partners with contact-free, safe programing through virtual offerings, creative art kits, and instructional videos. The program benefited community partners in many ways by sharing in the stress and workload of tackling the needs of the community during the pandemic. Nineteen organizations involving 38 programs participated in art access activities in 2020.

The Art Center provided more than 800 art kits that were accompanied with instructional videos to organizations to ensure participants had access to art materials. A partnership with Lutheran Services in Iowa highlights this collaborative effort. Elderly refugees isolated in their homes during the pandemic were provided with more than 300 art kits designed to combat loneliness and promote a sense of wellbeing and stability. Participants were given a wide range of mediums to explore including scratch art boards, paint, coloring sheets, and journals.

As part of an ongoing partnership with Children’s Cancer Connection, the Art Center created monthly artmaking projects for kids, and virtual art classes made it possible for students to keep learning and stay connected to the museum.
VIRTUAL MEMBER TOURS AND HAPPY HOURS

In 2020, members of all levels were able to participate in a virtual private home collection tour of Director Jeff Fleming and his wife Carrie Marshburn-Fleming. The Flemings shared stories of how they choose to collect art as a family, as well as the meaning behind many of the works in their collection.

A “Happy Hour with Curators” allowed members to learn the creative process behind how exhibitions are curated with a virtual conversation between Curatorial Manager Laura Burkhalter and Associate Curator Jared Ledesma. Members at the Ambassador level ($140+) had a Tangerine “lunch to-go” as part of the Art for Lunch series and participated in a virtual studio visit with 2020 Iowa Artist Rachel Cox to learn about the story behind her “Mors Scena” exhibition.

MEMBER GROUPS

Member groups reimagined the membership experience in 2020. Art Noir was able to provide several take-home kits inspired by perennial favorites, including a Trivia Night partnership with The Bartender’s Handshake and Art Noir’s Home for the Holiday Studio.

For the first time, Print Club hosted their annual meeting in a virtual setting, where it was announced that members selected the Elizabeth Catlett color lithograph Links Together (page 10) as the 2020 Des Moines Art Center Print Club Gift Print.

Finally, who could forget Salon 4700’s end-of-year celebration, a virtual private collection tour with Pamela Bass-Bookey and Harry Bookey? The Bookey’s generosity welcomed members to hear stories about some of the most cherished works in their home. Members received surprise complimentary goody boxes to commemorate the evening from Happy DSM.

2020 GALA

Finally, Art Center Trustee Rosemary Parson chaired the “Entirely Unexpected” 2020 Virtual Gala, held in September. Guests were able to pick up dinner from Tangerine and return home to watch a video highlighting the diverse artworks, artists, programming, and partnerships within the Art Center.

Director Jeff Fleming unveiled the Art Center’s new inclusion statement at the event. A portion of the proceeds from the fundraising event supported the free September 24 community event showcasing the Art Center’s collection on the exterior of the Richard Meier building and a virtual concert by Parranderos Latin Combo that was shared on social media.

Thanks to continued generous and loyal support from individuals, corporations, and foundations, the membership and development department was able create new ways to connect with our supporters.
WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR VITAL SUPPORT.

Continued generosity of Art Center donors. The foundation for our success is the culture in Iowa for years to come. We are appreciative of this foresight and programming remain a part of the Des Moines Art Center experience. Ongoing annual support is generated from endowment funds. We are thankful for the following individuals and families, who have or will have or estate plans. These endowed funds will enrich the arts and culture in Iowa for years to come. We are grateful for your vital support.

EDMUNDSON HONOR SOCIETY
Members of the Edmundson Honor Society have included the Des Moines Art Center in their will or estate plans. These individuals are leaving a legacy that will enrich the arts and culture in Iowa for years to come.

EDMUNDSON HONOR SOCIETY MEMBERS

- Anonymous (2)
- Emily Bahnsen
- Bruce Barnes
- Linda Bresnan
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- Margaret Brennan
- Joseph Cunningham
- Richard L. Deming, M.D.
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- Doris M. Eby
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- Mickey and NaLi Ryan
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- Craig and Kimberly Shadur
- Steven Marquardt
- Thomas and Linda Koehl
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- Ikes Funeral Homes
- Harriet Hubbell
- Fred and Charlotte Hubbell
- Mary and Stanley Seidler
- Nancy Woods
- FBL Financial Group
- Stanley and Regina Glawe
- Charles Gabus Ford
- Eric Faust
- Jeff Chelesvig
- Joseph and LaNae Ceryanec
- J.C. “Buzz” Brenton
- Cheryl and Bill Bergren
- Babette Brenton
- Jaliesky Hernandez
- Michael Simonson and Pamela Bass-Bookey
- Pamela Bass-Bookey and Harry Bookey
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- William Randolph Hearst Endowment for Education Fund
- Rusty Hubbell and Jim & Ellen Hubbell Photography Acquisition Fund
- Frederick James Endow Iowa Fund
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- R.W. and Mary Nelson Scholarship Fund
- Craig and Kimberly Shadur Endowment
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- The Wallace Endowment Fund
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- Toni and Tim Urban International Artist-in-Residence Fund
- The Wallace Endowment Fund
- YE ($100,000)
- The Right Foundation
- Ellen and James W. Hubbell
- Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- Linda and Tom Koehn
- John and Penny Krantz
- Nk and Virginia Lauridsen
- Joanna Leffett
- The Fred Meytag Family Foundation
- Meier Bernstein Foundation
- Nationwide Foundation
- YE ($25,000)
- The Bright Foundation
- Craig and Kimberly Shadur Endowment
- Principal Foundation
- YE ($50,000 – $99,999)
- John and Mary Pappajohn
- Principal Financial Group
- YE ($25,000 – $49,999)
- The Bright Foundation
- Ellen and James W. Hubbell
- Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- Linda and Tom Koehn
- John and Penny Krantz
- Nk and Virginia Lauridsen
- Joanna Leffett
- The Fred Meytag Family Foundation
- Meier Bernstein Foundation
- Nationwide Foundation
- YE ($20,000 – $24,999)
- Gregory and Andrea Abel
- Mary K. and Daniel M. Kelly
- Thomas and Linda Koehn
- Steven Marswardt
- Craig and Kimberly Shadur
- The Trust of Keith W. Shaver
- YE ($15,000 – $19,999)
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- Judith A. Lindquist Scholarship Fund
- Michael Simonson and Jalesky Hernandez
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- Eric Faust
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- FBL Financial Group
- Michael Myczkowski and Martha James

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- Joseph and LuAnn Ceynar
- Jeff Chelesvig
- Eric Faust
- Charles Gabus Ford
- Stany and Regina Glawe
- FBL Financial Group
- Michael Myczkowski and Martha James

The foundation for our success is the continued generosity of Art Center donors. We are grateful for your vital support.
TRIBUTE GIFTS

The following individuals were celebrated by gifts made in 2020. We are grateful that their loved ones chose the Art Center to recognize them in this meaningful way.

IN HONOR OF

April Zintham
Jeanne Leavitt
Lori and Louis Ringerman
Pam Blass-Bockley and Bockey Blass

IN MEMORY OF

Aileen Thompson
Charles A. Duesbery
Cynthia Rehm
Dana Percival
Frank Fogarty
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James Demetrio
John L. Berg Knouse
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Sandra Zimmerman
Shirley Michel
Stanley Roberts
William and Natalie Brenton

IN KIND SUPPORT

I.M. Sports Companies
Marta Couch
John and Katrina Stenberg
Melvin and Marcia Hoskinson
Sheena and Frank Thomas
Iowa Public Radio
Bosie the Florist

*Deceased

The Art Center makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of names and gift amounts. We apologize for any errors. Please contact Development Director Tiffany K. Nagel or Development Manager Miriam Worth at artcenterdevelopment@desmoinesartcenter.org or 515.271.0338 or to inform us of any changes or omissions.
A family enjoys Nick Cave’s Rescue, 2013, in the Black Stories exhibition.
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Denise Hague Director of Human Resources

The names on this list represent staff employed at the Art Center as of December 31, 2020.

Kate, a security officer on duty in the Kuro Black 20 Years exhibition shortly before the museum closed on March 17 because of the pandemic. The staff swiftly shifted to virtual connections with members and the community and development of plans for a safe reopening on July 7.

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Extensive wayfinding routes, signage, and visual messages helped create a safe environment so visitors could return to the galleries in person. This clever rendition of the Art Center's John Singer Sargent painting, *Portraits de M.E.P. ... et de Mlle L.P. (Portraits of Edouard and Marie-Louise Pailleron)*, was created by Applied Art & Technology to remind visitors of the importance of six foot social distancing.