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For Immediate Release

Contact: Amy Day

Tel: 515.612.0775 (m)

E-mail: aday@desmoinesartcenter.org

Des Moines Art Center Receives Highest National Recognition

Awarded Re-Accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums

DES MOINES, IA (November 2022) – The Des Moines Art Center has again achieved accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums, the highest national recognition afforded to the nation’s museums. Accreditation signifies excellence to the museum community, to governments, funders, outside agencies, and to the museum-going public. All museums must undergo a reaccreditation review at least every 10 years to maintain accredited status.

Alliance Accreditation brings national recognition to a museum for its commitment to excellence, accountability, high professional standards, and continued institutional improvement. Developed and sustained by museum professionals for 50 years, the Alliance’s museum accreditation program is the field’s primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation, and public accountability. It strengthens the museum profession by promoting practices that enable leaders to make informed decisions, allocate resources wisely, and remain financially and ethically accountable in order to provide the best possible service to the public.

According to John and Mary Pappajohn Director Jeff Fleming, “Accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums is an outward recognition of the leadership of our board of directors and the dedication of many extraordinary Art Center staff members who carry out our mission to provide transformational art experiences for our community every day.”

Accreditation is a very rigorous but highly rewarding process that examines all aspects of a museum’s operations. To earn accreditation a museum first must conduct a year of self-study, and then undergo a site visit by a team of peer reviewers. AAM’s Accreditation Commission, an independent and autonomous body of museum professionals, considers the self-study and visiting committee report to determine whether a museum should receive accreditation.

“Accredited museums are a community of institutions that have chosen to hold themselves publicly accountable to excellence,” said Laura L. Lott, Alliance President and CEO. “Accreditation is clearly a



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significant achievement, of which both the institutions and the communities they serve can be extremely proud.”

About the Des Moines Art Center + John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park

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 19th 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. General admission to the museum is always free for all.

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, 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.

About the American Alliance of Museums

The American Alliance of Museums has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. Representing more than 35,000 individual museum professionals and volunteers, institutions, and corporate partners serving the museum field, the Alliance stands for the broad scope of the museum community. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org.

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