DE/ MOINE/ ART CENTER

75

1948-2023

M A Y J U L J U L

2023

INTRODUCING Dr. Kelly Baum

write this, my first introduction to the Art Center's printed newsletter, from New York, where I'm currently finishing my tenure as The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Cynthia Hazen Polsky and Leon Polsky Curator of Contemporary Art. On May 1, right around the time you are reading this, I will have assumed the title of John and Mary Pappajohn Director. My arrival coincides with the Art Center's 75th Anniversary, an auspicious moment equally suited to reflecting on the past and pondering the future. There is immense promise and possibility at the Art Center. Thanks to excellent leadership, exceptional staff, and committed trustees, donors, and members, the institution's potential is limitless. As the Art Center's twelfth director. I follow a storied line of visionaries, most recently my distinguished predecessor, Jeff Fleming, each of whom made unique contributions to the institution. I aim for my own impact on the Art Center to be as distinctive and meaningful as theirs.

The future direction of the Art Center is a discussion in the making: there is much learning to be done and many conversations to be had. That said, I come to the institution with a set of priorities and aspirations forged over the last 23 years while working as a curator at museums big and small, civic and university, in Texas, New Jersey, and New York. Along the way, I have been consistently challenged by the many artists whose work I have had the privilege of studying, collecting, and exhibiting. As such, teaching and mentorship are fundamental to my identity. I am an advocate for incoming generations of world-changing professionals, arts or otherwise. I am also devoted to big thinking. I believe our approach to art should be as bold, rigorous, and exciting as the recently installed Huma Bhabha sculpture in the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park (PAGE 23), and as the exhibition *Underneath Everything* that opens on June 2. In keeping with the spirit of shows such as 75 Years of lowa Art. moreover, it's important to situate the local in relationship to the regional, national, and international:



John and Mary Pappajohn Director Dr. Kelly Baum

we should bring the world to lowa just as we bring lowa to the world. I'm committed to leading with excellence and ethics as well. Every decision we make, from how we welcome visitors into the galleries to what works of art we acquire to how we operate as an institution, should reflect the world in which we'd like to live. Last but not least, I want the Art Center — myself included — to bring self-awareness to our every endeavor: how can we do better, listen more, empower new perspectives, and reach ever widening circles of people?

Above all, we are for and of the people of Des Moines, a fact built into the Art Center's history and reflected in exceptional projects and programs like the spring 2023 Community Access exhibitions, this season's slate of summer art camps, the communitywide anniversary picnic planned for the lawn on August 19, and, finally, the 2023 gala "Avant Garden," a nod to the avant-garde character of so much of the art we hold in trust. The Art Center is great because the city and people of Des Moines are great: we thrive and excel together. I'm honored to have been entrusted with the task of leading the Art Center into the next decades of the 21st century, and I move into my role as John and Mary Pappajohn Director with a sense of anticipation and excitement, as mindful of the institution's past as I am ambitious for its future.

DR. KELLY BAUM | JOHN AND MARY PAPPAJOHN DIRECTOR

75TH ANNIVERSARY COMMUNITY PICNIC

Saturday, August 19 / 11 am – 3 pm Des Moines Art Center and grounds (rain or shine)

When the Des Moines Art Center opened its doors in 1948, one of the first celebratory events was a joyful picnic on the museum lawn. Acclaimed architect Eliel Saarinen joined the fête and is pictured below dressed for the occasion carrying a slice of cake.

Our community came together, galvanized by a curiosity to experience the modern spaces and treasures of the new museum. Seventy-five years later, the awe and inspiration of the Art Center endures. We invite you to a free community picnic as we remember the past with a touch of nostalgia and embrace the future with an eye toward innovation.

We invite you to join us for a day of old-fashioned games, live music, hands-on studio experiences, food trucks, and, of course, celebratory cake!





NEW BOOK CELEBRATES THE PAPPAJOHN SCULPTURE PARK

As part of the Art Center's 75th anniversary celebrations, we are thrilled to announce the publication of a new collections catalog showcasing the works of art installed in the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park.

Dedicated in honor of the late Mary Pappajohn, the 144-page catalog features multiple color images of 32 sculptures by 26 internationally acclaimed artists, as well as essays by ten writers from around the country. The cover features Olafur Eliasson's 2013 *Panoramic awareness pavilion*.

"After 13 years, this park has transformed the cultural and economic landscape of the city of Des Moines and has become one of the most significant sculpture parks in the country."

JEFF FLEMING, RECENTLY RETIRED
JOHN AND MARY PAPPAJOHN DIRECTOR

Designed by Connie Wilson and edited by Lea Rosson DeLong, the book features photography by Cameron Campbell, with select photos by Rich Sanders, Jim Zeller, and others. A special feature of the book is a fold-out, aerial view of the park by Nathan Scott Photography. The Art Center extends a special thank you to honorary trustee, Mike Simonson, who generously provided the funds for this project. The book is available in the Museum Shop at the Art Center.

STUDIO ARTS PROGRAM BUILT ON A FOUNDATION **OF CLAY SINCE 1948**

ur upcoming exhibition Underneath Everything [PAGE 6] features clay as the building block of all creation. In much the same way, ceramics classes at the Art Center have been a foundational part of the studio experience. As early as 1949, just one year after opening, the Des Moines Register printed an article about ceramics instructor William E. Ross who was also the subject of an exhibition dedicated to clay in that same year. All of the pieces in Ross' exhibition were produced in Des Moines using the soil and vegetation of Iowa.

"From the clay and glazes in Iowa is to be found something that is unique; it will have an individuality never found elsewhere."

WILLIAM E. ROSS | DES MOINES REGISTER, MARCH 1949

Seventy-four years later, ceramics is still one of the most popular and widely requested classes offered by the Studio Department. In anticipation of the Underneath Everything exhibition, we sat down with resident ceramics expert, Studio Arts Manager Chuck Purviance, who has been working and teaching in the medium for 15 years.

Published in March 1949, the year after the Art Center opened, this newspaper clipping, written by Des Moines Register art critic George Shane, reviews an exhibition of ceramics by William E. Ross, one of the Art Center's original ceramics instructors.



Studio Arts Manager Chuck Purviance

ART CENTER: Introduce yourself to our readers and tell us a little about your background.

CHUCK PURVIANCE: Originally from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, I hold a BFA in ceramics from Edinboro University and an MFA in ceramics from Wichita State University. In between my undergraduate and graduate work, I was the studio arts manager at Brockway Center for Arts and Technology, overseeing the ceramics department, K-12th grade programming, and a teen after school program.

AC: What drew you to ceramics?

CP: I was about to be kicked out of community college for poor grades when an academic advisor said I needed to take something I could pass. That is when I met Judy Campbell who became my first mentor. She was so excited about clay and its endless possibilities, how communal the work is, and its history. It became addictive. Judy and clay became a positive part of my life when I felt lost.

AC: What do you enjoy about teaching ceramics?

CP: Seeing the 'ah-ha' moments with students might be the best — when their lumps of clay start to take shape and their excitement comes into focus.



The Art Center goes through an average of 7.000 pounds of new clay a year.

AC: Why do you think ceramics is a popular class?

CP: Clay is a humbling material. It connects people from the past to the present with its rich history. We are using the same dirt that has been used since the dawn of time: from kings and queens of old decorating their lavish lifestyle with the finest porcelains to modern day coffee drinkers whose favorite mug reminds them of a special memory.

AC: What would people be surprised to learn about clay?

CP: Ceramics has a strong foothold in the world of tech and scientific advancement. Ceramics is the cornerstone of aerospace and electronics engineering and is found in virtually every area of modern technology, including oxygen sensors, fuel cells, and our cell phone screens.

AC: What final thought do you want to leave our readers with?

CP: You are never too old, young, or unskilled to get into art making. Whatever mediums speak to you, there are ways to learn their mysteries and make them your own.

Expert Uses Clay of Iowa In Ceramics

By George Shane. (The Register's Art Critic.)

Ceramics is an art which is appreciated widely, and also enjoys growing participation on the part

of a large num-

Moines people. It provides a perfect fusion of the desire to works in crafts and the urge to produce work in harmony with the higher forms of esthetic expression.

An example of the high quality which this

art is receiving here in Des Moines is found in an exhibition which has just opened at the Des Moines Art center.

Native Materials.

It is work by William E. Ross, William ceramics instructor at the Des Moines Art center, All of it has been produced in Des Moines and almost all of the materials used in the plates, vases, pitchers and other objects in the exhibition are from the soil and vegetation of

In developing the popular ceramics division at the Art center, 20 Ross has stressed the use of native materials. There is a distinctive quality of color and hue in the materials of any given region.

From the clay and glazes in Towa is to be found something that is unique; it will have an individuality never found elsewhere,

In study with his students, and in his own creative work, Ross is seeklyg out those beauties inherent in the materials which lowa offerst: 1 1

The work-in his

Des Moines Art Center

Located in Greenwood park at Polk blvd and Grand ave. Gallery Exhibitions An exhibition of work in ceramics William Ross; ceramics instructor at the Angegenter, until App exhibition of Indonesian are from the Royal Indies, institute, sterdam, The Netherlands, including textiles, and other wor the Dutch East Indies through March; exhibition of drawing Margaret Britton, Art center instructor, until Mar. 27; Rene Koen collection of paintings, until Apr. 3. Gallery op

UNDERNEATH EVERYTHING:

HUMILITY AND GRANDEUR IN CONTEMPORARY CERAMICS

"Clay is the humblest of materials, it is underneath everything... You can manipulate a world with clay." THEASTER GATES

n a virtual artist talk at the Des Moines Art Center in December 2021, Theaster Gates evoked a fascinating paradox in contemporary ceramics practice. Clay is the humblest of materials, often overlooked and more readily associated with a morning cup of coffee than the international art world. But it is underneath everything; there is an expansiveness to work made or based in this medium, as artists today push the limitations of clay, attaching layers of conceptual meaning and playing with the boundaries between ceramics and other media including film, photography, painting, performance, and installation. This exhibition features artworks that navigate this tension, honoring the humility of the medium while simultaneously evoking a sense of grandeur and possibility. Organized to coincide with the Art Center's 75th anniversary, *Underneath Everything* celebrates a robust ceramics tradition in lowa, featuring work by artists with local connections alongside those working nationally and internationally. This exhibition draws out several themes across these practitioners' work, including reevaluations of history and traditional forms and techniques; the vessel as metaphor; clay's relationship to the body; and commentaries on race, gender, land use, and other pressing social justice issues.

Underneath Everything is organized by Associate Curator Mia Laufer in consultation with an Artist Advisory Committee that includes Katayoun Amjadi, Donté K. Hayes, Ingrid Lilligren, and Chuck Purviance. The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalog with essays by Laufer, Dr. Glenn Adamson, and Dr. Tiffany Momon.



Theaster Gates (American, born 1973)

Vessel #19, 2020

High fired stoneware with glaze, custom-made plinth

Purchased with funds from the Coffin Fine Arts Trust; Nathan

Emory Coffin Collection of the Des Moines Art Center, 2021.4.a-.c

OPENING CELEBRATION

Friday, June 2, 2023 | 5 – 7 pm Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and refreshments by Tangerine at the Art Center

For additional programming visit desmoinesartcenter.org and subscribe to our weekly newsletter.

"Clay is inherently political material. It is the essence of land — earth."

VICK QUEZADA



FEATURED ARTISTS AI WEIWEI KATAYOUN AMJADI ELIZA AU SALLY BINARD PAUL BRIGGS CANDICE J. DAVIS EDMUND DE WAAL, CBE THEASTER GATES DONTÉ K. HAYES SIMONE LEIGH INGRID LILLIGREN CANNUPA HANSKA LUGER ANINA MAJOR HEIDI MCKENZIE MAGDALENE A. N. ODUNDO, DBE VICK QUEZADA IBRAHIM SAID RAE STERN EHREN TOOL



ABOVE

Sally Binard (American, born 1973)

Oil, acrylic, and hand-thrown earthenware pots on wood

Private Collection

RIGHT

Anina Major (Bahamian, born 1981) Guard, 2014 Digital photograph in lightbox Courtesy of the artist

ABOVE RIGHT

Magdalene A.N. Odundo, DBE (Kenyan, born 1950) Vessel (Untitled), 2009 Multi-fired red clay

Krannert Art Museum at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Richard M. and Rosann Gelvir Noel Fund, 2010-3-1



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"I've always equated clay with the humanity that's within us, fragile like our bodies. It can tip over. You have it on its toes, but if you push just slightly on the wrong pivot, it will break your heart." MAGDALENE A.N. ODUNDO, DBE



ABOVE

Ai Weiwei (Chinese, born 1957)

Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds), 2009

Hand-painted porcelain

Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;

Purchased with funds from the Edmundson

Art Foundation, Inc., 2012.76

OPPOSITE

Cannupa Hanska Luger (Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara and Lakota, born 1979) Every One, 2018 Over 4,000 ceramic clay beads created in collaboration with hundreds of communities across the US and Canada Courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York



REMBRANDT & HIS WORLD
THROUGH AUGUST 27, 2023
JOHN BRADY PRINT GALLERY
ORGANIZED BY ASSOCIATE CURATOR MIA LAUFER
AND CURATORIAL INTERN NAJLA EVANS

Highlighting some of the oldest works in the Art Center collections

REMBRANDT & HIS WORLD

The Art Center permanent collections contain approximately 3,000 works on paper. This group of objects is a significant, but lesser known aspect of the museum's holdings. The collection spans eight centuries and ranges from 14th century manuscript pages and 15th century prints to contemporary artworks.

When the Art Center opened its doors in 1948, a group of about 100 works—transferred from the Des Moines Fine Arts Association—formed the nucleus of the collection. From the beginning the Art Center founders planned to collect works of art on paper from all periods. In fact, the primary focus on contemporary art began in the 1970s and 1980s under the leadership of Director James Demetrion. The Art Center's collection of works on paper is a product of generous donors and targeted collecting by knowledgable directors and curators, including Amy N. Worthen, curator of prints, for 20 years.

This exhibition showcases many of the Art Center's oldest works on paper. When asked what she thought about discovering these pieces in the collection, Associate Curator Mia Laufer replied that she was "surprised and delighted. Most of the time these older works are used in thematic exhibitions to provide historical context for the modern and contemporary works that are the main focus of the museum. With Rembrandt and His World, I wanted to refocus our attention on these incredible works of art and think about what they say about their own moment in history."



Jan Both (Dutch, ca, 1618–1652)

The Ox-Cart, View between Ancona and Sinigaglia, from the series "The Upright Italian Landscapes," 1644–1652

Etching on paper

Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections: Purchased with

funds from the Edmundson Art Foundation, Inc., 1950.10

GALLERY TALK WITH ASSOCIATE CURATOR MIA LAUFER

Sunday, May 21 | 1:30 pm John Brady Print Gallery Free | No reservation required



Rembrandt van Rijn (Dutch, 1606 – 1669)

Abraham and Isaac, 1645

Etching on paper

Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Purchased with funds from the Edmundson Art Foundation, Inc., 1950.142

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CONTINUING EXHIBITION THROUGH MAY 7, 2023 ANNA K. MEREDITH GALLERY AND THROUGHOUT THE MUSEUM ORGANIZED BY SENIOR CURATOR LAURA BURKHALTER AND ASSOCIATE CURATOR MIA LAUFER



ART CENTER: 75 YEARS OF IOWA ART

This exhibition presents a wide spectrum of art covering more than 100 years of artmaking with approximately 100 works, all by artists who have had a connection to lowa during the 75 years of this institution.

"Visiting the exhibition was such an energizing experience for me and my students. Sometimes people hold the assumption that life in Iowa is not worth documenting or is mundane in some way, but the artwork featured in 75 Years of lowa Art demonstrates the wide variety of unique experiences and perspectives that have existed in our state throughout history. My students were pleasantly surprised by the diverse materials used and subject matter featured, which prompted them to think more deeply about what "home" means to them."

RYAN KONING

VISUAL ARTS EDUCATOR | DES MOINES EAST HIGH SCHOOL

CONTINUING EXHIBITION THROUGHOUT 2023 BLANK ONE GALLERY ORGANIZED BY MUSEUM EDUCATOR MIA BUCH, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION JILL FEATHERSTONE, AND GRAPHIC DESIGNER CONNIE WILSON

MAKING THE ART CENTER

1948-2023

The Blank Gallery is brimming with nostalgia, sharing a bit of history with visitors all year in celebration of the Art Center's 75th Anniversary. Photos, documents, fun facts, and bits of ephemera uncovered in the archives tell the stories of the people, the artwork, the architecture, and some behind-the-scenes events that shaped this special place into the world-renowned institution that we know today.

The final pieces of a timeline are installed and the exhibition is ready for visitors to discover.





to learn that Edward Hopper's Automat was part of the Making the Art Center exhibition which was still under construction. However, when Senior Director of Education and Interpretation Jill Featherstone heard what they were looking for, she quickly gave them an impromptu tour of the exhibition and made sure they got to view Automat before heading home.

"Collaborating on this exhibition was in many ways a walk down memory lane and simultaneously a surprising archeological dig. Having the privilege of working with this institution for 34 years, I was familiar with much of what is in this room, however it was the new discoveries that were so much fun. I have such appreciation for the vision of the people who, from the beginning, acted with equal consideration for the quality of the museum and for the importance of the connection to this community.

The decisions that were made along the way — from the artwork that formed the early collection, to the choice of architects, to the mandate that education be a core part of the Art Center - in retrospect seem uncannily insightful and brilliant."

CONNIE WILSON | GRAPHIC DESIGNER SINCE 1989

Visitors are invited to share their stories and memories of this institution in a comment book in the gallery.

WORKS RECENTLY ACCESSIONED INTO THE ART CENTER COLLECTIONS

ROBERT CARSTON ARNESON

This nine-color lithograph, titled *General Nuke*, by noted Bay Area artist Robert Arneson is highly illustrative of the artist's body of work, especially his prints. It was printed by Landfall Press in 1986 in an edition of 25. This work references the tensions between the United States and Russia at the time it was produced and presents an anti-nuclear war statement. Arneson created the character General Nuke with a huge missile-like nose to express the absurdity of the nuclear arms race. In 1984, he created a major ceramic sculpture of General Nuke as well.

Arneson began his career as a functional potter but he quickly moved to creating sculptures in clay, as well as works on paper. His irreverent, humorous, and self-deprecating work was hugely influential with West Coast artists. He, along with the artist William Wiley, were the founders of the Funk Art Movement. Likewise, he, along with Peter Voulkos, helped to move clay out of the realm of craft into fine art.

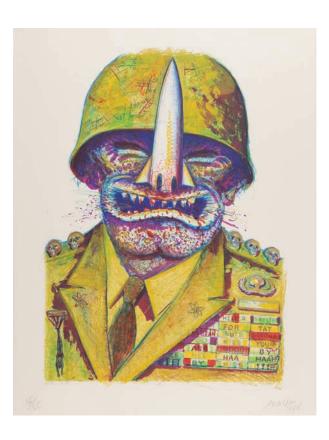
Arneson's work is found in many museum collections around the world, such as the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Hirshhorn Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, among many others. The Art Institute of Chicago and MoMA each own an impression from the edition of this print. The Art Center currently holds 10 works by the artist, including two significant clay sculptures.

RIGHT
Robert Carston Arneson (American, 1930–1992)
General Nuke, 1986
Lithograph with hand-coloring on paper
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of Sheila and Kent Mauck. 2023.13

HANS BREDER

Hans Breder was born in Germany but came to the United States in 1964. He later taught at the University of lowa where he created the Intermedia and Video Art Program, one of the first of its kind in the nation and one of the most influential programs of its time. The program's goals were to expand beyond the traditional ways of teaching and the concept of artmaking, particularly by encouraging students to work in various types of media and fostering the growth of performance and conceptual art.

Not only was Breder one of the most influential teachers of his generation, but he was also an accomplished artist whose work has been collected and exhibited by prestigious institutions around the world. "Body/Sculptures" is his signature series of works, using performers and mirrors to create living, abstract sculptures that exist only briefly but could be captured with photography. These images, taken



in Mexico and Iowa City, likely feature the celebrated artist Ana Mendieta, who was his partner at the time. The Art Center has exhibited Breder's work multiple times, however this is the first time his work has entered the collections. Eleven works (eight photos

and three drawings) were gifted by his estate.



Hans Breder (American, born Germany, 1937 – 2017) *La Ventosa, Mexico*, from the series "Body/Sculptures" 1973

Gelatin silver print

Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of the Estate of Hans and Barbara Welch Breder, 2023 5



BERLINDE DE BRUYCKERE

Berlinde de Bruyckere is a contemporary Belgian artist whose work explores vulnerability, fragility, and mortality. While her works can evoke difficult and complex emotions, they are intended to inspire hope and introspection as we consider the profound nature of existence. Her materials — wax, animal hides, wood, and textiles, reflect her thematic interests.

Lost III, one of many horses the artist has portrayed over time, was inspired by art historical depictions of the horse throughout centuries of art and by the events of World War I. De Bruyckere's native Belgium saw some of the worst violence and loss of life during that conflict in which as many horses were killed as humans.

As in all of her works that use horse hides, this horse died of natural causes. Unlike traditional taxidermy, the hide is placed over a wax form and there is no attempt to recreate a living horse. Instead, the work is a somber reminder of its life.

De Bruyckere's work has been exhibited and collected at prestigious institutions around the world, and in 2013 she represented Belgium at the Venice Biennale.

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THE PAPPAJOHN SCULPTURE PARK WELCOMES A NEW PIECE BY HUMA BHABHA

"It is a special privilege to announce a new addition to the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park. Funds for the purchase of this new sculpture by Huma Bhabha were given by John Pappajohn in memory of his wife, Mary Pappajohn. This work is a fitting tribute to a marvelous lady, and the entire Art Center community is pleased that we can honor her in this way."

RECENTLY RETIRED JOHN AND MARY PAPPAJOHN DIRECTOR

JEFF FLEMING

The latest addition to the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park is a towering bronze sculpture entitled, Even Stones Have Eyes, 2023, by Pakistani-American artist, Huma Bhabha. Bhabha's forms appear as ancient as they do contemporary. She simultaneously draws from past representations of the human figure, such as Paleolithic, Egyptian, or classical sculptures of ancient Greece, as well as imagery taken from today's cartoons, horror films, and science-fiction. Archaic

Greek Kouros figures that portray the capacity for

movement, the physicality of August Rodin's hand-

carved and modeled production methods, and the

eerie visual quality of films such as *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951) are influential models and sources.

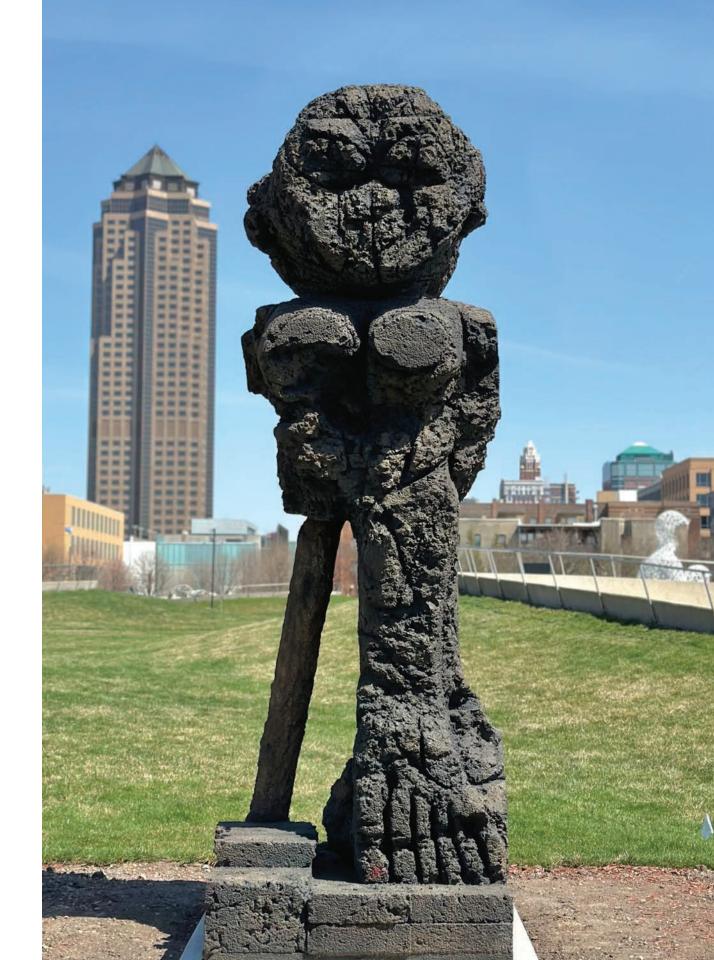
Additionally, Bhabha's use of found materials in her creative process finds precedence in the artwork of Modern artists, such as Pablo Picasso and Robert Rauschenberg, and lends her sculpture a battlescarred aura. Her unsettling monsters and aliens speak to the concept of displacement and disillusionment derived from the region of her birth, where, as she has stated, "cities can look like archeological digs," because of war. This drama is heightened by her disquieting blend of abstraction and figuration, one merging seamlessly into the other.

In this 12-foot-high bronze sculpture, Bhabha positions a female figure with a missing arm and a peg leg as a monumentalized giant. The oddities of the figure, especially its exaggerations, may evoke humor which aides in humanizing her monster and providing an avenue of access otherwise denied the viewer. The work could also be perceived as having several faces, like the Roman god Janus; these various "fronts" or facades require viewing from multiple angles. The mythological Janus also exhibited dualities, such as life and death, beginnings and endings, entrances and exits, and was often seen as the god of doorways. This is a fitting metaphor for a figure in which we question whether it is the aggressor or the victim.

Bhabha's process of creating a work is spontaneous and rapid. For example, she does not sketch out a sculpture before beginning. Bhabha first manipulates and carves Styrofoam or cork, which she may combine with other found materials to create a figure. She then casts this form in bronze and often paints it or adds a colored patina. The dark patina on *Even Stones Have Eyes* gives the impression of rust and age, which aids in its bearing as an ancient as well as a contemporary object.

Born in Karachi, Pakistan, Bhabha came to the United States to study at the Rhode Island School of Design, as well as Columbia University, where she earned an MFA in 1989. She has had equally monumental works exhibited on the roof garden of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and on the National Mall in Washington D.C. at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. Funds for this purchase were provided by John Pappajohn in memory of Mary Pappajohn.

Huma Bhabha (Pakistani, born 1962) Even Stones Have Eyes, 2023 Bronze / Height: 12 feet Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Purchased with funds from John Pappajohn in memory of Mary Pappajohn, 2023.19



During this 75th anniversary, when looking back over the years at what makes this institution a destination for so many, its collection of architecture is, for many, as important a consideration as the art within its walls.

AN ARCHITECTURAL TRILOGY

Since its humble beginnings in the early part of the 20th century, the Art Center has developed into an internationally recognized institution. Beginning as the Des Moines Association of Fine Arts in 1916, it operated out of the turn-of-the-century Beaux Artsstyle Main Library building on the banks of the Des Moines River in downtown Des Moines that now houses the World Food Prize. In 1938 it moved to a gallery at 610 1/2 Walnut Street.

A freestanding museum became possible with a bequest from James D. Edmundson, a real-estate investor and scholar, who believed that art should be made accessible to all people. At the time of his death in 1933, a trust worth more than half a million dollars was established with the stipulation that the money be held for 10 years in the hope that the assets would recover from the Depression. They did, and in 1943, leading citizens of Des Moines drew up plans for a modern museum of art and an education center.

The public buildings that house the Art Center collections and programs today were designed by three of the most significant architects of the 20th century and reflect a dedication of the institution throughout its history to world-class architectural design. Each architect was hired at a career turning point as their work was coming to the attention of the public.

A pivotal moment in the Art Center's architectural history occurs on March 22, 1945 when the institution's trustees accepted Saarinen's fourth and final proposal for the design of the building. The design fee was \$2,500 plus \$1,200 for five site visits.

The second Art Center architect, the Chinese-American I. M. Pei, won a highly competitive commission in Washington with his design for the East Building of the National Gallery of Art, just as his addition to the Art Center was being completed. Finally, in 1985, the third building by Richard Meier stands in sharp contrast to both the horizontality of Saarinen and the humility of Pei

Two of the architects for the Art Center were early winners of the most prestigious international award for architects, the Pritzker Prize, established in 1979: Pei, who won in 1983, and Meier, in 1984.

1948 ELIEL SAARINEN

Some of the most influential architectural proposals in American history have been for buildings that were never realized. One such proposal is Finnish-American Eliel Saarinen's 1939 winning competition entry for the Smithsonian Gallery of Art — never constructed due to Congressional failure to fund the project. Saarinen's work was brought to the Art Center founders' attention when the never-realized plan drawings were shown in a 1938 exhibition at the Des Moines Association of Fine Arts Gallery, and led directly to his Art Center commission. Saarinen, 72 years old, was an internationally renowned figure, widely recognized earlier in the century in his native Finland and became more well known during the years that followed his immigration to the United States in 1923.

The Des Moines Art Center is the clear offspring of Saarinen's groundbreaking Smithsonian proposal in that both emphasize a harmonious relationship to their site. In addition, both designs feature low stone masses that hug the ground, with a courtyard focusing on a reflecting pool (both including a proposed sculpture by Carl Milles) and beyond to open space. Saarinen's insistence on the connection of his architecture to its surroundings was furthered in both designs by the view afforded from the courtyard: to the National Mall in the case of the Smithsonian, and to Greenwood Park in the case of the Des Moines Art Center.

Saarinen's building utilizes a warm limestone cladding quarried in Wisconsin known as Lannon stone. The stone is rough-cut and laid in a random pattern for the exterior walls, with an elongation and

refinement of the stone at the moment where the walls meet the sky or where visitors enter the building. Along the public front the building is quite solid, pierced by the transparent entry's walls and canopy which sweep outwards to welcome visitors. The mass of the building unfurls across the site enclosing a dramatic courtyard which, before 1968, opened southward to the rose garden over a tranquil reflecting pool.

Saarinen's vision for the facility always balanced the physical prominence of the site with the cultural status of the building, protecting the integrity of each. Upon its completion in 1948, it represented innovation in American museum design as well as a new type of institution — a blend of museum and education center—an Art Center.

LOWER CENTER Eliel Saarinen Lannon stone entrance and the Education wing on the left. Photo: Rich Sanders.

LOWER RIGHT The Art Center lobby on opening day, 1948.

BELOW Early 1950s view of the the current W. T. and Edna Dahl Gallery which now connects on the south end to the I. M. Pei building.





1968 I. M. PEI

When the trustees of the Des Moines Art Center selected I. M. Pei to design an addition to the building in 1966, their choice was one of deference to the architectural integrity of Saarinen's building. The assignment from the trustees was daunting: to provide space for the display of monumental sculpture, with gallery heights as much as twice those of the existing building. In addition, there was need for a larger auditorium to serve an increasing audience. These demands risked a new building which would tower over the Saarinen, creating an aesthetic conflict between the low natural masses of the original building and the more severe forms for which Pei was becoming famous.

To resolve this conflict, Pei utilized the topography of the site, which slopes down southward from Saarinen's open courtyard. By nestling the large volumes of his building against this slope, he could match the height of his building to that of the Saarinen galleries and close the courtyard with a glazed sculptural facade and a new reflecting pool. Only the largely transparent butterfly roof of his new gallery would soar above this height.

The materials of the new building would simultaneously challenge and accept the existing materials' palette. Saarinen's natural stone cladding would be juxtaposed against the concrete walls of Pei's design. The new walls, however, would be bush-hammered, roughening the crystalline concrete volumes and also revealing the larger Lannon stone aggregate within the concrete, thus giving the new walls a visual connection to the older cut-stone walls.

BELOW Pei building during construction circa 1967, shows how I. M. Pei dug into the site so that his building, even though it was two stories high, would nestle down into the land and be barely visible over the existing Saarinen galleries.

BELOW CENTER A view of the completed building which offers those inside a lovely view of the surrounding Greenwood Park. Photo: Paul Crosby

The dominant effect of the completed building is largely interior, a play of solid and void, enclosure and release, lightness and mass. The newly enclosed courtyard is simultaneously a harmonious volume and a juxtaposition of the solidity of the Saarinen building and the sculptural playfulness of Pei. Entering the soaring upper gallery from narrow halls on east and west, the visitor is offered a breathtaking spatial experience. The concrete "wings" of the butterfly roof hover overhead, opening to admit abundant natural light which cascades over the roughened concrete walls. Across the expanse of the upper gallery, the lower gallery opens downward and outward to views of the Greenwood Park Rose Garden. This eloquent and masterful building, completed in 1968, profoundly enhanced the Art Center while respecting the materials' palette and scale of the original Saarinen building. Upon its completion, the addition was almost invisible from Grand Avenue. The Pei building extended the institution's reputation for commissioning only the most talented contemporary architects, working at the top of their game.



TOP The concrete "wings" of the butterfly roof overhead admit abundant natural light which cascades over the roughened concrete walls. Photo: Paul Crosby ABOVE In addition to space for much larger works of art, the new Pei building included a new 200+ seat auditorium. Photo: Steve Hall

LEFT The Pei building created a newly enclosed courtyard where the two buildings meet. With the addition of the Richard Meier café in 1985, this became the convergent point where visitors can experience all three buildings simultaneously. Photo: Rich Sanders

Sunlight and shadow fall in pools and shadows that dramatize works without overpowering them, almost as if Pei had not only shaped the architecture but stagelighted its content so they are 'performers' in a brightly unified theatrical production.

EMILY GENAUER | "TWO DAZZLING SHOWCASES FOR ART IN IOWA," DES MOINES SUNDAY REGISTER, JUNE 15, 1969

1985 RICHARD MEIER

As the permanent collections of the Art Center grew and began to include very large-scaled contemporary works, the need for exhibition space especially suited to these works became clear.

In 1982, five internationally prominent architects were invited to a competition to design the next building for the Art Center. In addition to providing more space, the members of the building committee saw this project as an opportunity to reposition the relationship between the institution and the community. Richard Meier's winning approach would increase the visibility of the museum in parallel with its increasing cultural visibility.

Meier's building is an extroverted sculptural form against the backdrop of both the existing building and the natural site. The porcelain-coated metal panels defy the elements, and the sensuous massing contradicts the long-held belief that museum and gallery design should be subservient to the art housed within. The Meier building is both more complex and pragmatic than it may at first appear. It is composed of three parts: an iconic pavilion pushed out to Grand Avenue with permanent collections and temporary exhibition galleries, a courtyard restaurant, and a service area on

BELOW Meier's iconic white porcelain-covered metal building sits in graphic contrast to the natural materials of the previous buildings and the site. Photo: Rich Sanders

the west. This division allows for seamless functioning of the facility and keeps the scale of these parts in balance with the earlier buildings. In addition, the courtyard restaurant creates a fascinating conversation between the work of three architectural masters. The Meier is the foil to Saarinen and Pei, setting up a tension between architecture as background or foreground, gallery as neutral or dynamic, building and site in harmony or in contrary juxtaposition. In their totality, the buildings of the Des Moines Art Center create an experience that is unmatched.

TIM HICKMAN | PRINCIPAL, SUBSTANCE ARCHITECTURE



The Meier addition sits boldly upon the landscape, daring passers-by on Grand Avenue to take note. The three levels of new gallery space are an ingenious blend of large and small viewing areas—harmonious and yet with enough surprise to keep one wondering what's coming at the next turn. The walls, polished hardwood floors, and the wise use of windows and skylights create dazzling effects—enhancing the sense of space and light that is a hallmark of Meier's work.

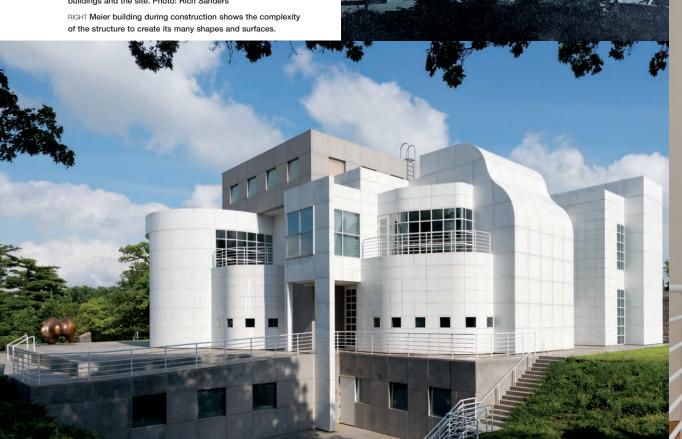
DEBBIE FELTON AND CHARLES W. ROBERTS,
"THE DES MOINES ART CENTER," THE IOWAN, WINTER ISSUE, 1986

ABOVE LEFT An extention from the Meier building connects the three buildings around the reflecting pond and creates the cafe.

LEFT The three-story atrium offers a multitude of installation opportunities. Shown here is Heeseop Yoon's *Still Life Chandelier*, 2017. Photo by Rich Sanders

BELOW The three-story curved stairway offers multiple views of the atrium space.

Photo: Steve Hall



CONNECTING TO THE COMMUNITY





BEING WITH ART TOGETHER

In partnership with the MercyOne Richard Deming Cancer Center's Integrative Medicine program, the Des Moines Art Center offers quarterly meditative art looking tours in the museum. This program titled Being with Art Together invites community members impacted by cancer, and their families, to guided experiences that leverage art, the museum, and their shared experiences as a form of healing.

"Art looking has a wonderful way of being both relaxing and challenging. It provides a special form of tuning out while tuning in. A lot of people don't know how much they enjoy looking at art with others. It is such a positive way to connect, and having artwork as a focus makes meditation easier," says program facilitator Mia Buch.

"Our tours of the Art Center have been unexpected, surprising experiences. We have come away saying it was a time of quiet reflection and enrichment and nice to do as a family. This is a gift for cancer survivors."

BEING WITH ART TOGETHER PARTICIPANT

Join an upcoming Being with Art Together program:

Thursday, May 18 / 5:30 – 6:30 pm Thursday, October 5 / 5:30 – 6:30 pm

Being with Art Together is free and open to anyone impacted by cancer. Please reach out to Museum Educator Mia Buch with any questions at mbuch@desmoinesartcenter.org.



Juan, a student in the My Voice program from Findley Elementary School gets inspired in the galleries.

MY VOICE

The Art Center's *My Voice* program is wrapping up a second year of tours, inspiration, and celebration with 12 creative students from Des Moines Public Schools. When viewing the completed artworks created by *My Voice* participants, ages 8–17, their talent is visible, but the journey is where the real magic happens.

"These students are getting a priceless experience; they are led through the Art Center's collections several times and given space and time to really consume the art, ask questions, make observations, and let themselves be moved and inspired," shares By Degrees Educator Billy Kirby.

This inspiration is encouraged and supported by Art Center educators, By Degrees staff, teachers at Findley Elementary, Harding Middle, and North High Schools, and by generous financial support from the Principal® Foundation.

The *My Voice* program seeks to amplify each student's unique perspective and skill.

"They are validated in their viewpoints and then encouraged to 'say something.' That's not something young people are offered every day. This experience will inform their futures and show them that their ideas matter." BILLY KIRBY

Museum visitors can view these student masterpieces by scanning QR codes located next to the pieces that inspired them in the Art Center galleries.

My Voice participants discussing Wangechi Mutu's Water Woman on a guided tour.



COMMUNITY ACCESS IMPACTS WOODWARD ACADEMY

Thanks to support from donors and members, the Art Center's Community Access program has made it possible for students at Woodward Academy to access art instruction for the first time in three years. According to Abigail McLoud, a Woodward Academy education liaison, before this partnership, Woodward students had no way of accessing the essential, therapeutic, and valuable coping skills that art can provide. "I have seen huge shifts in student interest, and kids of all different backgrounds are asking to be a part of this program."

McLoud goes on to say, "Our students are often struggling with their self-worth. It means the world to our students to see people volunteer their time every week. One of the first steps to accepting help is deciding you are worthy of help. Art Center instructors Amberly Dal and Siricasso Garcia make our students feel very worthy. We have students in the program who typically struggle throughout their whole day to make positive choices, but as soon as they sit down in the art room they are kind, courteous, and productive."

"Art Access helped me get out of a dark place, lift my spirit and gave me new coping skills. I use what I have learned when I am writing my music. Art is taking nothing and turning it into something valuable. That is what I am doing with myself right now."

9TH GRADE STUDENT, WOODWARD ACADEMY



"The screen-printing unit has been a favorite of our students. It is amazing to see these kids wearing their own designs, and many of them are now considering careers in screen printing." ABIGAIL MCLOUD, WOODWARD ACADEMY EDUCATION LIAISON



RIGHT AT HOME IN NEW ART CENTER

Des Moines Tribune, June 30, 1948

In 1945, Paul Parker was hired as the director to develop plans for the museum and to prepare for a new Des Moines Art Center building. The excerpt from his plan below illustrates the importance of education as part of the museum's mission from its earliest founding days.

"The very designation of Center implies that the program must have a wide scope and in general provide a maximum number of approaches to the study of art. One approach... calls for exhibitions and collecting - the museum function; another approach is the art school...; the extension program by which the facilities of the Center are made available outside of its physical confines; a vital children's education program; and so on."

LETTER FROM PAUL PARKER TO DING DARLING, PRESIDENT OF THE EDMUNDSON SOCIETY, JUNE 12, 1946



THE TRADITION OF EDUCATION CONTINUES.

SUMMER CLASSES

Youth and adult classes begin June 12. Registration is open.

FALL CLASSES

Fall classes begin September 11. Registration opens during first week of July. **DEVELOPMENT**

GALA CO-CHAIRS

VICTORIA BRENTON ADAM LACKEY

COMMITTEE

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2023 DES MOINES ART CENTER 75TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

A CELEBRATION OF **ART + COMMUNITY IN THE GARDEN**

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2023 **TICKETS ON SALE THIS SPRING**

JUNE 2, 1948 Architect Eliel Saariner joins in a celebratory picnic on opening day of the new Des Moines Art Center.



THE LEGACY OF PRINT CLUB CONTINUES

WHAT IS PRINT CLUB?

Print Club is an Art Center member group ideal for print collectors, printmakers, and anyone curious about printmaking.

Founded in 1981, Print Club encourages the study and appreciation of fine prints. Members directly contribute to the Art Center's collections each year by donating a commissioned print to the Art Center, purchasing an annual gift print, and selecting works on paper from the Art Center collections to undergo conservation treatment.

Print Club is managed by a group of dedicated members in liaison with Art Center staff.

What is included in a Print Club membership?

- First opportunity to purchase commissioned prints at a discount and before sales are open to the public
- Opportunity to vote on annual gift print for the Des Moines Art Center
- Opportunity to vote on a work from the collection to be conserved
- Invitation to four annual Print Club events

How do I join Print Club?

Print Club memberships can be purchased online when you join the Art Center or renew your existing membership. To join or renew mid-cycle, please call the Membership Office at 515.271.0324. Please note: you must have a current Art Center membership in order to become a Print Club member.

Membership levels:

Student | \$15 Individual | \$35 Household | \$50 Benefactor | \$150

This circa 2001 photo of Print Club's annual potluck and program kickoff meeting at the home of Dr. Louis and Lois Fingerman includes many of the organization's founding members including officers: Dick Ward, president; Amy Worthen, vice president; John Huseby, secretary; and Dale Jansen, treasurer.





"Printing is my favorite art form, from printing one-of-a-kind monoprints to the amazing mezzotints, it is an art form all ages and skill levels can enjoy—limited only by one's own imagination.

The Des Moines Art Center's Print Club gives printmaking access to like-minded people and offers activities like collection visits and workshops. You don't need to be an artist or a critic to enjoy the company of others who love printmaking.

I feel very fortunate to have access to the Des Moines Art Center and Print Club. It's good clean fun with a little wine on the side."

VIVIAN DOBSON | PRINT CLUB MEMBER

2023 PRINT CLUB EVENTS

JUNE 24

Thomas C. Jackson's private print collection and Byron Burford at the Cedar Rapids Art Museum

OCTOBER 14

Unveiling of the 2023 commissioned print

NOVEMBER 9

Annual Meeting

DECEMBER 10

Holiday Party

More information about how to join print club is available at desmoinesartcenter.org/printclub.

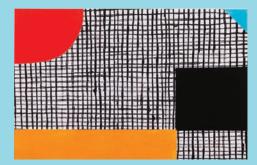
WHAT IS A COMMISSIONED PRINT?

This year the Print Club's 30th commissioned print will be by artist Lari Pittman.

Throughout its history, Print Club has commissioned annual prints by 29 contemporary artists including Cecily Brown, Glenn Brown, Enrique Chagoya, Ann Hamilton, Jun Kaneko, Rita McBride, Jaume Plensa, Martin Puryear, and others.

Each artwork is produced in limited editions of 50 to 60 prints with Print Club members receiving the first opportunity to purchase the prints before sales are open to the public. Revenue from the sale of the prints is used to support the Art Center's print exhibitions and related publications. A copy of each commissioned print is gifted to the Art Center's permanent collections.

A selection of past prints is available in the Museum Shop.



Print Club 2014 Commissioned Print

Jun Kaneko (Japanese, active United States, born 1942) untitled, 2014

Archival pigment print on paper
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of the Des Moines Art Center Print Club, 2014.73



Print Club 2011 Commissioned Print

Dario Robleto (American, born 1972)
The Sky, Once Choked With Stars, Will Slowly
Darken (Nelson) 2011
Archival digital print
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
Gift of the Des Moines Art Center Print Club, 2011.11

MEMBER TRAVEL OPPORTUNITY

Regional trip to Crystal Bridges in Bentonville, Arkansas October 20-22, 2023



Panoramic view of Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas.

Designed by world-renowned architect Moshe Safdie, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas is surrounded by 120 acres of Ozark nature. This stunning museum features art from the colonial era to modern day with a collection that includes American masterpieces such as Charles Wilson Peale's and Gilbert Stuart's portraits of George Washington; Asher Brown Durand's Kindred Spirits; and Norman Rockwell's Rosie the Riveter. Other major works by John Singer Sargent, Thomas Eakins, William Merritt Chase, Thomas Hart Benton, and Andy Warhol, are also featured. Highlights of our visit include Yayoi Kusama's Infinity Mirrored Room exhibition and a tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's Bachman-Wilson House which was rebuilt on the Crystal Bridges property after being relocated from New Jersey in 2015.

Registrants will travel by coach, stopping at the Nelson Atkins Museum in Kansas City on the way. Upon arriving in Bentonville we will be staying at the 21c Museum Hotel Bentonville, which includes a boutique hotel, contemporary art museum, cultural center, and The Hive, an award-winning restaurant. Three lunches, one dinner, and daily breakfast are included.

Registration begins in May. Members at the Dual/Household level (\$75) receive the first invitation to attend this trip.

Contact Senior Director of Membership Cassandra Tant at ctant@desmoinesartcenter.org or 515.271.0327 for additional information.



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

The Des Moines Art Center's 2022 Annual Report, which includes highlights on the progress made in the past year on strategic objectives and community impact, has been published. Explore a year-in-review of the Art Center's annual accessions, exhibitions and programs. Review the Art Center "by the numbers" and discover ways to get involved.

The Art Center makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of names and cumulative annual giving. Unfortunately, our most recent publication omitted the following donors, and we would like to recognize them here along with our apology and appreciation.

\$5.000+

John and Penny Krantz Christine Lauridsen Sand and Rob Sand Edwin McIntosh Nicola Mendenhall and Wendell Speers Toni and Timothy Urban

\$2,500

Jo Ghrist* Amy Namowitz Worthen

\$1,250+

Philip Dorweiler Elaine Estes Mark Holub and Wes Hunsberger

\$550+

Stephanie Kapfer Connie Wimer

To view the 2022 Annual Report, online visit desmoinesartcenter.org/about/ annual-reports

MEMORIAI

These gifts were received between December 1, 2022 - March 30, 2023.

In Memory of Cindy Baldwin

Fred and Charlotte Hubbell

In Memory of Louis Fingerman

Patricia McFarland

In Memory of Elise Geraghty

Mary E. Lambrecht

In Memory of Sally Hampton

Jim Brown (and the Cul de Sac Community) Joni Fish

Michael and Diane Flummerfelt

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and Carrie Marshburn-Fleming Tiffany K. Nagel Spinner and John Spinner Thomas Press and Donna Paulsen Phyllis Saltzstein Benjamin and Joyce Swartz

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Thomas Conelias

In Memory of Georgianne Schreiber

Jack Schreiber

In Memory of Sharon Simmons

Patricia McFarland

In Honor of Jeff Fleming

Sue Rutledge Brenton and J.C. "Buz" Brenton

The Art Center is proud to offer FREE ADMISSION to galleries, programs, and events, unless otherwise noted.

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HARRIET S. AND J. LOCKE **MACOMBER** ART CENTER FUND

GENERAL ART CENTER SUPPORT PROVIDED BY BRAVO



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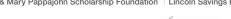


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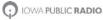


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DES MOINES ART CENTER

FREE ADMISSION

MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday & Wednesday / 11 am - 4 pm Thursday / 11 am - 7 pm Friday / 10 am - 7 pm Saturday & Sunday / 10 am - 4 pm Closed Monday

CLASSES

Studio art classes and workshops are available for students of all ages. Members receive a 20% discount. Join today!

MUSEUM SHOP

Open during regular museum hours. Shop online anytime. Members receive discounts every day.

TANGERINE AT THE ART CENTER

Open for lunch / 11 am – 2 pm Tuesday / Wednesday / Thursday / Friday Reservations for parties of six or more can be made at tang4000@gmail.com or 515.720.7510.

PAPPAJOHN SCULPTURE PARK

Open daily from sunrise to midnight. Free admission / Free cell phone tours

MORE INFORMATION desmoinesartcenter.org 515.277.4405



DesMoinesArtCenter



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Photos in this issue are by Rich Sanders or Art Center staff, unless otherwise noted.

ON THE COVER
View of the I. M. Pei building from
Greenwood Park
Photo: Steve Hall, Hedrich Blessing, 1997

Since the beginning, the Art Center has been not only a museum but a center for art education.



CIRCA 1968 William Schuster, a longtime friend of the Art Center and member of the Edmundson Honor Society, recently shared a photo of himself as a youngster participating in studio classes at the Art Center in the 1960s. He credits his mother, Dorothy, for encouraging an interest in art from an early age.

The Art Center's Edmundson Honor Society recognizes those who have indicated the Des Moines Art Center in their estate planning.