

ZANESVILLE MUSEUM of ART

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Zanesville Museum of Art Creating Access to Its Collection

ZANESVILLE, Ohio—The Zanesville Museum of Art has announced that it will undertake a thorough inventory of its 8,000+ work collection beginning mid-October 2020.

This ambitious project, which has not been conducted in over a decade, is vital to the museum's future plans. The collection inventory will:

- Create greater accessibility to the ZMA's extensive holdings through a searchable digital database
- Refine the institution's collecting plan and prioritize the acquisition of underrepresented art and artists, and
- Allow the museum to further develop an education collection that will benefit new school outreach programs currently in development

While this initiative will take more than six months to complete, require the assistance of each staff member, not just those responsible for the care of the collection, and the closure of the facility through March 2021, the ZMA staff is ready to begin.

"The current health emergency has presented us with challenges including intensive cleaning protocols that, combined with low onsite attendance, which is a fraction of what it was before the pandemic, is challenging for the ZMA's small staff. **But the health emergency has presented us with opportunities as well,**" stated museum director Laine Snyder. "While we struggled with the decision to temporarily close the building to guests mid-October 2020, it's the right decision and will allow us to pursue the collection inventory and to deliver excellent online programs, which have grown in popularity dramatically over the last five months. **The health emergency**

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created a need for a robust online presence. The ZMA-*Online* is a series of topnotch programs that are accessible to the community from the safety of their home.”

Inventory will Create Greater Accessibility

Caring for the museum’s collection and this community’s cultural heritage is fundamental to the ZMA’s mission. Providing community members, students, educators, researchers, artists, and guests easy access to the broad holdings of paintings, works on paper, sculpture, glass, and the American Art Pottery collection is just as essential to that mission. **The ongoing health emergency has brought accessibility into sharper focus as more of the museum’s exhibitions, programs, and events are available online.**

By digitizing each object in its holdings, the ZMA will create a searchable database accessible on our website that provides users the ability to explore the art, artists, and themes present in the large collection. Also, **the seventy percent of the ZMA’s collection that is not on exhibition will be viewable online once the inventory is complete.**

By better documenting its holdings, the Zanesville Museum of Art is better positioned to **preserve and understand more about this region’s cultural heritage** including the rich artistic production of art pottery in this region at the turn of the last century.

Another byproduct of the inventory will be a revised collection plan identifying under-represented art and artists in the collection. While the museum has a good collection of American Art Pottery, we need to enhance that collection with the finest pieces decorated by female decorators at the beginning of the 20th century. A revised collection plan will provide us with a road map of which art we should purchase. For example, “We have a good collection of local, regional, and Ohio artists, but we know this should be strengthened,” stated Executive Director Laine Snyder. **“The comprehensive inventory will allow us to revise our thoughtful collection plan so that we can continue to strategically purchase new work made by contemporary Ohio artists, especially those artists in this community.”**

An inventory will aid the ZMA to further develop its education collection and make that collection accessible to educators and students. The museum has developed K–12 curriculum over the last several years, including a new initiative in development called *ZMA to Go*, generously supported by the J.W. and M.H. Straker

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Charitable Foundation. Launching in fall 2021, artwork from the ZMA's education collection will be utilized in school classrooms for new and unique learning experiences for students. The education project with the Inventory was also generously supported by Mr. and Mrs. Clay and Alice Graham.

Project's Timeline and Scale

A site-wide collection inventory will take the ZMA's six-member, full-time staff more than six months and a great deal of space to complete. The ZMA has space in several galleries as a result of postponed exhibitions due to the ongoing health emergency. Each work of art, of the 8,000+ works of art in the collection, will be removed from collection storage and moved to one of our large, secure galleries where it will be inspected, photographed, and accessed for conservation.

The ZMA, which began planning this large-scale project in August 2020, has the right staff in place to complete this significant undertaking. "The ZMA staff is looking forward to the inventory. It's time to make the entire collection available to the community," stated Laine Snyder. "This staff is well-trained, thoughtful, and prepared to begin this rigorous process, which will require them to work diligently over the next six months to complete on time."

The Museum's Onsite Facility Temporarily Closes for Inventory—ZMA-Online Open for Business as Usual

While the ZMA is unable to welcome guests to the physical building beginning October 19, 2020 until it reopens in April 2021, **the ZMA will continue to welcome guests online through a series of live, online programs and events that can be accessed on the museum's webpage** zanesvilleart.org or on social media.

The ZMA-Online is a series of programs that includes: Concerts at the Museum; Perspective Lectures; A Book ApART; and special docent-led access to the museum through A Minute with a Masterpiece. These are a few of the programs that will engage audiences each week while the ZMA facility is closed to the general public.

The ZMA will also feature a series of online exhibitions, including: *Modern Morality | The Prints of William Hogarth*; the *75th Ohio Annual Exhibition*; *Rare Finds | The Latta Collection*; and *The Mark and Kim Moyer Collection*. The ZMA has online galleries to view many of the works of art from these exhibitions, which guests can view from the

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comfort and safety of their home. The ZMA-*Online* and its robust program schedule can be found on the museum's website and the ZMA's Facebook page.

In addition, the ZMA is planning several "open-house" events during the inventory. The museum will open twice during the inventory to guests who register for a timed-entry tour to learn more about the collection inventory and get a first-hand look at the process. The dates of these open-house events will be announced soon and depend on state and local guidelines to prevent the spread of the novel Coronavirus, COVID-19. Announcements will be made on the ZMA's webpage and on the museum's social media pages.

The Collection Inventory project and many projects at the ZMA are generously supported by the Ohio Arts Council.

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