

Take Time Out for Art

The Grand Rapids Gallery Association unveils its new Gallery Guide.

AS LONG AS ART has been created, people have taken the time to appreciate it. Even artwork that an artist never intended to show can still be the subject of engagement and discussion. From the Lascaux prehistoric cave paintings in France to Michelangelo's statue of *David* in Florence to Jackson Pollack's *Full Fathom Five* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, art compels attention from far outside the audience for which it was originally made.

The creation of art runs hand in hand with people's desire to engage with and possess it. History is embedded with formal and informal gatherings which have arisen to support both the production of and connection to art. Seventeenth-century royal academies and salons are just some examples of institutions that have evolved to support artists and exhibitions. Historically, artists and curators have also rejected formal approaches, seeking more informal methods that were free of institutional oversight and regulations. Nevertheless, whether or not art is produced



Close-up View: Many local galleries feature demonstrations and art talks.

and viewed within a formal or informal setting, good art stimulates the human senses and the mind. Art promotes discussion, lifts the soul, creates tension, tells a story and fills a void.

So take time out for art in Grand Rapids as Grand Rapids launches into fall. As a museum opens a new building, college and university galleries welcome back students and new schedules of exhibitions, commercial galleries gear up for holiday sales, and arts organizations plan classes and support local artists, the community should make time for art. Whether you do it formally or informally, the new 2007–2008 Grand Rapids Gallery Association annual Gallery Guide is the perfect tool to support your own creation and interaction with art. If you want to sign up for an art class or workshop, visit a gallery to purchase a new piece of art, tour a new exhibition, or gather with friends to voice your opinion, pick up the new Gallery Guide.

Organized in 1997, the Grand Rapids Gallery Association includes a mix of retail galleries and arts-related, non-profit organizations. Each year the GRGA has grown in both membership and commercial support, which is well reflected in the nearly twenty members included in this year's guide. Association members work together to promote the arts in Grand Rapids. For more information about each of the galleries as well as links to individual gallery web sites, visit www.grga.org. To get your copy of the GRGA annual Gallery Guide, just stop by any of the member galleries listed. Guides are also available at the Grand Rapids/Kent County Visitors and Convention Bureau and at many local shops and restaurants.



Gallery Stroll: Patrons check out a local gallery's offerings.