



News Release

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Technology Offers New Ways to See and Hear at Kresge Art Museum

EAST LANSING, MICH.— Kresge Art Museum announces a redesigned and expanded website as well as the introduction of its new audio tour system. The new audio tour allows visitors to tour the museum with the type of audio units found in larger museums throughout the world. The new website can be accessed through www.artmuseum.msu.edu. It includes a redesigned navigation system and is organized to make it easier to find specific information about upcoming exhibitions, the museum's history, the collection, public programs, events, and educational offerings including tours, trips, and lectures.

The audio tour offers short, lively, and informative comments about various works in the museum's permanent collection. Two tours are available, one for adults and one for children. Small and easy to use, the handheld unit allows each visitor to go at their own pace and choose which stops to hear.

"This technology offers a new way to bring life and excitement to the works of art on view. Not only do the tours give background and history, but they also include innovative ways to look at and think about art," say Susan J. Bandes, Museum Director. "We plan to offer audio tours for upcoming special exhibitions, including *Pursuits and Pleasures: Baroque Painting from the Detroit Institute of Arts*, coming to the museum in January."

The audio tour also is a wonderful new resource for hearing and visually impaired visitors. In addition because many people connect better with aural stories rather than written texts, audio guides have increased understanding and the retention of information.

"Docent tours and gallery talks can be very effective ways of sharing information with visitors," explains Education Coordinator Carol Fisher. Audio guides enable Kresge Art Museum to offer a similar group tour experience to individual visitors at any time the museum is open, thereby enhancing the museum experience. Long-time docent and freelance writer Bonney Mayers worked closely with museum staff to create the scripts for both the adult tour and children's tour. The high quality recordings were produced locally by the audio department of The Video Professionals.

The redesigned website was designed and implemented by Mark Hollosy, the museum's Webmaster, with the help of Julie Thomson, Outreach Coordinator.

The purchase of the sound units and development of this first tour was made possible by a grant from the federal agency, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Kresge Art Museum is located on the campus of Michigan State University at Auditorium and Physics Roads in the Kresge Art Center. Admission is free to Kresge Art Museum and many of its public programs. The museum is open Monday-Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Thursdays until 8 p.m., Saturday and Sunday noon- 5 p.m. For additional information call 517/355-7631 or visit www.artmuseum.msu.edu.

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