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Asheville Art Museum Receives Prestigious Re-Accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums

ASHEVILLE, NC – Today **Asheville Art Museum** announces its re-accreditation by the **American Alliance of Museums** as of March 2013. This is the Asheville Art Museum’s third accreditation and an important continuing recognition of the excellence of our programs, administration, organization, planning and leadership in the field. Accreditation status from the Alliance is the highest national recognition achievable by an American museum. The Asheville Art Museum is one of only 21 museums around the nation to receive re-accreditation by the Alliance through its Accreditation Commission, an independent and autonomous body of museum professionals.

According to the Alliance, “Accreditation recognizes high standards in individual museums and ensures that museums continue to uphold their public trust responsibilities. Developed and sustained by museum professionals for over 40 years, the museum accreditation program is the field’s primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation and public accountability. Alliance accreditation signifies excellence and accountability to the entire museum community, to governments and outside agencies and to the museum-going public.”

“Accredited museums have met and exceeded the highest standards of the museum field, in everything they do,” said Ford W. Bell, Alliance president. “Accreditation is clearly a significant

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

About the Asheville Art Museum:

The Asheville Art Museum is the only community-based nonprofit visual art museum serving Western North Carolina. Incorporated in 1948 by area artists, the Museum serves the Asheville urban area and surrounding region by annually presenting an exciting, inviting and active schedule of exhibitions and public programs based on its permanent collection of 20th and 21st century American art.

With the completion of the *Art works PRIMED* interim expansion project in 2012, the Museum now stands at 54,000 square feet and is located on the center square of downtown Asheville. It includes twelve galleries within a historically significant 1926 Italian Renaissance style building with contemporary additions and an adjacent wing. With the *Art works PRIMED* project, the Museum renovated existing facilities and added new space to create the East Wing and Atrium, which houses an expanded Museum Shop, three exhibition galleries, a New Media Gallery, an installation space for special projects and commissioned works, an interactive play space for children and families, and the WNC Art Resource Center studio. The Museum’s plans for a new facility on the existing property are well underway.

The Museum’s programs and exhibitions engage diverse audiences of all ages in active exploration of themselves – their past and future – and their communities, through interpretation of American Art since the beginning of the 20th century. The Museum has established its expertise in the collection, preservation and interpretation of contemporary American art and in all aspects of public programming, making innovative and outstanding exhibition experiences available to residents of and visitors to WNC.

The Museum’s Permanent Collection, containing more than 3,642 works in all media and 4,905 architectural drawings, is the only such resource in the region. Any visit to the Asheville Art Museum will also include experiences with works of significance to Western North Carolina’s cultural heritage including Studio Craft, Black Mountain College and Cherokee artists. Special exhibitions feature renowned regional and national artists and explore issues of enduring interest.

“This third accreditation of the Asheville Art Museum attests to the professionalism of the amazing staff of the Museum and to the dedication of the Board of Trustees and hundreds of community volunteers who, along with Museum members, partners and visitors, support the excellence of the Museum’s programs,” comments Museum Executive Director, Pam Myers.

For more information about the Asheville Art Museum visit www.ashevilleart.org or call 828.253.3227.

About the American Alliance of Museums:

The American Alliance of Museums (formerly the American Association 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. Since its founding, the Alliance has grown to nearly 21,000 members, including more than 17,000 individual members, 300 corporate members, and more than 3,100 museums. The Alliance supports its members by developing standards and best practices, providing resources and career development, and advocating for museums to thrive. For more information visit: www.aam-us.org.

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The Asheville Art Museum is the only nonprofit visual arts museum serving the 24 counties of Western North Carolina. Incorporated by artists in 1948, the Museum collects, preserves and interprets American art of the 20th and 21st centuries with a focus on work of significance to the Southeast.

Centrally located in downtown Asheville on Pack Square, the Museum is open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Special docent-guided tour packages are available for groups and students.

Admission to the Museum is \$8.00 for adults and \$7.00 for seniors (ages 60+) and students (K-college). Children age five and younger are admitted free. Members are admitted free to the Museum. The Museum's Shop, Holden Community Gallery (first floor, North Wing), Biltmore Gallery (adjacent to the main entrance) and Atrium art installations are open for the general public to enjoy free of charge.

The Asheville Art Museum is accredited by the American Association of Museums and receives general operating support from businesses, foundations and individuals, as well as from the North Carolina Arts Council, an agency funded by the State of North Carolina, and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art. Additional support is provided by the City of Asheville and Buncombe County.

The Asheville Art Museum asks when reprinting images, please keep all artwork at their original proportions; please do not crop them or alter them disproportionately. Provided image credit information is mandatory and images are not for resale.