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***Celebrate the Holiday Season at your Museum:
December 2012 Holiday Events, Shopping & More***

The Big Crafty December 2 | **Holiday Market** December 4-9 | **ADGA Art Walk** December 7 |
Silent Auction December 9 | **Family Art pARTY!** December 9 | **Art Camp** December 26-28

ASHEVILLE, NC — This December, the Asheville Art Museum invites you to celebrate the holiday season beginning with the return of **The Big Crafty** on **Sunday, December 2 from 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. (free admission)**. This year The Big Crafty celebrates its 5th birthday with its 10th biannual celebration of handmade commerce, featuring the fine handmade wares of 75 talented indie artists and crafters, representing the ever-expanding talent of WNC.

Organized by Justin Rabuck and Brandy Bourne, The Big Crafty's guiding principle is that buying handmade is good for the community, and the organizers' aim is to make doing so fun. As a juried craft show, selected crafters are chosen based upon their innovation, creative re-use and generally work with that extra special "spark". The Museum is honored to once again partner with event organizers to bring this special event to WNC. **For more information about The Big Crafty visit www.thebigcrafty.com.**

Holiday shoppers will also enjoy the opportunity to support local vendors and the Museum by shopping in our **2012 Holiday Market**, taking place during regular business hours from **Tuesday, December 4 – Sunday, December 9** at the Museum. Admission to

the Holiday Market is free for all visitors. Museum members will enjoy a 15% discount on Holiday Market gift items. Once again, this year's Market and items available in the Museum Shop offer a wide variety of gift ideas perfect for holiday shopping lists, including unique handmade items such as jewelry, scarves and hats, to gifts for the home and kitchen, art books, children's gifts and art kits, and much more.

To keep your support local, consider purchasing items from participating Asheville-based artists and vendors, including: Gabriela Baumgartner, Celia Barbieri (aka The Button Florist), Christie Calaycay, Curt Christianson, Daphne Cohan, Sondra Dorn, Leslie Goodrich, Peak Designs (hats & scarves), Monty Phillips, Dianne Ramsey, Gayle Ray, Stephanie Stephens, Marita Strauss, Barbara Wasserman and Warren Williams.

Also, **Friday, December 7 marks this month's downtown Art Walk**, organized by the Asheville Downtown Gallery Association (ADGA). As a proud member of the ADGA, the Museum will extend visiting hours until 8:00 p.m. during the Art Walk, offering visitors additional time to browse our galleries and enjoy the Holiday Market. Regular Museum admission applies during Art Walks. The Museum's Shop, Biltmore Gallery and Holden Gallery are always open to the public free of charge.

The Museum's Holiday Market will conclude on **Sunday, December 9**, with a **Reception and Silent Auction from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.** in the Museum Shop and Atrium. Guests will be treated to art demonstrations, books signings, light refreshments and exceptional auction items on which to bid in support of the Museum. Meanwhile, families and children are invited to a ***Family Art pARTy!*** from **2:00 – 4:00 p.m.** featuring guided art activities in the Museum studio with Asheville artist Kenn Kotara. The Reception, Silent Auction and *Family Art pARTy!* are open to the public and free of admission charge.

Finally, for parents looking for fun activities to entertain kids at home for the holiday break from school, the Museum offers its annual **Holiday Arts Extravaganza (holiday art camp) for students in grades 1 – 4 from December 26 – 28, 2012 (from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. daily). Admission is \$18 per day for members and \$20 per day for non-members. Registration is required.** For more information, contact Sharon McRorie at (828) 253-3227, ext. 122. Registration forms are available on the Education page (Children's Programs section) of the Museum's Web site: www.ashevilleart.org.

About the Asheville Art Museum

Founded by artists in 1948 in Asheville, NC, the Asheville Art Museum annually presents an exciting, inviting and active schedule of exhibitions and public programs based on its Permanent Collection of 20th and 21st century American art. Any visit 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. The Museum also offers a wide array of innovative, inspiring and entertaining educational programs for people of all ages. For more information: www.ashevilleart.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 and students (K-12 and college students with college ID). Children age five and younger are admitted free of charge. Members are admitted free of charge. The Holden Community Gallery, Museum Shop and Biltmore Gallery (all located on the first floor/street level of the Museum, are open at all times to the general public 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.