

Docent Manual
General Information



Mission of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts enriches the community by collecting, preserving, and making accessible outstanding works of art from the world's diverse cultures.

Vision

Inspiring wonder through the power of art.

Values

Accessibility, Excellence, Respect, Preservation, Creativity, Learning, Integrity

Mission of the Department of Museum Guide Programs

The Department of Museum Guide Programs provides volunteer-facilitated learning experiences that inspire visitors to discover personal meanings in art and explore museums confidently on their own.

Visitor Information

Museum Hours	Open to public	Staff & Volunteer Hours (access with ID badge)	
	Monday	Closed	No access (staff only)
	Tuesday	10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
	Wednesday	10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
	Thursday	10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.	8:30 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
	Friday	10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
	Saturday	10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
	Sunday	11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	10:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Museum Holidays	Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, July 4 th (closed to public, staff, and volunteers)		
Admission	Free everyday. Suggested donation \$5. Nominal charge for special exhibitions in Target Gallery.		
Phone Numbers	Switchboard	612-870-3000/888-MIA-ARTS	
	24-hour automated museum information	612-870-3200	
	Visitor and Member Services	612-870-3131	
	Museum Guide Programs		
	Administrative Assistant (Stacey)	612-870-3013	
	Interim Chair, Education (Sheila)	612-870-3206	
	Docent Program (Debbi)	612-870-3074	
	Tour Scheduling Office	612-870-3140	
	Teacher Resources (Annie)	612-870-3056	
	Museum fax	612-870-3004	
	Security	612-870-3225 (non-emergency) 612-870-5555 (emergency)	
Museum Websites	www.artsmia.org www.artsconnected.org www.mgpvolunteers.org		
Reproduction and Photography Policy	Photography with or without flash, sketching, and videotaping allowed for personal use. No tripods allowed in the galleries unless approved by the Director’s Office. Call 612-870-3224 for an approval form.		
Lost and Found	Visitor and Member Services	612-870-3091	
	Items will be kept for 30 days.		
Food and Drink	No food or drink is allowed in the galleries. The museum’s exclusive caterer is D’Amico & Sons. ArtsBreak by D’Amico & Sons is open during regular museum hours (above). ArtsCafé by D’Amico & Sons is open on the Mezzanine level Tuesday through Saturday, 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m., and Sunday, 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.		

Minneapolis Institute of Arts: An Abbreviated History

- 1883 The Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts was incorporated and a number of exhibitions of loaned objects were held in rented quarters until 1889.
- 1889 Space was provided for school classrooms and a permanent art gallery in the new library at 10th and Hennepin.
- 1906 By 1906 the permanent collection numbered nine oil paintings and comparably few other objects, but a vigorous exhibitions policy (still largely of loaned works) caused the gallery needs to outgrow the space.
- 1910 A committee of Society members, chosen from the leading families of Minneapolis, met to discuss plans for a permanent and separate art museum. Land was donated in what was then a residential area on the outskirts of downtown. This park-like setting provided enough land to allow for future expansion and was in keeping with the contemporary aesthetics concerning the arts.
- 1912 Plans for a new museum were presented in 1912 by the leading architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White and represented the popular notion of art housed in a classical, temple-like environment. Originally, the “arts complex” was to include a theatre and an orchestra hall, but only the first phase of the project—the museum itself—was completed. The cornerstone was laid in 1913.
- 1915 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts was formally opened to the public on January 10 to 12,000 visitors. The new building was a lavish Beaux Arts exercise in the classical style, making use of marble, wood, granite, and bronze; the goals of the Society were realized on a spectacular scale.
- 1916 Joseph Breck, the museum’s first director, immediately began an active purchasing policy and a fundraising drive in an attempt to establish a permanent collection whose quality would reflect its surroundings.
- 1926 By 1926 the collection was valued at several million dollars and had outgrown both storage and exhibition space. Accordingly, a new wing was added extending from the center of the building and including the fountain court and auditorium. During these years a school was also established with its own building for classrooms and studios. Little change marked the next forty years except for the growth of the permanent collection.
- 1965 The museum and school again found themselves forced to consider expansion as a result of inadequate space. A committee was formed to review the needs of the Society, and this time the needs of the surrounding community were also taken into consideration.

- 1968 The expansion review report made clear the necessity for greater community involvement on the part of the Society, which had come to be viewed as an obsolete, irrelevant, and elitist organization—a very large white elephant in what was now a model city neighborhood.
- 1970 The need for a new urban image was one of the reasons the Board of the Society chose Kenzo Tange of Tokyo, Japan as the architect for the expansion project. He seemed the fitting choice to create an arts complex that would relate in a dynamic way to the large-scale urban planning of the community. A preliminary design was approved in 1971, and construction began in 1972. The Minneapolis firm of Parker Klein Associates acted as local design supervisors throughout the project, which was completed in 1974.
- 1975 The new complex, composed of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, and The Children’s Theatre, was opened to the public. The most striking architectural feature of Tange’s design came from his decision to retain the main McKim, Mead and White facade for historic and symbolic purposes. The old structure was framed by new wings to the east and west, and an attempt was made to harmonize the relationship between the two elements by working in a deliberately understated style. Open vistas, both interior and exterior, reflected the changed image of the museum as a more active, responsive member of the community.
- 1988 Institutional autonomy was achieved in 1988 when the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and Minneapolis Institute of Arts officially agreed to separate, creating independent administrative structures and separate governing boards. The Society continues to exist as a legal entity.
- 1989 The general admission fee to the museum was eliminated, increasing annual attendance significantly.
- 1992 A major building expansion was undertaken in 1992 and completed in 1994, adding 43,000 square feet of new gallery, office, and storage space.
- 1993 Reinstallation of the permanent collection was begun in 1993 and completed in 1995 with the opening of renovated, reinstalled galleries in the original McKim, Mead and White building and in the museum’s east wing.
- 1996 The Board of Trustees approved a plan for the final phase of construction, full reinstallation of the permanent collection, and building-wide improvement upgrades.
- 1998 In October the Minneapolis Institute of Arts celebrated its Grand Re-Opening with 33 new galleries, 74 renovated galleries, and 13 period rooms.

Docent Program Handbook

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- 2003 The Minneapolis Institute of Arts began another major expansion and remodeling project, and launched a \$100 million capitol campaign. Designed by American architect Michael Graves in conjunction with RSP Architects, the expansion combines the neoclassical elegance of the original 1915 McKim, Mead and White building with the stark minimalism of Kenzo Tange's 1974 addition.
- 2006 The museum's Graves-designed Target Wing had its grand opening in June 2006. The 113,000-square-foot addition, along with a 49,000-square-foot renovation to the existing building, added 34 new galleries and almost forty percent new gallery space, as well as a new public research library, prints and drawings and photography study centers, and lecture/training room. The Target Wing showcases the museum's 20th- and 21st-century collections.

Museum Guide Programs

The Department of Museum Guide Programs, a part of the Education Division, led by Sheila McGuire, Interim Chair, consists of seven staff members and three groups of volunteer guides. Each of the three guide programs is distinctive in terms of its art historical focus, the length of the training and touring commitment, and the museum audiences served.

Staff: Jennifer Curry, Tour Coordinator, x3140, jcurry@artsmia.org
Debbi Hegstrom, Associate Educator, Docent Program, x3074, dhegstro@artsmia.org
Ann Isaacson, Associate Educator, Art Adventure Guide Program, x3089,
aisaacso@artsmia.org
Sheila McGuire, Director, Museum Guide Programs, x3206, smcguire@artsmia.org
Amanda Thompson Rundahl, Associate Educator, Collection in Focus Guide Program,
x6317, athompson@artsmia.org
Stacey Thompson, Administrative Assistant, Museum Guide Programs and Teacher
Resources, x3013, sthompson@artsmia.org
Paula Warn, Tour Coordinator, x3140, pwarn@artsmia.org

If calling any of the above staff from outside the museum, please dial 612-870-, followed by the 4-digit extension listed above for the person you wish to reach.

Docent Program

Staff: Debbi Hegstrom

The Docent program involves 161 active volunteers, some of whom have been docents for more than 40 years, and 39 docents-in-training. Docents go through two years of training to learn to give tours of all parts of the permanent collection. They commit to giving at least 40 tours per year for a minimum of three years after training. During their two years of training, docents are referred to as Junior Docents. After they complete training, they are called Senior Docents.

Art Adventure Guide Program (AAG)

Staff: Ann Isaacson

There are 108 Art Adventure Guides (AAGs) who give tours based on thematic sets of objects to school children in grades K-6. These sets are first presented in the classroom by “Picture Person” volunteers (mostly parents) who take reproductions to the schools in advance of the students’ visit to the museum. AAGs participate in six months of training and commit to giving 30 tours per year for a minimum of two years after training.

Collection in Focus Guide Program (CIF)

Staff: Amanda Thompson Rundahl

The Collection in Focus Guide Program, the newest of the three programs, is the result of intensive community outreach and input. Among its goals are to diversify the existing volunteer base at the museum and to offer volunteer opportunities in the evenings and on weekends. CIF guides train on Thursday evenings for twelve to thirteen weeks and commit to volunteering at least 24 hours during the year after their training, and 12-24 hours per year during subsequent years of participation. Each time training is offered (annually or bi-annually), guides are recruited and trained to tour a different part of the permanent collection (e.g., Africa or China). There are currently 100 touring CIF guides.