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**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:** Barbara Briggie-Smith or Jordan Powers

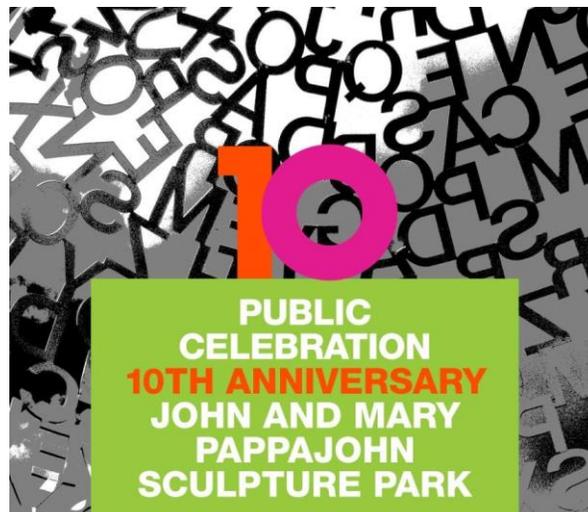
Tel: 515.271.0343 or 515.271.0344

E-mail: [bbsmith@desmoinesartcenter.org](mailto:bbsmith@desmoinesartcenter.org) or  
[jpowers@desmoinesartcenter.org](mailto:jpowers@desmoinesartcenter.org)

## **Des Moines Art Center announces public celebration honoring 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park**

**Des Moines, IA (August 2019)** – On Saturday, September 7, 4-7 pm, the Art Center will host a public celebration of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park. The event will take place in the park, 15<sup>th</sup> and Grand Avenue, and is free to all. The celebration will feature music by Faculty Lounge, food trucks including Top Bun and Outside Scoop, a kid zone, guided tours, light refreshments, and a cash bar. *Sculpting Our Community*, an art exhibition showcasing artwork inspired by the sculptures in the park will also be featured (weather permitting). More than 100 unique artworks created in response to the sculptures in the park have been submitted by the public and will be on display. For more information, visit [desmoinesartcenter.org](http://desmoinesartcenter.org). *In case of inclement weather, updates will be posted to the website, on Facebook, and noted on the Art Center phone, 515.277.4405 after 2 pm the day of the event.*

Speaking about the park, Art Center Director Jeff Fleming said, “I will never forget my phone call from John Pappajohn in March 2007 when he told me that he and Mary would like to give the Art Center their collection of sculptures for placement in the newly opened Western Gateway Park. They could have given the sculptures to any of the many museums around the country they supported. However, fortunately for the Art Center and for the city, John and Mary’s vision was to create a site where the entire community could enjoy and interact with the best of contemporary art, free of charge, in their hometown. Since its opening, we have seen the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park contribute to the cultural, educational, social, and economic transformation of the city.”





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### Des Moines Art Center

Recognized by international art critics as a world-class museum in the heart of the Midwest, the Des Moines Art Center, an AAM-accredited institution, has amassed an important collection with a major emphasis on contemporary art. The collection's overriding principle is a representation of artists from the 19th century to the present, each through a seminal work. This accounts for an impressive collection that ranges from Edward Hopper's *Automat* to Jasper Johns' *Tennyson*, Henri Matisse's *Woman in White*, Georgia O'Keeffe's *From the Lake No. 1*, Francis Bacon's *Study after Velásquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, Bill Viola's *Ascension*, and Cecily Brown's *Half-Bind*.

The Art Center's physical complex marries with the collection for a totally integrated experience. The collection is housed in three major buildings, each designed by a world-renowned architect—Eliel Saarinen, I. M. Pei, and Richard Meier. With the exception of special events, admission to the museum is free.

In September 2009, the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park opened in Des Moines' Western Gateway Park and features artwork by many of the world's most celebrated artists. Philanthropists John and Mary Pappajohn provided funding for and donated 31 sculptures by internationally acclaimed contemporary artists to the Des Moines Art Center. The collection of sculptures by such artists as Ai Weiwei, Louise Bourgeois, Deborah Butterfield, Willem de Kooning, Mark di Suvero, Olafur Eliasson, Keith Haring, Robert Indiana, Ellsworth Kelly, Yayoi Kusama, Jaume Plensa, Richard Serra, and Joel Shapiro is the most significant donation of artwork to the Art Center in a single gift in the museum's history. The 4.4 acre park, located within a major crossroads of the urban grid, creates a pedestrian friendly entranceway to downtown Des Moines. This accessible setting, coupled with the skilled landscape design and caliber of the art, makes it unlike any other sculpture park in the United States. The park is a collaborative effort of the Pappajohns, the City of Des Moines and Parks and Recreation, the Des Moines Art Center, and numerous corporate and private funders.

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