

For Immediate Release

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Des Moines Art Center juxtaposes literature and the visual arts in *Arts & Letters*

DES MOINES, IA (November 2015) On Saturday, February 13, 2016, the Des Moines Art Center will open *Arts & Letters*, which runs through May 1, 2016 in the Anna K. Meredith Gallery.

Arts & Letters considers connections between literature and the visual arts across various times and cultures. Works from the Art Center's permanent collections, from works on paper from the 16th century to contemporary sculpture, will be displayed alongside generous loans from the libraries of historic Salisbury House and the University of Iowa. Painting, photography, sculpture, and video are represented. Rare book editions, including Salvador Dali's illustrations for "Alice in Wonderland" and the Kelmscott Chaucer, a magnificent example of Victorian design organized by William Morris, are particular highlights.

Many of the works in *Arts & Letters* have rarely been on public display. Illustrations from various noted novels will appear, as well as images from familiar Biblical stories, Greek myths, fairy tales, and fables, with Shakespeare, Goethe, Hermann Melville, and Lewis Carroll considered by more than one artist. Joseph Cornell and Jasper Johns both offer tributes to noted poets. Other works explore the theme of reading more abstractly, as both a physical act and intellectual exercise.



Caption:
Henry Ossawa Tanner (American, 1859 – 1937)
Christ Learning to Read, ca. 1911
Oil on canvas
50 x 38 5/8 inches
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of
the Des Moines Association of Fine Arts, 1941.16



Caption:
Carrie Schneider
Still from "Reading Women," 2012-14
HD video installation, 4 hrs
Type-C print
Courtesy of the artist and Monique Meloche, Chicago



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The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully-illustrated color gallery guide, with an essay by Associate Curator Laura Burkhalter, the organizer of the exhibition. Educational programming for the show will be extensive, including several gallery talks with Burkhalter, joined by Salisbury House Curator Megan Stout Sibbel and Timothy Shipe, Curator, International Dada Archive at the University of Iowa. President of the Lewis Carroll Society Stephanie Lovett will deliver a lecture. Burkhalter will also curate a film series to accompany the show.

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 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. Philanthropists John and Mary Pappajohn have provided funding for and donated 28 sculptures by internationally acclaimed contemporary artists to the Des Moines Art Center. The collection of sculptures by such artists as Louise Bourgeois, Deborah Butterfield, Willem de Kooning, Olafur Eliasson, Keith Haring, Ellsworth Kelly, Jaume Plensa, Richard Serra, Joel Shapiro, and Mark di Suvero, is the most significant donation of artwork to the Art Center in a single gift in the museum's history. The Pappajohn Sculpture Park is a collaboration of the Pappajohns, the City of Des Moines, the Des Moines Art Center, and numerous corporate and private donors.

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