



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Rob Lehr
Director of Marketing
330.453.7666, ext. 102 • rob@cantonart.org

Canton Museum of Art Launches New “Art for Health & Healing Program” Expressive Art Therapy Program Connects with New Audiences

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 17, 2017, Canton, Ohio — In response to the growing need for expressive art therapy services in Stark County, Canton Museum of Art (CMA) began the **Art for Health and Healing Program** in January 2017. This unique hands-on program was conceived and developed by the CMA staff and local art therapy consultant, Gail Wetherell-Sack. Group leaders and therapists from local service organizations utilize the Museum’s exhibitions and art therapist-led experience in conjunction with existing therapeutic efforts, or as a way for their patients to visually express themselves and focus on positive life experiences. This program would not be possible without the lead sponsor, Stark County Mental Health Addiction & Recovery.

Amy Hope is CMA’s Program Coordinator for the Art for Health and Healing Program. She grew up in Stark County and received her undergraduate degree in Studio Art at Ursuline College. Amy is an Art Therapist and licensed professional clinical counselor for the state of Ohio. She holds a master’s degree in Art Therapy from Ursuline College.

“It’s all about connection,” said Amy. “Some people in drug and alcohol treatment feel there is a stigma, as if they aren’t allowed to come to places like Museums because they don’t belong. We are breaking down stereotypes and showing them they are more than welcome here. Everyone is welcome at the Canton Museum of Art.”

Last year the Museum displayed community artwork in the lobby by clients from Stark County Mental Health Addiction & Recovery. CMA plans to display expressive community art exhibitions in the classrooms and public lobby later this year. Many participants from the Art for Health and Healing Program want to be a part of something and inviting them to the Museum to participate in exhibitions helps with their self-esteem and their recovery process.

“Expressive therapy that utilizes the visual arts has proven itself as an indispensable tool in the field of mental health treatment,” said Max Barton, Executive Director of CMA. “This program makes the most of CMA’s resources and expertise in the visual arts, offering a safe environment in which people can begin the healing process.”

Art is an important communication channel—an expression of thoughts, emotions, reactions and opinions. It can be a culmination of a person’s life experiences and struggles. A portion of the artist is invested into every creation. The Art for Health and Healing program focuses on the

1001 Market Avenue North • Canton, Ohio 44702 • Tel: 330.453.7666 • Fax: 330.453.1034 • www.cantonart.org
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expressive act of making artwork in a relaxing atmosphere. Canton Museum of Art is seeking additional sponsors for the sustainability of this exciting new program. For more information about sponsoring this important community resource contact, CMA Development Director, Eliza Williams at 330.453.7666 ext. 103 or eliza@cantonart.org.

About the Canton Museum of Art

The Canton Museum of Art (CMA) is one of Ohio's premier museums for an exceptional visual arts experience. CMA is recognized for powerful national touring exhibits; dynamic CMA-original exhibits; an unrivaled Permanent Collection of American watercolors and contemporary ceramics; and innovative education outreach programs, in-Museum classes, and workshops. CMA is one of only two Stark County museums accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. For more information, including hours, exhibits, classes, and special events, call 330.453.7666, visit www.cantonart.org, Facebook at "Canton Museum of Art," or @CantonMuseum on Twitter.

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