

## About The Bronx Museum of the Arts

The Bronx Museum of the Arts is an internationally recognized cultural destination that presents innovative contemporary art exhibitions and education programs and is committed to promoting cross-cultural dialogues for diverse audiences. Since its founding in 1971, the Museum has played a vital role in the Bronx by helping to make art accessible to the entire community and connecting with local schools, artists, teens, and families through its robust education initiatives. In celebration of its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012, the Museum implemented a universal free admission policy, supporting its mission to make arts experiences available to all audiences. The Museum also recently established the Community Advisory Council, a group of local residents that meets monthly and serves as cultural ambassadors for the museum. Located on the Grand Concourse, the Museum's home is a distinctive contemporary landmark designed by the internationally recognized firm Arquitectonica.

### Collection

The Bronx Museum's permanent collection demonstrates a commitment to exhibit, preserve, and document the work of artists not typically represented within traditional museum collections. Comprising over 1,000 20th century and contemporary works of art in all media, the collection highlights work by artists of African, Asian, and Latin American ancestry, reflecting the diversity of the borough, as well as by artists for whom the Bronx has been critical to their development. Artists include: Romare Bearden, Willie Cole, Seydou Keïta, Nikki S. Lee, Ana Mendieta, Hélio Oiticica, Jamel Shabazz, Lorna Simpson, and Kara Walker, as well as Pepón Osorio, Whitfield Lovell, and Xu Bing.

### Programs

The Bronx Museum is committed to presenting exhibitions featuring works by culturally diverse, emerging, and established artists and covering themes that are of special interest to the Bronx community and that explore the interplay between contemporary art and culture.

#### Artist in the Marketplace (AIM)

The Artist in the Marketplace program engages emerging artists with leading arts professionals through seminar sessions—training that is not part of a traditional MFA program—and gives them the opportunity to have new work displayed in a museum exhibition and catalog. Since its founding in 1980, the program has reached over 1,000 artists. 36 new artists are selected each year; selection is based solely on the quality of their work. Through interacting with fellow participants with diverse experience, schooling, age, nationality, artistic medium, and subject matter, participants are inspired to push the boundaries of their own work. The Bronx Museum is proud to invest in the careers of emerging artists and continues to work with past AIM participants as they move forward in their careers.

#### smARTpower

The Bronx Museum was the first visual arts organization selected by the U.S. Department of State as a partner for *smARTpower*, a major initiative to send visual artists abroad. The unprecedented partnership enabled visual artists to travel around the globe and collaborate with local artists and youth to create socially engaged art projects. Selected artists designed and implemented programs within a 45 day period in cooperation with local arts organizations in China, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, India, Kosovo, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Kenya, Morocco, Sri Lanka, Turkey, and Venezuela.

#### U.S. Pavilion at the 2013 Venice Biennale

The Bronx Museum of the Arts is presenting the work of Sarah Sze at the U.S. Pavilion at La Biennale di Venezia, the 55th International Art Exhibition, on view from June through November 2013. Sze's project for the U.S. Pavilion will create opportunities for public engagement and exchange both at a local level in Venice and at home in the United States, connecting directly to the community-oriented mission of the Bronx Museum.

### Education Programs

The Bronx Museum has an established reputation as a contemporary art museum that serves one of the most ethnically and socio-economically varied constituencies in New York City, largely composed of Latino and African American populations, as well as increasing communities originally from West Africa and the Caribbean. The Museum focuses on diverse groups and their rich heritage by presenting bilingual (English/Spanish) labels and gallery guides and providing programs that serve children, adults, and families.

The Museum's First Friday and Open House public programs include film, art performances, and music, and have drawn enthusiastic response from community members, many of whom also participate in the Museum's community and teen councils. Designed to make contemporary art and culture accessible to urban youth, the Teen Council program provides teens with an open forum for the expression of ideas and dialogue on issues affecting young people and the promotion of the Bronx as an important cultural, political, and artistic force.

### **History**

The Museum was founded in 1971 and originally housed in the public rotunda of the Bronx County Courthouse located on Grand Concourse and 161st Street. In 1982, it moved five blocks north on the Concourse to 165th street into a former synagogue purchased and donated by the City of New York where it remained until 2006. The museum's current home on the Grand Concourse is a distinctive contemporary landmark designed by the internationally-renowned firm Arquitectonica.

### **Building**

The museum's current home was designed by Arquitectonica and opened in 2006. Its design was awarded the "Excellence in Design" prize by The Art Commission of the City of New York in 2003. The \$19 million space features a major gallery, flexible events / program spaces, an outdoor terrace, and an entire floor dedicated to education programs and classrooms.