

## “Access Art: Touch Tours” Provides Tactile Art Experience

GAINESVILLE, FL, March 11, 2016—The Harn Museum of Art at the University of Florida is offering visitors of all ages, with and without visual impairments, the opportunity to experience art through one-on-one conversation and senses other than sight. This two-part program is offered Saturday, March 12, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. It will include a nature-inspired touchable art installation provided and presented by local artists, as well as verbally descriptive guided tours of art in *Framing Nature: The Living World in Art* with touchable art based on the original objects.

The community installation in the Harn’s gallery and promenade will include 49 works, primarily three-dimensional, including ceramics, wood sculptures, paper origami, printed plastic lithopanes and mixed-media. Twenty local and UF student artists will present and describe their art, encouraging a dialogue, as participants explore the objects through touch.

Verbally descriptive cell phone tours of art in the *Framing Nature* exhibition will focus on contemporary photographs *Flamingos Visit Yosemite* by Jerry Uelsmann and *Rosignano Solvay* by Massimo Vitali, a Japanese wood block print titled *Wisteria at Kameido* by Kobayashi Kiyochika and a contemporary painting titled *Moonlight Sonata* by Ethiopian artist Bisrat Shibabaw. Visitors will then have the opportunity to touch art based on the original objects described in the exhibition.

“Offering a program for visually-impaired citizens to be able to understand and enjoy art supports our mission of being accessible for all,” said Harn Museum Director Rebecca Nagy. “For those participating who have sight it provides additional ways to approach the art prompting longer looking and possibly discovering elements of the work that may otherwise have been missed.”

Advanced registration is not required for blind and visually impaired individuals bringing a sighted guide with them or for other members of the general public. A sighted guide can be requested by contacting Elizabeth King, Visitor Engagement and Volunteer Coordinator at [eking@harn.ufl.edu](mailto:eking@harn.ufl.edu) or 352.392.9826 x2172.

Partners for this program include the Division of Blind Services, National Federation for the Blind Gainesville Chapter, Gainesville Lion’s Club, Dr. Mary Ann Nelson and students from her course EEX3093: Exceptional People: School & Society, UF Disability Resource Center and the UF Museum Studies Graduate Program, in particular Harn student intern Kimberly Crowell whose work on the development and improvements of “Access Art: Touch Tours” is part of her thesis work in museum studies.

Admission to this program is free. For more information, call 352-392-9826 or visit [www.harn.ufl.edu](http://www.harn.ufl.edu).

### **About the Harn Museum of Art**

Founded in 1990, the Harn Museum of Art is an integral part of the University of Florida. The Harn contributes to an interconnected, international community by integrating the arts and culture into curricula throughout the university's system of colleges and centers. Its holdings include more than 10,000 works in five main collecting areas: Asian art, African art, photography, modern art of the Americas and Europe, and international contemporary art. The museum also has noteworthy collections of Oceanic and Ancient American Art and works on paper. In addition to rotating installations drawn from its permanent collection, the Harn organizes traveling exhibitions, public lectures, panel discussions, academic symposia, and educational programs for adults, students, and children.

The Harn Museum of Art, at 3259 Hull Road in Gainesville, Florida, is part of the University of Florida's Cultural Plaza, which is also home to the Florida Museum of Natural History and the Phillips Center for the Performing Arts. Admission is free. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. The museum is open until 9 p.m. the second Thursday of every month for Museum Nights. The Camellia Court Café is open Tuesday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information call 352-392-9826 or visit [www.harn.ufl.edu](http://www.harn.ufl.edu).

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