



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART'S *ART BALL* RETURNS ON SATURDAY, FEB 15**

*Art Ball 2020: A Flair for Art* Will Feature Cocktails, Dinner, Auctions and Music

**[For Release Jan 9, 2020 – Albany, GA]** — An exciting evening of celebrating art is just over a month away when *Art Ball* returns to the Albany Museum of Art. *Art Ball 2020: A Flair for Art* is set for Saturday, Feb 15, 2020.

A major fundraiser for the AMA, *Art Ball 2020: A Flair for Art* will be instrumental in empowering the museum to bring world-class exhibitions to Albany, and provide robust educational and art programming while maintaining free admission for all guests. The black-tie-optional event starts at 6:30 pm with a cocktail hour, and will include a great dinner; live dance music; a wide array of items, experiences and trips for silent and live auctions, and a unique opportunity to support the AMA's many educational programs.

"We are looking forward to this special evening to celebrate with friends the AMA's many successes," AMA Executive Director Dr. Andrew Wulf said. "This vibrant event raises critical funds to support the museum's highest priorities, including the reimagining of the future of this marvelous institution."

*Art Ball* was cancelled in February 2019 because Albany and the region were still recovering from the widespread destruction of Hurricane Michael, which struck the area in October 2018.

Museum officials are hoping the new year will bring fairer weather as the final weeks until *Art Ball 2020* tick down. This year's event is being chaired by Margaret "Puddin" Bass, who is working on the last details for the gala with her amazing group of volunteers.

"I'm excited about Andrew being on board working with us and giving us fresh ideas," Bass said. "If you haven't already, mark your calendar for Feb 15<sup>th</sup>. We're looking forward to seeing you there!"

Sales for table sponsorships and individual tickets already have been brisk.

"The *Art Ball* sells out year after year," Chloe Hinton, director of development and membership for the AMA, noted. "There's really nothing else like it in our area, plus all of the funds raised go to support the important work being done at the museum for our community and region."

Event planner Kate Grubb has designed a fantastic evening. The dinner, which will be held in the Haley Gallery, will be catered by Stewbos. After the dinner and auction, the popular band *Close to Midnight* will perform in the Harry and Jane Willson Auditorium, where guests can dance.

During the live and silent auctions, guests will have the opportunity to bid on items and trips that are even more than outstanding investments and wonderful experiences. They are critical for raising funds needed for the AMA to fulfill its mission of making world-class art and robust programming fully accessible to everyone in Albany and Southwest Georgia.

There also will be a special paddle-raise for educational programming. Donations received through the *Libby Womack Paddle Raise* are earmarked for educational programming, art camp scholarships, internships, and the new *Art Forward Fund*, which was been created to ensure the AMA gives our young visitors a safe space to grow in self-awareness and confidence.

The paddle-raise for education is named for the late Libby Womack, a longtime educator and supporter of the Albany Museum of Art. She served on the museum's Board of Trustees, and her husband, Jim, now serves on that board.

Mrs. Womack believed in the impact that exposure to art has on young minds, sparking creativity and critical thinking skills. Those beliefs have been borne out with statistics that show students regularly exposed to art score 100 points higher on SATs, are 5 times more likely in low-income homes to finish school, are twice as likely in low-income homes to graduate college, and are 4 times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement and to engage in math and science fairs. With more and more art programs in school facing budget cuts, the AMA's programs are more vital than ever.

"The arts work hand in hand with the other components of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) education curriculum," Annie Vanoteghem, director of education and public programming for the AMA, said. "Art helps sharpen children's thinking skills, gives them new perspectives and makes them more engaged in the educational process."

During the Libby Womack Paddle Raise, each guest will have the opportunity to raise his or her paddle at the donation level he or she is comfortable with. Museum officials are hoping to raise \$15,000 for educational-related programming at the AMA through the paddle-raise.

"The proceeds of *Art Ball* will go to help fund new exhibitions, provide free admission, and the creation and continuation of exciting programming," Bass said. "Please plan to be a part of this fun, celebratory evening."

The return of the AMA gala has been highly anticipated after the devastation of Hurricane Michael forced the cancellation of *Art Ball 2019*. Tables will sell out early, so please do not delay in reserving your seats or table. You can get more information at [albanymuseum.com/art-ball-2020](http://albanymuseum.com/art-ball-2020), or email [chloe.hinton@albanymuseum.com](mailto:chloe.hinton@albanymuseum.com).

## CURRENT AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *Origami Variations*, works by Gloria Garfinkel, is in the Haley Gallery through Feb 8, 2020.

- *Looking at America and Painting How I Want, What I Want and How I See It*, works by Dean Mitchell, is in the East Gallery through March 28, 2020.
- *Do Not Hand Me Over to the Impure Whiteness of Noon: A Hemings Elegy,*" works by Yanique Norman, is in the West Gallery through March 28, 2020,

## **ABOUT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART**

The Albany Museum of Art is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive in Albany, Georgia, adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open 10 am through 5 pm Tuesdays through Fridays and noon until 5 pm on Saturdays. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, [www.albanymuseum.com](http://www.albanymuseum.com) or call 229.439.8400. Be sure to follow the @AlbanyArtMuseum on Twitter, AlbanyMuseum on Instagram and AlbanyMuseumOfArt on Facebook.

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