

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Art is like honey.



Antonio Machado, one of the great Spanish writers of all time, described in a poem that his childhood memories were of a patio in Seville and an orchard where lemon trees ripen. I deeply connect with these lines because my childhood memories also have images of a patio—in Valencia (where my family is from)—a patio where the bright Mediterranean sun gave warmth to blooming jasmine. In these memories, on that patio, is my grandfather Antonio, who loved life and who equated anything that was good to eat as being like honey. "Yes, Salva eat this, it is as good as honey!" he would persuasively tell me. At the time, I did not understand his point because, as a child, I found the taste of honey unpleasant. As a grownup, I have come to love honey and enjoy it every day at breakfast—it is a delicious, natural medicine.

By now you might be thinking, what is the point of this column? Well, a month or so ago, the benefits of honey came up in an interesting conversation I had in my office with the DIA development staff and a philanthropy team from a company with which we would like to collaborate. As many of you know, we, unfortunately, can't show our entire collection in the galleries because there is not enough space. In our storage, we have extensive holdings of great works by Detroit artists, including some from the Cass Corridor, and we would like to share these with our community. We proposed in the meeting to have some of these pieces installed in public areas of buildings and other places where they can be shown with the necessary environmental and security precautions. The fact that these works were made in Detroit is an important one. To illustrate this point, I explained to the group that I made sure the honey I enjoy every morning is locally produced because it is thought to enhance the immune system in fending off local allergies and other ailments in the area. In parallel fashion, I thought it was a good idea to have works by local artists displayed in Detroit buildings for the quiet atmosphere they invoke for people frequenting those spaces. Let's say that Detroit art exercises a stronger positive influence to those who live and work in our three-county metropolitan area as local honey does for local residents.



*Flowers in a Glass Vase* (detail: Earth Bumble Bee), 1704, oil on canvas; Rachel Ruysch, Dutch. Founders Society Purchase, with money from multiple museum funds and contributions from many individual donors.

While my approach to honey or the influence of Detroit artists in the city can't really be scientifically proven and quantified, I do enjoy making these parallel connections that speak to our intuition about certain good things. Yes, this is a bit of a romantic idea, but perhaps we can all agree that the exposure to art has an ineffable positive effect and that eating honey feels like it helps our immune system. Can art be like honey? I'd like to say yes. Next time someone comes into my office and asks me who painted Twin Tornadoes, which hangs on my wall, I will answer that it is by the Detroit artist Gilda Snowden, and that it is as good as honey—as my grandfather would say.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Salvador Salort-Pons".

Salvador Salort-Pons  
Director  
Detroit Institute of Arts

From: Thomas McNally  
Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2017 5:18 PM  
To: Marketing Department <[marketing@dia.org](mailto:marketing@dia.org)>  
Subject: How impressed I was

Dear Detroit Institute of Arts,

Hello I am hopefully directing this email to the right person/department. I just wanted to say how impressed I was with the DIA and the running of it. I came to Detroit as I was staying and visiting some friends who just live outside, I am from the UK and I had never visited Detroit or Michigan before. I really loved the entire museum and evidently it is ran and managed very well. Despite still being in my youth (aged 20) I have been fortunate to travel a lot of the world; touring some of the most famous art galleries and museums in the world ranging from Xi'an to Paris to New York City and to Beijing to name a few. I have to say the DIA is definitely at the top in my opinion. I was so impressed with the scale and diversity in all of the exhibitions and it was nice to see a few items on display from my country too. In fact I have considered visiting Detroit in the future just to see the DIA again as 5 hours was not enough for me and my friends I was staying with. Hopefully one day I will be able to patron of the DIA too. I just thought I might send this email because maybe not many people send emails with positive feedback just complaints or petty issues. Me and my friends (who live in Farmington Hills, which is nearby I believe) were impressed with everything - security, dining, staff, the art itself and the shop. A huge admirer from many many miles away.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas J. McNally

# 10 KEY FACTS

about the



DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS



## MISSION STATEMENT

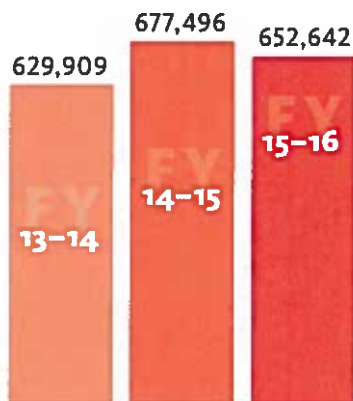
The DIA creates experiences that help each visitor find personal meaning in art.

## DIRECTOR PRESIDENT CEO

Salvador Salort-Pons

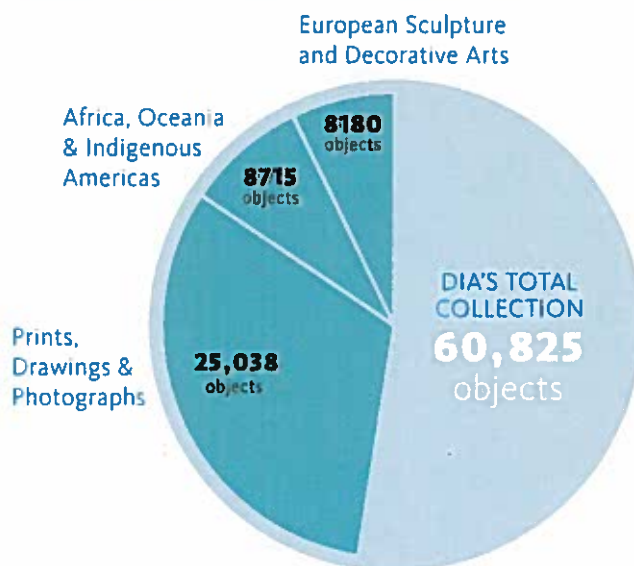


## ANNUAL MUSEUM ATTENDANCE



## NUMBER OF OBJECTS IN COLLECTION

and largest three collections in the museum



## 76,432 SCHOOL CHILDREN

participated in DIA programs during the 2015-2016 school year.

## AUXILIARIES

Nearly **1,629 MEMBERS** belong to one or more of 12 auxiliary support groups focused on specific collection areas and museum activities.

## IMPORTANCE OF COLLECTION

**ONE OF THE TOP SIX** comprehensive fine arts museums in the United States – a priceless and irreplaceable collection.

## GOVERNANCE

Collections, building and properties are owned and managed by the Detroit Institute of Arts, Inc., a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization with an elected board of directors

## ENDOWMENT

UNRESTRICTED: \$130 MILLION RESTRICTED: \$80 MILLION



FY 15-16

DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS

[dia.org](http://dia.org)