THE DAYTON ART INSTITUTE INTRODUCES NEW INTERACTIVE TOUR OF ITS PERMANENT COLLECTION

‘What Is a Masterpiece?’ uses QR codes, mobile technology to highlight 50 works of art

(DAYTON, OHIO) – April 17, 2013– The Dayton Art Institute recently introduced What Is a Masterpiece?, a new interactive tour that uses QR codes and mobile technology to provide guests with in-depth information about select works from the museum’s permanent collection.

The launch of What Is a Masterpiece? places The Dayton Art Institute among only a small number of museums in the United States to offer a mobile-based interactive tour of its collection.

“What Is a Masterpiece? provides an entirely new way to experience the treasures in our permanent collection,” says DAI Executive Director Michael R. Roediger. “Using mobile devices, such as iPads and smartphones, guests now literally have a wealth of information about these works available at their fingertips.”

The What Is a Masterpiece? project was funded by a federal Museums for America grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The interactive tour initially highlights 50 works of art from the museum’s permanent collection, with plans to add additional pieces to the tour. Each of the works features a special What Is a Masterpiece label with a QR (Quick Response) code on it. Visitors are able to access enhanced information about the featured works by scanning the QR codes, using museum-supplied iPads. Visitors may also use their own smartphones or other Wi-Fi enabled tablets and mobile devices to scan the QR codes.
The QR codes link to a mobile website that was developed specifically for this project. Each featured Masterpiece has a unique landing page that offers a variety of options, such as detailed historical information, audio commentaries and video content. Because What Is a Masterpiece? is web based, it may also be accessed through a standard web browser on any desktop or laptop computer, by going to www.daytonartinstitute.org/masterpiece.

It is also possible to more closely examine certain objects through the use of interactive “3D spins,” created using a specially designed iPhone/iPad app and turntable. Guests are able to rotate an image of these objects 360 degrees and zoom in, revealing details that might not otherwise be visible in the galleries. The DAI is one of the first museums in the U.S. to utilize this exciting new technology.

“What Is a Masterpiece? is designed to create a participatory experience,” says Education Director Susan Anable, who oversaw the project’s development. “It allows users to choose what kind of information they want to explore, from how a work of art was created and what choices an artist made in his or her lifetime, to examples of music from the time period of the work.”

Guests are also encouraged to participate by providing feedback about what constitutes a masterpiece and rating the featured works.

“Our hope is that visitors will ultimately engage in dialogue and conversations about the featured works and what constitutes a ‘masterpiece’,” Anable adds.

As part of the project, Wi-Fi has been installed throughout the museum galleries, as well as in the new Leo Bistro restaurant and Museum Store.

“What Is a Masterpiece? is another aspect of our ongoing efforts to make The DAI a premiere downtown destination,” says Roediger. “This addition, along with the museum’s expanded hours and new Bistro, will enable the community to enjoy food, friends and fine art in one place.”

To learn more about What Is a Masterpiece?, stop by the museum’s Guest Services Desk during regular hours. Museum-supplied iPads may be checked out for $3 for four hours, or guests may access What Is a Masterpiece through their own Wi-Fi enabled mobile devices.

For more about this and other programs at The Dayton Art Institute, visit www.daytonartinstitute.org or call the museum at 937-223-4ART (4278). Connect with The Dayton Art Institute on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for additional information, behind-the-scenes photos and exclusive offers.

ABOUT THE DAYTON ART INSTITUTE
As one of the Miami Valley’s premier fine art museums, The Dayton Art Institute offers a full range of programming in addition to exhibiting its collection. Galleries hours are Tuesday – Friday, 11 a.m. – 8 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sunday, noon – 5 p.m. With support from the Chase Endowment Fund, suggested admission to the museum’s permanent collection is $8 adults, $5 seniors, active military and groups. Admission is free for museum members, students (18+ w/ID) and youth (17 and under). Some special exhibitions, programs and events may carry an additional charge and include admission to the museum’s permanent collection as part of that price. Free parking is available at the museum and the facility is fully accessible to physically challenged visitors. The DAI’s new Museum Store and Leo Bistro are now open during regular museum hours. For more information, please call 937-223-4ART (4278) or visit www.daytonartinstitute.org. The Ohio Arts Council helped fund this organization with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The DAI also receives support from the Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District.

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