

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Cleveland Museum of Art Introduces ARTLENS Gallery, a Touchscreen-Free Approach to Integrating Art, Interpretation and Technology**

*The next iteration of museum's successful Gallery One uses barrier-free, motion-detecting technology to create a breathtaking environment of wonder and awe*

**Cleveland, OH (June 21, 2017)** – The Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA), in its latest initiative to use game-changing technology that enhances the experience of its visitors and their connection with the museum's world-renowned collection, has reimagined its award-winning Gallery One concept with the introduction of the ARTLENS Gallery. Guests will get a chance to preview ARTLENS Gallery during the museum's ninth annual [Solstice](#) celebration on June 24, 2017. Beginning the next day, all visitors will have the opportunity to experience the space. The museum will formally celebrate ARTLENS Gallery on September 10, 2017, Grandparents Day.

ARTLENS Gallery encompasses and improves upon the original four components of Gallery One, now known under the new ARTLENS name:

- ARTLENS Exhibition, where masterworks are intertwined with digital interactives
- ARTLENS Studio, an award-winning intergenerational space where movement and art creation connect visitors to the museum's collection through technology
- ARTLENS Wall, a 40-foot interactive wall that displays all of the museum's on-view collection
- ARTLENS App, which connects to all of the Exhibition interactives as well as the Wall, and can be used throughout the museum with responsive wayfinding

In addition, the Beacon, a monumental screen at the entrance of ARTLENS Gallery, displays visitor-generated content, including tours, collages, portraits, and poses in real time.

Transitioning away from the touchscreen technology featured in Gallery One, ARTLENS Exhibition interactives respond seamlessly to body movement and immerse the user in the experience. The new technology is designed to focus the visitor on the artwork in an unobtrusive way, and strengthen the visitor's understanding of art through pedagogically rigorous but fun games. Featured works in the exhibition space will be rotated every 18 months and include both celebrated masterworks from the collection and objects that the public may not know about, in the hope that return visitors will recognize these "hidden gems" on future trips to the museum.

"The Cleveland Museum of Art is committed to using the potential of cutting-edge technology to enhance our visitor's experience. Gallery One was an unqualified success from the day it opened in 2013," said William M. Griswold, museum director. "It won multiple awards, and articles about it appeared in many major national publications. It also helped drive a 31% increase in individual attendance and a 29% increase in the attendance of families during that period. However, we wanted the space to better provide our visitors with the toolset they would need to understand and enjoy the

museum's collection. Through new digital interactives, ARTLENS Gallery intends to take away the intimidation of the art museum."

The centerpiece of ARTLENS Gallery is Exhibition, which bridges the gap between the everyday world of the museum's visitors and the transformative potential of face-to-face experiences with great artworks in the museum's collection. ARTLENS Exhibition puts the art in the foreground, using barrier-free and motion-activated interactive projections to create an immersive experience that facilitates engagement with the art on a personal, emotional level. Visitors approach and engage with the art, and then activate the interactive games. These games augment visual literacy skills, providing an experience in which visitors can learn more about concepts such as composition, gesture and emotion, purpose, and symbols, inspiring them to look at artworks again with a new understanding. The 18-month rotation of featured objects provides visitors with new touchpoints in the galleries and offers opportunities to feature more of the museum's collection in the Exhibition space.

Two of the 16 new games in ArtLens Exhibition, Gaze Tracker and Express Yourself, use innovative eye-tracking and facial-recognition technology, transforming the way museums understand how visitors look at art and how visitors understand their own gaze. The other barrier-free interactive games that explore the themes of composition, symbols, gesture, emotion, and purpose.

"While the innovative technology is itself awe-inspiring and fun, the most exciting part of ARTLENS is that we are providing new tools for visitors to look at artwork more closely and gain a better understanding of key concepts," said Jane Alexander, the museum's chief information officer. "We are using digital innovation to promote individual and social participation, and open and enlightened public discourse, to advance our goal of helping people start a relationship with the museum's collection."

"ARTLENS Exhibition offers visitors an opportunity to investigate artworks from across the collection in a single location through play," said Lori Weinke, associate director, Interpretation. "Our primary goal was to design a pedagogical framework for the games that encourages closer looking, enhances understanding, and deepens the resonance of works of art for our visitors."

Partnering with the museum on ARTLENS Exhibition was Potion, an interactive design firm located in New York City. Phillip Tiongson, principal says "What's most exciting to me, is that in ARTLENS Exhibition, people use their natural tools — their eyes and their hands — to look more closely at art—and that experience might change how they look at art for the rest of their life."

In addition, the award-winning ARTLENS App is upgraded to unify all four components of the ARTLENS Gallery. Each game station in ARTLENS Exhibition has a dock for visitors to connect a personal device via Bluetooth, allowing them to save to the app all artworks they encounter during a game, along with pictures of themselves during gameplay, so that they may take this information with them as they explore the rest of the museum.

ARTLENS Gallery is a gift of the Maltz Family Foundation. Additional generous support comes from the Char and Chuck Fowler Family Foundation. ARTLENS App is a gift of Swagelok. ARTLENS Studio is a gift of PNC.

ARTLENS Gallery Partners:

Potion — ARTLENS Exhibition

Dome Collaborative — Beacon

Local Projects — Beacon; ARTLENS App

#### **About the Cleveland Museum of Art**

The Cleveland Museum of Art is renowned for the quality and breadth of its collection, which includes almost 45,000 objects and spans 6,000 years of achievement in the arts. The museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship, performing arts and art education and recently completed an ambitious, multi-phase renovation and expansion project across its campus. One of the top comprehensive art museums in the nation and free of charge to all, the Cleveland Museum of Art is located in the dynamic University Circle neighborhood.

The Cleveland Museum of Art is supported by a broad range of individuals, foundations and businesses in Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. The museum is generously funded by Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture. Additional support comes from the Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund the museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. For three consecutive years, the museum has been awarded a top four-star rating by Charity Navigator, the nation's most-utilized independent evaluator of charities and nonprofits. For more information about the museum, its holdings, programs and events, call 888-CMA-0033 or visit [www.ClevelandArt.org](http://www.ClevelandArt.org).

#### **Game Checklist**

- **Gaze Tracker:** Innovative eye-tracking reveals where a visitor focuses when looking at a work of art, increasing the visitor's understanding of how an artist's compositional choices influence how they look at art.
- **Express Yourself:** This personalized experience is rooted in the aspiration that visitors can discover artworks in the ARTLENS Exhibition that are viewable in the primary galleries of the CMA, creating an engine to send visitors out into the larger museum to explore more. Facial-recognition technology reads how visitors react to art they are shown, and then sends visitors on missions throughout the museum based on their emotional reactions. It helps visitors broaden their palates, better understand their own opinions on art, and be affirmed that those opinions are valid.
- **Mashup:** Visitors change the emotion of a portrait by making a face, and witness how a change in expression can change the meaning of an artwork.
- **Make a Face:** Visitors are shown a portrait to interpret the figure's emotion, then their facial expression is matched with another portrait. Visitors will see how meaning is created through facial expression in an artwork.
- **Body Language:** Visitors guess the different emotions expressed by figures in an artwork by mirroring the poses of each figure. By matching gestures with emotions, visitors realize the narrative of an artwork through the interaction between the figures.
- **Strike a Pose:** Visitors are prompted to mirror the pose of a character in an artwork, in order to truly feel the physical exertion of the movement and pose. Visitors can better understand the emotions of the figure through its gesture, as well as the contextual emotion of the artwork.

- **Hidden Meaning:** Visitors use their shadows to uncover the meaning behind symbols in artworks, revealing how artists embed symbols in their art to represent nonconcrete concepts.
- **Symbol Sleuth:** Based on contextual clues, visitors guess which symbol represents a certain theme in a work of art. Visual and thematic clues in a work of art can help a visitor deduce a symbol's meaning.
- **Decode Symbols:** From a selection of symbols, visitors guess which symbol goes in the area that has been blurred from the artwork. Visitors learn how symbols can transform the meaning of an artwork.
- **Purpose Discovery:** Visitors decide how an unfamiliar object was once used by placing it on different parts of a mannequin. By looking at an object closely, a visitor can deduce its use.
- **Now and Then:** Visitors guess the modern equivalent of an object from a range of options. The modern understanding of an object can differ from its contextual use.
- **Dress Me Up:** A variety of wearable objects, from fashion statements and cultural wear to unfamiliar pieces, are on display for visitors to select and wear on their bodies. Visitors realize the functional purpose of unfamiliar objects.
- **Shape Seeker:** Visitors reveal geometric shapes in an artwork to decipher the compositional arrangement of elements. Visitors see how the structure of a shape gives meaning to a work of art through its dynamism, stability, symmetry or asymmetry.
- **View Finder:** Visitors explore works of art from the museum's collection to find areas of focus and points of emphasis. Visitors uncover how artworks with multiple focuses are composed of separately identifiable elements that work together to enhance meaning and understanding.
- **Become an Artist:** Visitors create an original artwork based on the color, composition or pattern of an artwork in the museum's collection. By reinterpreting an artwork while maintaining its aesthetic integrity, visitors can better understand the composition of artworks with no central focal point.
- **Become an Artwork:** Visitors generate a unique all-over composition through a snapshot of themselves and based on works in the museum's collection. Visitors learn how works of art can be composed of rhythm, pattern and repetition by using the palette of their own body and clothing.

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