



NewsRelease

FOR RELEASE:
Upon Receipt

CONTACT: Maria Morreale, Director of Marketing
716.270.8229, mmorreale@albrightknox.org

Statement from the Albright-Knox Art Gallery on the Closing of the Collector's Gallery

Buffalo, NY — The Collector's Gallery of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery will close on October 31, 2009. "The decision to end this program, which has existed since 1933, was a difficult, but necessary one," Albright-Knox Director Louis Grachos said. "It is part of an ongoing audit of all of our activities as we strive to build a more efficient operation," he continued. Collector's Gallery Volunteer Chairwoman Eras Bechakas added, "This decision has been made to help ensure the stability and growth of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery for the future."

The closing of the Collector's Gallery does not in any way diminish the Albright-Knox's commitment to the art and artists of Western New York.

The Albright-Knox Art Gallery will continue to be a driving force in the expansion of the regional, biennial exhibition *Beyond/In Western New York*, which was reformatted in 2005 to become a twelve-venue exhibition that in 2007 received almost 60,000 visitors. This outstanding curated, invitational exhibition provides an essential platform for all Western New York artists. The exhibition further serves to call national and international attention to the wealth of artistic talent in our region. The Albright-Knox will continue to allocate significant resources to this project to ensure it remains a strong and growing component of its exhibition program and looks forward to *Beyond/In Western New York 2010*.

Supporting the work of Western New York artists will also remain a key component of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery's strategy for the growth and development of its Permanent Collection and its exhibition program. In recent years more than seventy works by Western New York artists have been purchased by the Gallery for its collection.

Area visual and performing artists will also continue to be supported through the weekly *Gusto at the Gallery* program, which offers free museum admission to the public on Friday nights and regularly introduces new audiences to the arts. Over the last several years, *Gusto at the Gallery* has created opportunities for hundreds of visual and performing artists from across Western New York.

In recent years, there has been significant growth in opportunities for area artists to exhibit and sell their work locally, including the establishment of more than

fifteen new galleries in Buffalo that promote and advance the work of Western New York artists. The Albright-Knox Art Gallery and the Collector's Gallery are not in a position to compete, nor do they wish to, with these successful, flourishing venues at the expense of a focused pursuit of the Albright-Knox's mission.

Collector's Gallery Volunteer Chairwoman Erras Bechakas said, "The volunteers and Gallery staff will spend the next few months deciding how we can best support the Gallery and area artists in new and exciting ways in the future, and I look forward to that."

The Albright-Knox Art Gallery is recognized as one of the world's leading collections of modern and contemporary art. With more than 6,500 works in its collection and a dynamic series of exhibitions and public programs, the AKAG continues to grow and fulfill its mission to acquire, exhibit, and preserve modern and contemporary art in an enriching, dynamic, and vibrant environment.

Hours: Thursday 10 am to 5 pm; Friday 10 am to 10 pm; Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 5 pm; closed Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. Admission: \$12 for adults; \$8 for seniors and students; free for Gallery Members and children 12 and under. On Fridays from 3 to 10 pm, *Gusto at the Gallery* features a variety of free programs for visitors of all ages. For additional information, visit www.albrightknox.org.

#