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The
Nelson-Atkins
Museum
of Art

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Mobile Guide Program Premieres at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

New Platform Allows Visitors to Use Smartphones or Museum's iPod Touch Players

Kansas City, MO Sept. 29, 2010 – Using their own smartphones or one of the Museum's iPod Touch players, visitors can now easily listen to information about more than 250 works of art at The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. The Nelson-Atkins Mobile Guide premieres Friday, Oct. 1, offering the Museum's excellent audio content on a new technology platform.

The Mobile Guide is actually a mobile-optimized website—www.naguide.org. The entire Museum and Sculpture Park are now equipped with Wi-Fi, so visitors can access the guide anywhere on the Museum campus from their smartphones or laptops.

The new website also makes information about works of art available to “virtual visitors,” who will be able to access favorite works of art from their homes,

offices and schools. The program was made possible by a grant from Ann and Kenneth Baum, long-time supporters of the Nelson-Atkins, and is the result of extensive work by the Museum's education, design, curatorial and information technology staff.

“Ann and I feel deeply that audio content enriches any museum experience, and we are thrilled to support this new opportunity to enlighten and inspire visitors at the Nelson-Atkins,” said Mr. Baum, who is a member of the Museum's Board of Trustees.

The new approach replaces the previous audio guide program, which made information available only through fixed players. Visitors may now borrow an iPod Touch, available in the Museum's



Bloch Lobby, or retrieve the website on their own iPhones, iPads or Android-enabled smartphones. Headsets also will be available for visitors to plug into their own devices. In the gallery, certain works of art are identified with a label and a number. Pressing that number on the phone's pad will pull up an audio entry, a transcript for hard-of-hearing visitors and additional object information.

“You can roam the Museum at your own pace and enjoy each collection in a new way,” said Adam Johnson, the Museum’s head of adult programs and interpretive media. “You can access information on the Mobile Guide that is more extensive than what we can provide on a written label.”

The program highlights works in every collection of the Nelson-Atkins. Later this fall, 24 new stops featuring the American Indian collection will be added. Visitors also can take part in two special Mobile Guide tours: one is the family-friendly *Kansas City Sculpture Park*, and the other is the architecturally focused *Stone and Feather: A Tour of Two Buildings*.

Nelson-Atkins staff did extensive research to identify a platform with growth potential. The mobile site provides for future multimedia additions, such as images and video clips that will encourage more engagement with the Museum’s works of art. Although only in its first phase of development, the Nelson-Atkins Mobile Guide already is one of the most comprehensive mobile art tours available anywhere, and is unique in its free web-based design.

Funded through the generosity of George K. Baum & Company and Ann & Kenneth Baum

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

The Nelson-Atkins in Kansas City is recognized nationally and internationally as one of America’s finest art museums. The Nelson-Atkins serves the community by providing access and insight into its renowned collection of more than 33,500 art objects and is best known for its Asian art, European and American paintings, new American Indian and Egyptian galleries, photography and modern sculpture. Housing a major art research library and the Ford Learning Center, the Museum is a key educational resource for the region. The institution-wide transformation of the Nelson-Atkins has included the 165,000-square-foot Bloch Building expansion and renovation of the original 1933 Nelson-Atkins Building. The Nelson-Atkins is located at 45th and Oak Streets, Kansas City, MO. Hours are Wednesday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.; Thursday/Friday, 10 a.m.–9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Sunday, Noon–5 p.m. Admission to the Museum is free to everyone. For Museum information, phone 816.751.1ART (1278) or visit nelson-atkins.org.

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