

Aurora Art Museum

Welcome to the **Aurora Art Museum**, a contemporary cultural hub dedicated to celebrating creativity, fostering dialogue, and connecting communities through the power of art. Founded in 1998, the museum has grown into one of the region's most dynamic art spaces, offering a balance of local innovation and global perspectives.

Our Mission

We believe art has the power to illuminate, challenge, and inspire. Our mission is to provide a space where diverse voices are represented, ideas are exchanged, and every visitor feels a sense of belonging.

What We Showcase

From groundbreaking contemporary installations to timeless works on canvas, the Aurora Art Museum curates exhibitions that highlight both established and emerging artists. With rotating exhibits, interactive installations, and a permanent collection featuring over 2,000 pieces, every visit offers something new to explore.

Our Community

The museum is more than a gallery—it's a gathering place. Through educational programs, artist talks, family workshops, and community partnerships, we strive to make art accessible to all. Whether you're an art student, a curious traveler, or a family looking for inspiration, the Aurora Art Museum has something for you.

A Place to Explore

Located in the heart of downtown, the museum's light-filled galleries, sculpture garden, and café offer visitors a welcoming environment to slow down, reflect, and engage. Our goal is not only to exhibit art but to create meaningful experiences that stay with you long after you leave.

Highlights from the Permanent Collection

1. "Midnight River"

Oil on canvas, 1964

Artist: **Harold Benton (American, 1928–2009)**

A moody landscape painted during the height of the American Abstract Expressionist movement. Benton used sweeping blue and black strokes to capture the movement of water under moonlight. The painting anchors the museum's modernist holdings.

2. “Ceremonial Vessel”

Hand-carved clay, c. 800 CE

Origin: **Mesoamerica**

This earthenware vessel, decorated with geometric patterns, was used in ceremonial rituals. It reflects the intricate artistry of pre-Columbian cultures and stands as a testament to the enduring role of art in spiritual life.

3. “Cityscape in Motion”

Mixed media collage, 1987

Artist: **Alicia Martínez (Mexican-American, b. 1955)**

Martínez layers photographs, newspapers, and acrylic paint to create a fragmented view of urban life in the late 20th century. Her work reflects themes of migration, adaptation, and cultural blending in modern cities.

4. “Aurora Rising” (Sculpture)

Bronze, 2005

Artist: **Jean-Paul Fournier (French, b. 1969)**

Commissioned specifically for the Aurora Art Museum’s opening of its downtown wing, this abstract bronze sculpture greets visitors at the main entrance plaza. Its upward-sweeping form symbolizes growth, renewal, and the city’s evolving cultural identity.

5. “Threads of Silence”

Textile installation, 2010

Artist: **Mina Okada (Japanese, b. 1972)**

Woven from indigo-dyed fabric strips, this large-scale hanging piece explores the absence of sound and communication. The shifting folds of fabric create shadow patterns that change with the gallery’s lighting, echoing the museum’s thematic interest in perception.

6. “Self-Portrait with Window”

Oil on canvas, 1912

Artist: **Clara Weiss (German, 1886–1932)**

A rare example of early 20th-century female portraiture, Weiss's self-portrait combines Expressionist brushwork with a stark, direct gaze. The work provides insight into women's growing presence in the European avant-garde.

7. "Digital Landscape #4"

Video projection with sound, 2018

Artist: **Ravi Kapoor (Indian, b. 1984)**

An immersive new media installation that reimagines traditional landscape painting through generative algorithms. Kapoor's piece continuously evolves, ensuring no two viewings are exactly alike.

Current Exhibitions

- *Light & Shadow: New Dimensions in Contemporary Art*
A collection of immersive installations exploring perception, contrast, and form.
- *Local Visions: Artists of Our City*
Celebrating the vibrant talent within our own community.

Upcoming

- *Threads of Memory* – A textile-based exploration of heritage and storytelling (Opening October 12).
- *The Digital Canvas* – Examining the intersection of art and technology (Opening December 1).

Past Highlights

- *Echoes of Nature* (Spring 2023)
- *Global Perspectives: Women in Art* (Fall 2022)

Hours

- Tuesday – Friday: 10am – 6pm
- Saturday: 10am – 8pm
- Sunday: 12pm – 5pm
- Closed Mondays & Major Holidays

Admission

- Adults: \$12
- Students & Seniors: \$8

- Children under 12: Free
- Members: Free

Location

Aurora Art Museum

123 Main Street, Harrisburg, Pa 17110

Amenities

- Café & Sculpture Garden
- Gift Shop featuring local artists
- Accessible facilities

Events

Our events bring the museum to life:

- **First Fridays:** Late-night gallery hours, live performances, and food trucks.
- **Artist Talks:** Meet the creators behind the work, every second Saturday.
- **Family Sundays:** Interactive workshops designed for children and parents alike.
- **Film Nights:** Screenings of art documentaries and experimental films.

Education

We believe art education inspires lifelong curiosity.

For Schools

- Guided field trips with hands-on activities
- Teacher resources and lesson plans

For Adults

- Studio workshops with practicing artists
- Lecture series exploring art history and current trends

For Families

- Drop-in art making in the Creativity Lab
- Seasonal family festivals

Membership

Become a part of the Aurora Art Museum community.

Benefits Include:

- Free unlimited admission
- Invitations to members-only previews
- Discounts at the gift shop and café
- Exclusive access to travel opportunities with museum curators

Membership Levels:

- Individual: \$60/year
- Dual/Family: \$100/year
- Patron: \$250/year
- Benefactor: \$500/year

Support Us


Your generosity helps us grow.

Ways to give:

- **Annual Fund:** Directly supports exhibitions and programs
- **Corporate Sponsorships:** Partner with us for community impact
- **Planned Giving:** Leave a lasting legacy
- **Volunteer:** Share your time and skills to help bring art to the public

Contact

General Inquiries

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Light & Shadow: New Dimensions in Contemporary Art

Elena Marquez

Born in Madrid, Spain (1983), **Elena Marquez** is a multimedia artist whose practice investigates the interplay between perception, light, and material. She is best known for her large-scale installations that incorporate mirrors, glass, and projected video to create immersive

environments. Her work invites audiences to question how light can both reveal and distort truth, often blurring the boundary between the real and the reflected.

Marquez studied fine art at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and later completed a Master of Fine Arts at the Royal College of Art in London. Over the past decade, her installations have been exhibited in major international venues, including Berlin's Kunsthalle, the Museum of Contemporary Art in São Paulo, and the Palais de Tokyo in Paris. She has received numerous awards, including the International Installation Prize (2019).

When she is not traveling for exhibitions, Marquez maintains a studio in Barcelona, where she continues to explore the poetics of light in both public and private commissions.

Devon Chen

Devon Chen (b. 1990, Vancouver, Canada) is an artist working at the intersection of sculpture, digital media, and interactive technology. His practice is centered on the concept of “living light”—installations that respond to movement, sound, and time. By programming shifting light patterns through algorithmic design, Chen's works transform static exhibition spaces into dynamic, ever-changing experiences.

After studying computer engineering before turning to fine arts, Chen brings a uniquely technical perspective to his creative process. His projects often combine 3D-printed structures with projection mapping and responsive sensors. Chen's recent interactive piece *Prismatica* was presented at the Venice Biennale's emerging artists showcase (2022) and drew critical acclaim for its innovative fusion of technology and human engagement.

Chen currently resides in Toronto, where he teaches digital fabrication at OCAD University while continuing to develop large-scale interactive works for public spaces.

Ayako Watanabe

Born in Kyoto, Japan (1975), **Ayako Watanabe** works across painting, installation, and traditional Japanese media to explore the aesthetics of shadow and silence. Influenced by the philosophy of “ma”—the Japanese concept of negative space—her installations often combine ink painting with carefully choreographed light sources to evoke memory, absence, and impermanence.

Watanabe studied Nihonga (traditional Japanese painting) at Kyoto City University of Arts before moving to Tokyo to pursue contemporary installation art. Her early exhibitions gained attention for blending centuries-old artistic traditions with minimal, modern forms. Her work has since been exhibited at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, as well as international venues in New York, Paris, and Seoul.

Watanabe's practice often involves site-specific projects, with each installation tailored to the spatial qualities of the gallery. By carefully shaping shadows, she creates contemplative environments that invite viewers to slow down and embrace stillness.

Local Visions: Artists of Our City

Marcus Hall

Marcus Hall (b. 1987, Aurora, USA) is a painter and muralist whose bold use of color and layered forms reflect the vibrancy of urban life. Hall is best known for his large-scale murals that celebrate community identity, featuring dynamic figures and patterns inspired by street culture, jazz, and the energy of city neighborhoods.

Hall began his career as a graffiti artist before formally studying painting at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His work bridges these two worlds—bringing the immediacy and accessibility of street art into galleries while continuing to make public art accessible to all. His murals can be seen throughout downtown Aurora, transforming once-blank walls into landmarks of civic pride.

In addition to his studio practice, Hall is deeply engaged in community arts education, running workshops for local youth that encourage creative expression and collaboration. His recent mural *River Rhythms* was commissioned by the city to commemorate Aurora's cultural diversity.

Sofia Ramirez

Born and raised in Aurora (1996), **Sofia Ramirez** is a mixed-media artist whose work is rooted in themes of memory, migration, and cultural identity. She creates assemblages from found objects, textiles, and photographs—transforming everyday materials into richly layered narratives.

Ramirez earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Illinois, where she began experimenting with recycled materials as a way of preserving family history. Her work often incorporates fabric scraps from her grandmother's sewing projects, handwritten letters, or fragments of personal photographs, weaving together past and present.

Her collages and installations have been exhibited in regional galleries and community centers, where they resonate deeply with audiences through their personal yet universal storytelling. Ramirez's practice highlights the significance of heritage and the act of preserving stories through art. She continues to live and work in Aurora, where she mentors young Latinx artists and curates community art events.

Caleb Nguyen

Caleb Nguyen (b. 1992, Aurora, USA) is a photographer whose black-and-white portraits explore themes of identity, belonging, and memory. His images often focus on quiet, intimate moments that reveal the complexity of human experience, from fleeting expressions to overlooked details of daily life.

Nguyen studied photography at Columbia College Chicago, where he developed his interest in portraiture as a means of storytelling. His ongoing series *Ordinary Light* captures members of the Aurora community in unguarded moments, celebrating the subtle beauty found in everyday lives.

His work has been exhibited in both solo and group shows throughout the Midwest and has been published in several regional art journals. Beyond his own practice, Nguyen is committed to making photography accessible, offering free portrait workshops at community centers and collaborating with local nonprofits.