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## **Arts Partner Profile: Institute of Contemporary Art Showcases Established and Emerging Artists**

The University of Pennsylvania in West Philadelphia is home to the city's premier contemporary art museum: the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA).

Founded in 1963, ICA uses site-specific work to create a dialogue between artists and the public. Exhibiting artists have included David Smith, Laurie Anderson, Robert Mapplethorpe and many other artists who defined contemporary art in their time. In 1965 ICA was home to Andy Warhol's first solo museum exhibition. A large crowd arrived for the opening, some to protest pop art, which was controversial at the time. As the crowd grew larger, the director removed Warhol's paintings from the walls to prevent damage. When Warhol arrived, he was mobbed and had to sneak out escorted by police. Warhol was thrilled by the whole experience, even though the paintings were taken down, because he believed he was the art that evening.

ICA works primarily work with living artists, either locally or from around the world. Exhibitions are supplemented with gallery notes, and the museum offers workshop, films, lectures and tours. Many artists participate in these programs, which familiarizes audiences with the process and the ideas behind the art. ICA also collaborates with other institutions around the city: recently artist Karen Kilimnic staged an installation in a local historic house and another recent exhibition collaborated with Bartram's Garden.

Being an Art-Reach arts partner has been beneficial to ICA, according to Jill Katz, the museum's director of marketing and communications. ICA does not have the staff to focus on building new audiences, but Art-Reach can introduce new viewers who might not have otherwise visited the museum. In addition, Art-Reach helps ICA to realize their mission by connecting more people with the artists and the institution. Working with people from different backgrounds and with different needs also enriches ICA programs by incorporating different learning techniques and visual experiences.

The Institute of Contemporary Art is at 118 S. 36<sup>th</sup> Street between Chestnut and Walnut streets. The building is ADA-compliant and easily accessible and recent renovations were made to the restrooms to ensure accessibility. There are two floors of gallery space, the second of which is accessible by elevator.

Current exhibitions include the work of counter-cultural cartoonist—and Philadelphia native—R. Crumb. Art-Reach members can arrange a visit to the ICA by submitting a Museum Request form to the Art-Reach Programming Department.

- Gretchen N Boyum