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Solving for X = Accessibility

ON DISPLAY
September 12–December 8, 2019 | Grafly Gallery

Solving for X is a series of exhibitions organized by the Ulrich Museum of Art in collaboration with university scholars across campus. The intent of the Museum is to work with WSU scholars in all disciplines to create visualizations of their research. The objective is to explore the potential for the Museum to make accessible to the public the fascinating and important research taking place on campus. We are thrilled by the opportunity to work with researchers across campus and excited about the challenges we will face together in discovering how to create visual pathways to understanding.

Our second project in the series features the research of Dr. Vinod Namboodiri, Professor, Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, working in collaboration with Dr. Nils Hakansson, Associate Professor, Biomedical Engineering. They are developing GuideBeacon, a wayfinding app that uses beacons to assist blind and visually (BVI) and mobility impaired people in navigating between any two (indoor or outdoor) points.

We are transforming the Grafly Gallery into a test site for GuideBeacon by offering multi-sensory access to a selection of works of art from the Museum's permanent collection.

GuideBeacon will have directional information, as well as experiential content featuring vivid descriptions of art works displayed in the Grafly Gallery and sculptures featured on the Kouri Sculpture Terrace. On the terrace, located across from the second floor galleries, sculptures can be explored through direct contact, offering immediate personal experiences with

original works of art.

The Ulrich Museum of Art joins other Museums around the globe in recognizing that everyone has the right to participate in the cultural life of the community. We are working closely with WSU's Office of Instructional Design and Access to create touchable tactile representations of works of art from the Museum's collection. Andy Warhol's screen print, *Chicken'n Dumplings,* from 1969, is an example of one of five works included in *Solving for X* that will be on display with corresponding tactile graphics. Visitors can use the GuideBeacon app to gain an understanding of the spatial context of the gallery, letting them know where to find each work of art and guiding them to it. Once a piece has been located, visitors can choose to explore the tactile graphic while listening to a vivid description of the work. Vivid and supportive descriptions make up the experiential content of the app. Also included in the exhibition will be opportunities for sighted people, through simulations of BVI experiences, to increase understanding and awareness.

We thank Dr. Vinod Namboodiri and his graduate students Seyed Ali Cheraghi and Ali Almadan for working with us to make the marvelous GuideBeacon our second *Solving for X* project. Thanks also to Dr. Nils Hakansson for his support and advice.

We are grateful to our lead sponsor, ENVISION for the amazing work they do in our community and beyond. Information on ENVISION will be available at the Museum during the run of the show.

Below: The five works from the Ulrich collection that will be displayed next to touchable 3D representations are: (From left to right) Andy Warhol *Chicken 'n Dumplings,*1969, screen print on paper, 35 x 23 inches; Joan Mitchell *Untitled*, 1956, oil paint on canvas, 83 3/4 x 77 inches; Robert Longo *Untitled,* 1980, charcoal, graphite on paper, 60 x 39 inches; Heidi Zumbrun *Rabbit*, 1999, Duraflex® print on paper, 70 x 46 inches; and Roger Shimomura *American Portrait #1,* 2002, Andy Warhol's acrylic paint on canvas, 63 x 75 x 5 inches.
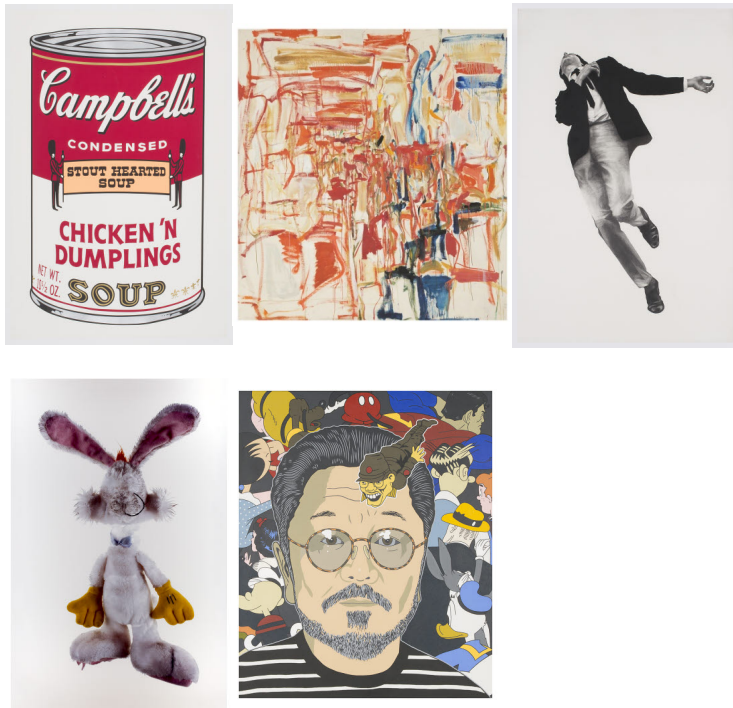
Below: Blind and visually-impaired museum visitors interacting with the tactile graphic of a work of art.

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