

University Group Tour Topics

Review the group tour topics below before making your reservation. Please note that all tours need to be scheduled at least **3 weeks** in advance. All tours last 1 hour except VTS tours which last 45 minutes.

Special Exhibition Tours

Bes Ben: The Mad Hatter of Chicago

(April 20, 2018 – January 6, 2019)

Paul Textile and Fashion Arts Galleries

Limited to 30 visitors

One of America's most celebrated milliners, Benjamin B. Green-Field was Chicago's "Mad Hatter" for forty-nine years. With \$500 and the help of his sister Bessie (the Bes of Bes-Ben) he opened his millinery shop in 1919, and eventually expanded to 5 stores throughout the city. Bes-Ben hats were coveted by women of all ages, although only a few could afford them. Known for elaborate, humorous, flamboyant creations, Chicago's "Mad Hatter" left a remarkable and enthralling fashion legacy. Today his hats are regarded as captivating surrealistic works of art.

Collecting Contemporaries: Recent Acquisitions from the Koch and Wolf Collections

(May 4, 2018 – December 16, 2018)

McCormack Forefront Galleries

Limited to 30 visitors

This exhibition highlights two of the largest gifts of modern and contemporary art made to the IMA over its 135-year history, donated by longtime supporters Kay Koch, and Joan and Walter Wolf. The exhibition features works by artists such as Andy Warhol, Alex Katz, Judy Pfaff, John Cage, Sol LeWitt, Ed Ruscha, Claes Oldenburg, Robert Longo and James Rosenquist.

Sensual/Sexual/Social: The Photography of George Platt Lynes

(September 30, 2018 – February 24, 2019)

Allen Whitehill Clowes Special Exhibition Gallery

Explore the legacy of visionary American photographer George Platt Lynes through this exhibition of photographs from the collection of the Kinsey Institute, Indiana University. Lynes' visionary work catapulted him to notoriety as a New-York-based commercial fashion and ballet photographer, but resulted in his drift from the spotlight when it was revealed that he photographed male nudes as well. Lynes also turned his lens on his social circle – the artistic and literary minds of the mid-20th century – who accepted him as a gay man during a period of harsh anti-LGBT laws in America. Learn about Lynes' groundbreaking work with lighting and darkroom manipulation and his personal passion, the male nude, considered taboo and illegal in the 1930s and '40s. ***Please note: Select artworks in this exhibition contain nudity.***

Interactive Dialogue

Closer Look Interactive Dialogue

Limited to 2 groups of 20 students (40 total)

Participants in a Closer Look session will observe, question, and think more deeply about a selected artwork in an hour-long session which will focus on a single work of art. A museum educator serves as a facilitator for each encounter to enhance interactive dialogue, and provide additional information about the art or artist if the group discussion calls for interpretation. Students are encouraged to use their own thoughts, emotions and voices to participate in this open-ended dialogue in order to develop enhanced understandings and share unique viewpoints.

VTS (Visual Thinking Strategies)

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is a facilitated discussion method used to encourage careful looking, critical thinking, vocabulary development, and an understanding of multiple perspectives. The VTS tour focuses on a small number of carefully chosen works of art that cover various media, cultures and time periods. Led by a docent, visitors will hold in-depth group discussions that share ideas and explore artwork in a new way. The tour focuses on student observation and sharing and does not provide art historical information. For more information on this tour and VTS, contact the Coordinator of School and Group Services. VTS tours last 45 minutes. If the group would like to engage in a debriefing of their tour, the VTS tour lasts 60 minutes.

Gallery Tours

Nazi-Era Looted Art and Museums: Continuing the Work of the Monuments Men

Limited to 30 students, who have undertaken in-depth study of WWII

Monuments men and women were museum and cultural professionals who helped the Allied military forces safeguard the art the Nazis stole and worked to return it once World War II came to an end. Art museums the world over continue their work by conducting provenance research, or research on the history of ownership of works in their collection. Students will learn about how some European paintings in the IMA's collection are intertwined with looting during WWII and subsequent Allied efforts at restitution, and why research into the history of ownership is important in American art museums.

Creative Hoosiers

Students will learn about Indiana artists, designers, poets and writers with a tour of art by and about some renowned creative Hoosiers. Many of the artists in the IMA's collection attended the Herron School of Art for their initial training. Some of the artists remained in Indiana all of their lives; many more spent time here and then continued their training and careers elsewhere. This tour may include stops in our American, Contemporary, Design and special exhibition galleries.

Focus: Faces

Students will observe and discuss how artists throughout history have represented faces—human and animal, real and imaginary. Participants will see faces represented using a variety of techniques and in a variety of materials and discuss how faces are used to show emotion, tell stories and illustrate ideas. This tour may include portraits, faces depicted in sculpture, masks and more abstract works.

Focus: Places

Students will explore the ideas surrounding “place” including interiors, natural settings, cityscapes, and seascapes. Participants will compare and contrast how artists have explored, depicted and included the natural world in their art at different historical times and in different cultures, including viewpoint and perspective. Participants will discover that not all artistic representations of nature are realistic—that artists may take liberties with the landscape to create a more visually successful image or one that tells a stronger story.

Focus: Spaces

This tour will include two-dimensional depictions of space and will explore methods and materials of three-dimensional art from around the world, including Asia and Africa. With more recent art, the term sculpture became a label for almost any form of art activity other than painting. Participants will see traditional sculpture and also become familiar with 3-D art forms, discuss various sculptural media and techniques in the galleries, and on the museum grounds—weather permitting.

Spotlight: Africa

Limited to 60 students

This tour will explore Africa - the world’s second-largest continent and the cradle of humankind. The arrangement of these works of art in the galleries highlights themes such as power, the importance of ancestors, and life transitions.



African Art Cart Option: For groups with 20 or fewer students, an African Art Cart experience is offered as part of the tour. Deaccessioned African Art objects will be available for examination by students; a docent will facilitate the presentation.

Spotlight: America

This tour will ask students to think about “What is American about American art?” From ancient America through Modernism and Contemporary, works of art in a variety of media will be explored.

Spotlight: Asia

Limited to 60 students

This tour will introduce students to Chinese and Japanese art from the distant to the more recent past. Works of art in a variety of media will be explored.

Asian Art Cart Option: For groups with 20 or fewer students, an Asian Art Cart experience is offered as part of the tour. Deaccessioned and purchased Asian Art objects will be available for examination by students; a docent will facilitate the presentation.

Spotlight: Contemporary

This tour will introduce students to the art of our time. The tour will include exploring works in a variety of media as well as a wide range of ideas and themes.



Spotlight: Design

The IMA's 11,000-square-foot Design Gallery is the largest collection gallery devoted to modern and contemporary design in the country. The tour will explore the design process – from inspiration to production.



Spotlight: Europe

This tour will explore the art of Europe from the Middle Ages through the middle of the 20th century. Works of art in a variety of media will be explored.

Self-Guided Tours

Visitors interested in structuring their own exploration of Newfields can schedule a self-guided tour of the IMA Galleries, The Garden and/or featured exhibitions.

Accessibility Tours

Touch & Audio Descriptive Tour

The Touch & Audio Descriptive tour is an accessible tour program for students who are blind or possess low vision. These gallery tours are designed to give individuals of all ages and abilities – along with their family, companions or caregivers – the opportunity to engage in a discussion of works of art in our permanent collection through the use of touch and/or descriptive narration and participant interaction. For the touch portion of the tour, visitors are provided with nitrile gloves to wear as their touching is guided by docents who also describe the work of art. Note that this tour requires a 3-week notice.

A Garden Experience for Everyone: for those with limited mobility or vision

A garden tour that focuses only on the Garden for Everyone, or a tour that involves that area plus a short walk to the Overlook Garden is suitable for those in wheelchairs or those who

cannot undertake long walks or be comfortable on irregular terrain. It is also an available option for those with limited vision. This tour lasts an hour more or less, depending on the group. Available April – October.

Tours Outside of the Main Museum

Lilly House Tour

Limit 40 students

Restored to its 1930s grandeur, the Lilly House, former home to businessman J.K. Lilly, Jr., is an exquisite example of a traditional country estate. The surrounding grounds offer breathtaking views and a newly restored historical, organic garden. Tour the home and step back into early 20th century Indiana history.



Garden Tour

This garden tour focuses on the landscapes in The Garden and the Country Estate surrounding the Lilly House featuring stately mature trees and lawns plus many areas planted with a variety of garden species, both common and rare. This tour last 1 hour and may involve uneven terrain and steps. Available April – October.

Outdoor Sculpture

The purpose of this tour is to view outdoor sculpture in the IMA's collection to understand what makes sculpture different from painting and to look at different materials and why artists choose them. Available April – October.

The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park: 100 Acres Tour

Limit 30 students

Join a knowledgeable guide for an experience in The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park: 100 Acres. Beginning at Lake Terrace, visitors will look for signs of wildlife, witness changes in the lake or river, or have discussions about native or invasive plants. Experiences will be seasonally influenced with flexibility to the visitors' interests. Available April – October

Native Trees & Shrubs of The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park: 100 Acres

This tour is designed for those who wish to learn more about the identification, characteristics and uses of trees and shrubs that are native to Indiana. The tour lasts 1-2 hours, depending on the group. Available April – October.

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