

Gregory Wittkopp Biography

Gregory Wittkopp is the Director of Cranbrook Art Museum and is responsible for shaping the mission and programs of Michigan's leading forum for contemporary art, architecture and design. Since becoming Director in 1994, he has both brought numerous major traveling exhibitions to the region—including *Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future, When Philip Met Isabella: Philip Treacy's Hats for Isabella Blow, Ruth Duckworth: Modernist Sculptor, Looking Both Ways: Art of the Contemporary African Diaspora; Aluminum by Design: Jewelry to Jets; Alexis Rockman: Second Nature; Messengers of Modernism: American Studio Jewelry, 1940-1960; Being & Time: The Emergence of Video Projection; The Sound of One Bomb Clapping: Sculptures and Actions by Roman Signer; Evidence: Photography and Site; Art on the Edge of Fashion; and Greer Lankton: It's all about ME, Not You--* and overseen the development by Cranbrook Art Museum of national traveling exhibitions and catalogues including *Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle*. He also has curated numerous exhibitions for the Art Museum, including *Richard DeVore: Retrospective and "Last Works"* (Summer 2008), *Hot House: Expanding the Field of Fiber at Cranbrook, 1970-2007* (2007) and a survey of the paintings, drawings and prints of Bridget Riley (2005).

At the same time he has worked to develop Cranbrook Art Museum's permanent collection most notably through the acquisition of the Dr. John and Rose M. Shuey Collection of Contemporary Art and the publication of the accompanying catalogue. He also directed the exhibition and catalogue project, *100 Treasures of Cranbrook Art Museum*. The book is the first-ever guide to the Art Museum's collection published during its nearly 75-year history. Most recently, he has overseen the acquisition of the John Bloom Collection of decorative arts and design, a recent bequest to the Art Museum.

Wittkopp currently is overseeing a \$20 million renovation and expansion of Cranbrook Art Museum that will include a new state-of-the-art Collections Wing.

In his former position as Curator of Collections for the Museum, he researched and directed the restoration of Saarinen House from 1988 through its transformation into a museum in 1994. In addition he has curated numerous exhibitions and wrote many essays on the architecture and design of Eliel Saarinen, including the award-winning book, *Saarinen House and Garden: A Total Work of Art* (Abrams, 1995). He also initiated Cranbrook's campus-wide outdoor sculpture restoration and conservation program, which now includes Cranbrook's entire collection of works by Carl Milles and many other important sculptors.

In the region, he maintains a high profile within the cultural community, including serving on the steering committee for the Contemporary Art Council and its *Art Detroit Now* project, and serving on the Director Search Committee at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit.

He holds a B.S. in Architecture from the College of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Michigan and an M.A. in Art History from Wayne State University. Before beginning his tenure at Cranbrook in 1985, he was Curator of Exhibitions at the Saginaw Art Museum, Michigan.