

**HISTORICAL REPORT, PREPARED UNDER  
THE DIRECTION OF THE BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES, EMBODYING THE REPORT TO  
THE CORPORATIONS, MADE AT THE  
ANNUAL MEETING, MAY, 1891**

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Historical Report, prepared under the direction of the board of Trustees, embodying the report to the corporations, made at the annual meeting, May, 1891 by Various

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# **VARIOUS**

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The  
Detroit Museum of Art  
HISTORICAL REPORT

May, 1891.



THE DETROIT MUSEUM OF ART.

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## THE DETROIT MUSEUM OF ART.

### The Art Loan Exhibition of 1883.

The Detroit Museum of Art had its origin in the Art Loan Exhibition of 1883.

This Exhibition was conceived by Mr. William H. Brearley in the previous year. The purpose from the beginning, as was stated by Mr. Brearley in an article in *The Evening News* in the latter part of 1882, was the ultimate establishment of an art institute, should circumstances appear favorable to the same.

The first meeting held for its consideration was at the residence of Mr. James F. Joy, on December 6, 1882. At a subsequent meeting, February 27th, 1883, an organization was effected by the election of an executive committee as follows :

W. H. Brearley, Chairman.	Mrs. H. H. H. Crapo Smith.
Fred. E. Farnsworth, Secretary.	Mrs. Morse Stewart.
John L. Harper, Treasurer.	Mrs. E. G. Holden.
Hon. H. P. Baldwin.	Mrs. E. C. Skinner.
Mrs. Richard Storrs Willis.	John L. Warren.

This committee held 45 meetings in all.

On March 7, 1883, a bond was executed, guaranteeing the projectors against financial loss on account of the exhibition, to which the following signatures were appended :

H. P. Baldwin.	D. M. Ferry.
Thomas W. Palmer.	James L. Edson.
James E. Scripps.	E. S. Heineman.
Thorndike Nourse.	Charles C. Hodges.

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C. R. Mabley.	Thomas S. Sprague.
James McMillan.	Robert P. Toms.
Clarence A. Black.	Mrs. Jessie Willis Broadhead.
M. S. Smith.	Hugh McMillan.
W. H. Brearley.	George V. N. Lothrop.
Philo Parsons.	E. Y. Swift.
Allan Shelden.	Wm. A. Moore.
Richard Storrs Willis.	C. H. Buhl.
John S. Newberry.	W. B. Moran.
Richard Macaulay.	C. A. Newcomb.
James F. Joy.	E. A. Brush.
Mrs. C. R. Mabley.	James Burns.
George H. Scripps.	George H. Hammond.
Wm. A. Butler.	George Peck.
Edward Kanter.	D. C. Whitwood.
Wells W. Leggett.	W. B. Wesson.
D. Whitney, Jr.	A. H. Dey.
E. W. Meddaugh.	W. H. Tefft.
David Preston.	Henry B. Brown.
Moses W. Field.	Simon J. Murphy.
Mrs. W. B. Wesson.	Willis E. Walker.
Samuel R. Murphy.	Thomas Pitts.
C. C. Randall.	Wilhelm Boeing.
R. A. Alger.	George B. Remick.
Francis Palms.	

The committee at once proceeded to lease from the Bagley estate, at a rental of \$500, the lot adjoining St. Anne's Church, on Larned street, upon which, in seventy-six days, a building 135x157 feet in size, containing twenty-six rooms, 21,195 feet of floor surface, and 2,000 running feet of wall space, was erected. It was completed on August 24th, 1883, and the exhibition opened on September 1st. It closed on November 12th of the same year.

Five hundred and twenty-eight different persons contributed works of art and other objects for exhibition, the number and value of the exhibits being as follows :



THE DETROIT MUSEUM OF ART.

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	Number.	Estimated Value.
Oil Paintings .....	987 .....	\$709,005
Water Colors.....	206 .....	13,830
Prints and Drawings....	455 .....	10,797
Sculpture, Bronzes, etc....	163 .....	34,465
Miscellaneous objects,....	3,040 .....	59,380
Total.....	4,851	\$827,477

An insurance of \$469,232 was carried on the property.

The largest day's attendance was 6,476 persons, and the entire attendance 134,924 persons.

The receipts and expenditures of the exhibition were as follows :

RECEIPTS.

From admissions .....	\$33,433 65
From sale of Catalogues.....	5,567 15
Commissions on sales .....	1,873 48
Sundries.....	3,386 00
Total.....	\$44,260 28

EXPENSES.

For building.....	\$15,322 86
Salaries .....	6,922 34
Insurance .....	4,752 71
Printing and advertising ...	3,132 31
Transportation.....	2,777 96
Cost of Catalogues.....	2,195 87
Sundries .....	6,713 85
Total.....	\$41,817 90

Through the instrumentality of Mr. Richard Storrs Willis, His Holiness Pope Leo XIII. was induced to present to the enterprise, with his blessing, a fine picture, representing the marriage of St. Catharine, by an old but unknown master. This, with a painting by F. D. Millet, "The Story of CEnone," which was purchased in part by a popular subscription in connection with the exhibition, and \$1,521.60 in cash, were turned over later to the Detroit

Museum of Art, as the net results of the enterprise. It is worthy of record that this Art Loan Exhibition is believed to have excelled in magnitude and merit all previous exhibitions of the kind ever held in this country.

### Steps Towards the Formation of a Permanent Institution.

While the subject of the feasibility of holding the Art Loan of 1883 was still a matter of discussion, in April of that year, the following letter was received by Mr. Brearley from Hon. Thomas W. Palmer, then United States Senator from Michigan :

DETROIT, April 5, 1883.

*W. H. Brearley, Detroit :*

DEAR SIR—Believing that the city of Detroit has taste and wealth enough to found and maintain an art gallery which will be creditable to the culture and public spirit of her citizens, and desiring to contribute thereto, I have this day put into the hands of Honorable Wm. A. Moore securities to the amount of \$10,000, with interest from January 1, 1883, for the purpose of aiding in the purchase of a lot and the erection of an art gallery thereon.

Said securities will be turned over by Mr. Moore for that purpose when \$40,000 shall have been secured from other sources, and a corporation shall have been formed, or some practical plan shall have been adopted to accomplish the end in view, provided said conditions shall be met by July 1, 1884.

I regret very much that my business prevents my being present at the exercises to-night, and wish you and the gentlemen associated the largest success in inaugurating this movement to call forth, develop and unite for practical ends the artistic feeling in our city. I am aware the result cannot be anything but gratifying.

Respectfully yours,

T. W. PALMER.

Encouraged by the success of the Art Loan Exhibition, Mr. Brearley at once took in hand the raising of the fund of \$40,000 suggested by Senator Palmer for the founding of a permanent art institute, and by January 26, 1884, the

following list of citizens was completed, each of whom had agreed to contribute \$1,000 to the fund. Later on the same persons became the original incorporators of the Detroit Museum of Art:

R. A. Alger.	Samuel R. Mumford.
H. P. Baldwin.	C. A. Newcomb.
Joseph Black.	*Thomas W. Palmer.
W. H. Brearley.	Francis Palms.
C. H. Buhl.	James E. Scripps.
James L. Edson.	George H. Scripps.
Charles Endicott.	Allan Shelden.
Fred. E. Farnsworth.	*Mrs. E. C. Skinner.
D. M. Ferry.	*Mrs. H. H. H. Crapo Smith.
George H. Hammond.	M. S. Smith.
*John L. Harper.	Frederick Stearns.
*Mrs. E. G. Holden.	*Mrs. J. T. Sterling.
Bela Hubbard.	*Mrs. Morse Stewart.
Collins B. Hubbard.	Mrs. Robt. P. Toms.
*L. T. Ives.	E. W. Voigt.
Geo. V. N. Lothrop.	Hiram Walker.
C. R. Mabley.	E. Chandler Walker.
James McMillan.	Willis E. Walker.
George F. Moore.	*John L. Warren.
Wm. A. Moore.	*Mrs. R. Storrs Willis.

(Those marked \* were named by Hon. Thos. W. Palmer under his \$10,000 contribution.)

The first meeting of the above incorporators was held on February 27, 1884, at Room No. 46, Moffat Block, Detroit. There were 22 members present. Hon. H. P. Baldwin presided, and Mr. Frederick E. Farnsworth acted as secretary. A committee on organization was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Wm. A. Moore, Chas. Endicott, W. H. Brearley, Geo. V. N. Lothrop and L. T. Ives.

On May 5 this committee reported that there was no law on the statute books authorizing incorporations for the purpose in view, and on June 28 a committee, consisting of Messrs. Geo. V. N. Lothrop, James E. Scripps and Wm. A. Moore, was appointed to draft a suitable law and procure its introduction in the Legislature.