

WORCESTER ART MUSEUM

FESTA ROMA Spring Community Day at the Worcester Art Museum Brings Ancient Rome to Life

WORCESTER—February 24, 2020—Before the fateful Ides of March come miniature chariot races, tasty kabobs, art Odysseys, trivia contests and a Project Roman Runway featuring toga haute couture! The Worcester Art Museum, in collaboration with young Ancient Rome enthusiasts from two local schools, greet spring with an all-day Festa Roma on Saturday, March 14, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Brutus is but a mere afterthought at this festive Spring Community Day.

Latin Club students from Abby Kelly Foster Charter School and Doherty High School join with the Education and Experience Department at the Worcester Art Museum to plan a spectacular day for the community. To connect daily life in Ancient Rome with the Museum's Roman, Greek and arms and armor collections, all are invited to take part in the lively activities—free of charge with the price of admission. The full list of Festa Roma activities is available at worcesterart.org.

Besides the quiz-bowl games and the miniature chariot races, the region's Roman Legion will demonstrate military drill maneuvers and display Roman-replica tools like wax tablets, cookware, and crafts that guests can examine and use. Visitors clad in togas have the option of taking a stroll down the Project Roman Runway, while families may embark on Roman art quests throughout all of the Museum's galleries. Younger members of the family may choose between three different story hours while older kids can try several art-making activities including Roman coins, miniature chariots and flower mosaics. Those who've worked up hearty appetites need look no further than Grub Guru's delicious Mediterranean food.

"There are very active Latin Clubs in the region," says Aileen Novick, manager of Education and Public Programs at the Worcester Art Museum. "A lot of people don't know about this time period, though many students in our region have a keen interest. The kids are so good at making really fun things from what they study. And they have helped create exciting activities to highlight daily life in Ancient Rome."

Activities include:

Project Roman Runway

All are invited to come to Festa Roma clad in toga attire and, also, to participate in Project Roman Runway, an event led by students from Abby Kelly Foster Charter School.

Demonstrations by the regional Roman Legion

The Roman Legion III Cyrenaica will welcome visitors in the Renaissance Court, where they demonstrate how items from Ancient Rome such as wax writing tablets, historic attire, and weaving and cooking tools are used. All are invited to experiment with these tools.

Roman military drill and maneuvers

The Roman Legion III Cyrenaica conduct Roman military maneuvers. The maneuvers take place in the Courtyard, weather permitting, or in the Conference Room.

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Gladiators demonstrate their skills

The Abby Kelly Foster Charter students lead a series of authentic gladiator moves and battle techniques.

***Certamen* for all**

Students from Doherty Memorial High School and Abby Kelly Foster Charter School host a quiz-bowl-style game. Usually *certamen* is conducted by students of Latin, Greek and classical civilizations but during Festa Roma, the quizzes focus on trivia and everyone is invited to test their wits.

Museum-wide art odysseys

In this Ancient Times Quest, families explore the Museum's galleries in search of Roman or Roman-influenced art. Prizes are awarded to those who successfully complete their quest.

Story time for young history buffs

Youngsters have opportunities to experience ancient cultures during fun story hours at 11 a.m., and 1 and 2 p.m.

Roman-style art making

Families are welcome to make Roman coins, flower mosaics and miniature chariots at art stations between 10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

Special gallery tour

At 1 p.m., WAM docent Marilyn Butler leads an anecdote-filled tour—From Ancient Goddess to Christian Saints — throughout the galleries.

At 2 p.m., WAM docent Mark Mancevice leads a Zip Tour of Roman hairstyles. All are welcome to join in and ask questions.

Grub Guru savory treats

The popular food truck, Grub Guru, plans to serve a Mediterranean-inspired array of delicious treats including lemon chicken skewers with tzatziki, gyros, falafel, baba ganouj and homemade baklavas. The Museum Café will be closed, but the dining room will be open.

Museum Shop

Enjoy shopping from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the tastefully curated Museum Shop.

About the Worcester Art Museum

The Worcester Art Museum creates transformative programs and exhibitions, drawing on its exceptional collection of art. Dating from 3,000 BC to the present, these works provide the foundation for a focus on audience engagement, connecting visitors of all ages and abilities with inspiring art and demonstrating its enduring relevance to daily life. Creative initiatives— including pioneering collaborative programs with local schools, fresh approaches to exhibition design and in-gallery teaching, and a long history of studio class instruction—offer opportunities for diverse audiences to experience art and learn both from and with artists.

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Since its founding in 1896, the Worcester Art Museum has assembled a collection of 38,000 objects: from the ancient Near East and Asia, to European and American paintings and sculptures, and continuing with works by contemporary artists from around the world. WAM has a history of making large scale acquisitions, such as its Medieval Chapter House, the Worcester Hunt Mosaic, its 15th-century Spanish ceiling, and the Flemish *Last Judgment* tapestry. In 2013, the Museum acquired the John Woodman Higgins Armory Collection, comprising two thousand arms and armor objects. It continues to commission and present new works, such as 2017's installation of the immersive *Reusable Universes* sculptural series and *Organic Concept* environment by Shih Chieh Huang.

The Worcester Art Museum, located at 55 Salisbury Street in Worcester, MA, is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and the third Thursday of every month from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Admission is \$18 for adults, \$8 for children 4-17, \$14 for seniors 65+ and for college students with ID. Admission is free for Museum Members and children under age four. On the first Sunday of each month, admission is free for everyone. Museum parking is free. For more information, visit worchesterart.org.

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