

Arts center changes name to Anderson Museum of Art

By Kelly Dickey | The Herald Bulletin
Aug 26, 2017

ANDERSON — As the Anderson Center for the Arts celebrates its 50th anniversary, the gallery is also celebrating its future with a new name.

The center unveiled its new logo and new name — Anderson Museum of Art — at its 50th anniversary gala Thursday night.

“I’m extremely excited about the name change. It’s been a long time coming,” Executive Director Deborah Stapleton said. “Obviously (we’ve had) 50 years of collecting, so I think this will more adequately reflect who we are and the concentration we’re going to have on the collection going forward.”

The organization has acquired about 800 pieces of art over the last five decades, but it’s been largely out of view from the public. Fifty pieces are on display in the galleries now through mid-October for the 50th anniversary exhibition.

But Stapleton said she wants to make the permanent collection more accessible to the public in the future, whether it’s through more exhibitions or merely viewing work online.

Although the Anderson Museum of Art is receiving a new name, Stapleton said people shouldn’t expect anything less in services.

“I think the main change is going to be we’re following, as many museums have, we’re still going to have a lot of activities and outreach,” she said. “And I think one of the things is, the collection is going to play an even more important role in what we do moving forward.”

Much of Thursday night's gala honored arts in the community over the last 50 years, as well as those who have contributed to the museum's success. Gala Chair Tom Bannon also recognized the organization's relationship with the Anderson Symphony Orchestra, which is also celebrating its 50th year.

Andrew Hopper, board of trustees president, said the museum plays a part in sharing the impact art can have on the community. He said art motivates, mends, inspires, intrigues and empowers people, and it contributes to the well being of those who encounter it.

"It's the transformative and unifying power of art that persuades us all to be here tonight to celebrate the organization's rich history and also to be boldly stepping into the future of this organization," he said.

The museum will continue its 50th anniversary celebration throughout the year with events and outreach programs.

To honor the museum's location at the former library, it will partner with the Anderson Public Library — which is celebrating 30 years at its current location — for a celebration on Oct. 5. They'll have mutual open houses and events throughout the day.

Stapleton said three "behind-the-scenes" events will also take place throughout the year. One will cover how the center obtains and maintains its permanent collection; one will include a tour of the museum and will go over the story of its restoration and upkeep; and the third will discuss the process of creating exhibitions, programs and educational events.

The 50th anniversary celebration will conclude with a volunteer recognition gala at the end of the year.