



GENERAL INFORMATION

Artrain USA - An art museum housed in vintage rail cars that travels via the nation's railroads, Artrain USA's mission is to enrich lives and build communities through the arts. It brings world class art exhibitions and art education programs to communities and their residents. Artrain USA delivers exceptional opportunities for learning, growth and art appreciation while encouraging the development of local cultural programs, organizations and communities.

Brief History - Founded as the Michigan Council for the Arts (MCA) inaugural project in 1971, Artrain was intended to be a two or three year program. Its mission was to deliver visual art exhibitions and educational programs to Michigan cities without access to traditional museums and to encourage the development of local arts agencies. Artrain USA reached 191,000 visitors in 28 Michigan cities in its first year. News of Artrain quickly spread. Within two years, MCA received requests from other states to share Michigan's unique art museum on a train. With the assistance from the National Endowment for the Arts, Artrain launched its first national tour in 1973. The project took on a momentum of its own, and in 1975, Artrain USA became an independent nonprofit arts organization. Artrain USA continues to deliver outstanding arts and cultural programs to cities across the country. Artrain USA's national headquarters is in Ann Arbor, MI

Audience - Artrain USA reaches a broad audience by traveling to communities with populations from 300 to 3 million. Artrain USA travels to approximately 30-35 cities reaching 80,000-100,000 people each year. During the school year, classroom students account for 40% of the visitors. Attendance is often high in proportion to community populations. For example, 3,461 people or 170% of the population of Spruce Pine, NC visited Artrain USA during a five day stop in April 2005.

Exhibits - To date, seventeen exhibitions have been showcased onboard Artrain USA representing collaborations with internationally respected institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian Institution, Cranbrook Institute of Art and the Detroit Institute of Art. World renowned artists featured in Artrain USA exhibits include: Elizabeth Catlett, Dale Chihuly, Willem de Kooning, Robert Indiana, Jacob Lawrence, Dan Namingha, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Robert Rauschenberg, Norman Rockwell, Andy Warhol and James Wyeth among many others.

National Tours - Artrain USA tours an exhibition across the U.S. - from coast to coast - for three to four years. Since its inception, Artrain USA has traveled to 45 states and welcomed more than 3 million people during almost 800 community visits.

What's Onboard? - Artrain USA's *Native Views: Influences of Modern Culture* exhibition opened in April 2004 and will travel through December 2007. Artrain USA's decision to present a Native American art exhibition was prompted by numerous requests. Discussions with Native American community leaders confirmed the value of a traveling Native American art exhibition. To assure that the Native American community was actively involved in the project, Artrain USA established a National Advisory Council (NAC). NAC recommended a contemporary Native American art exhibition to depict individual creativity as well as continuity with the cultural past of Native America. The guest curator is Joanna Bigfeather (*M.F.A., Western Cherokee and Mescalero Apache*). Ms. Bigfeather is a respected Native artist, curator and arts administrator. She is the former director of the Institute of American Indian Art Museum in Santa Fe, NM.

Native Views: Influences of Modern Culture displays 71 contemporary artworks by 54 living, Native American artists representing 45 Tribes. It explores the ways Native Americans artists are influenced by popular culture and offers mainstream America the opportunity to look at and consider different insights into contemporary society. In addition, the exhibition seeks to redefine Native American art by broadening the limits and stereotypes that currently define it. Exhibition works are on loan from the artists, private lenders, the Heard Museum, the Institute of American Indian Art and the Poeh Museum.