



**For Immediate Release**

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**ONLY IN GRAND RAPIDS**

**(June 19, 2007 – Grand Rapids, MI)** The thoughtful traveler seeking exclusive cultural and entertainment options need look no further than Grand Rapids, Michigan. While many may recognize Grand Rapids as the home of the 38<sup>th</sup> President, Gerald R. Ford, Grand Rapids also is a premiere arts and cultural destination, boasting many one-of-a-kind experiences in the state, the nation and the world!

**World Exclusive:**

The new Grand Rapids Art Museum (the GRAM), opening in October 2007, is the first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified art museum in the world!

**United States Exclusives:**

In 1969, Grand Rapids received the first-ever grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts for urban sculpture, which was used to purchase "La Grand Vitesse" by Alexander Calder. Today, downtown Grand Rapids boasts some 20 sculptures by such acclaimed artists as Calder, Mark DiSuvero, Maya Lin and Joseph Kinnebrew.

Rosa Parks Circle in downtown Grand Rapids is the first-ever urban park designed by Maya Lin, creator of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC. Rosa Parks Circle includes elements showcasing water in frozen, liquid and vapor states.

The Frederick Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids is one of only two places in the world to see The American Horse, originally conceptualized by Leonard Da Vinci 500 years ago, and brought to life in 1999 by sculptor Nina Akamu. This stunning bronze sculpture stands 24 feet high and weighs 15 tons. The second American Horse is located in Milan, Italy.

Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park also boasts the largest temporary butterfly exhibition in the nation. Each spring, thousands of colorful, exotic butterflies from Central and South America and Asia grace the Lena Meijer Conservatory for eight weeks.

The Public Museum of Grand Rapids was the first public museum in the nation to receive official accreditation from the American Museums Association.

If your name is Robert, Bob, Roberta or some variation thereof, you can join the BOB Club at the BOB, short for the "Big Old Building". This 70,000 square foot, restored historic warehouse with five restaurants, a nightclub and comedy club is set in Grand Rapids' entertainment district. Membership in The BOB Club is free and you don't have to be from Grand Rapids to participate. Club benefits are numerous and listed on the website at [www.thebob.com](http://www.thebob.com).

**(more)**



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**Michigan Exclusives:**

The 1913 Room at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel is the only AAA Five-Diamond restaurant in the entire state.

The Grand Rapids Ballet Company is Michigan's only professional ballet company and will be unveiling a new 300-seat theatre this fall.

The new JW Marriott hotel, the luxury brand of the Marriott family, which opens this fall, is the only JW Marriott in Michigan, and throughout the entire Midwest.

Grand Rapids is home to the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum where the 38<sup>th</sup> President was laid to rest on January 3, 2007.

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