



# SONOMA VALLEY MUSEUM OF ART

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*Engaging the community in the art and ideas of our time*



### Our start:

Though Sonoma had long been known for its rich cultural life, encompassing visual, literary, musical, dramatic, culinary, and winemaking arts, the town lacked a central place where artists, residents, and visitors could meet to interact.

In 1998, a group of community members founded the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art to meet that need. They believed that the residents of Sonoma would benefit from a local museum to promote the creation and exhibition of fine arts from around the world and to provide educational opportunities for the entire community.

### What we do:

The Sonoma Valley Museum of Art provides world-class art exhibitions of local, national, and international artists. The art of Picasso, Goya, and Rembrandt – as well as those of local artists – such as Chester Arnold and Jim Callahan – are just a few of the works shown at the museum. The Sonoma Valley Museum of Art also provides educational programs for people of all ages. Its A.R.T.S. program (Art Rewards the Student) includes field trips to the Museum and places an artist into every fourth and fifth grade classroom to work on an art project with the students.

### A single story:

Every summer the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art hosts a summer Young Artist and Writers Camp for teenagers. Young adults work directly with accomplished writers and artists to produce works of art that reflect their ideas, emotions, and creativity. This past summer, one of our students, Renee Serota, reflected on her three years in the program. Her words excerpted here from a longer essay, perfectly capture the goals and intent of the Camp:

*Over the years, the camp has exposed me to artists and the types of art that I would otherwise never have experienced, and I have grown as an artist in ways that are still revealing themselves. I have watched the other students, young adults of every age and from every background, learn about art, and, at the same time, learn about themselves. I have seen them take chances by showing slivers of themselves to the world through the art they produce. The Young Artists and Writers camp has reminded me of the importance of art in my, and everyone's, life.*

*Art has enabled me to work through challenges in my life and to stay in touch with my emotions in a way that validates them while not giving them too much weight. Teenagers (and I would hazard a guess to say everyone) need a healthy outlet for releasing and dealing with emotions. Art can be a lifeline, a golden string of hope that connects you to the inner self that is often lost within the whirlwind that is school, work, society, or the pressures of everyday life.*

### Our future:

The Sonoma Valley Museum of Art will continue to provide innovative exhibitions and educational programs and hopes to expand educational programs. We hope to provide art experiences for every school-aged child living in Sonoma.



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