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## CAM ready to welcome guests back



• "Acquisition Highlights 2010-2020: Paintings and Sculpture"

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"We will be an amazing place once we reopen – physically, and also online," he said.

Carla Castellani, whose parents, Armand and Eleanor Castellani founded the gallery, said, "We're just totally excited to be reopening ... and welcoming our audience and our community back."

She said the COVID-19-related museum closure actually helped bring the new exhibitions to fruition.

"It's something that we at the museum have wanted to do for a long time, and this just gave us a chance to really go through 10 years of acquisitions and to look at things, prioritize, and to also look at how we can further use the art in the future, especially in educational programming," she said.

Castellani is an adjunct professor

at NU in the fine art program. "I have curated, over the years, three or four exhibitions. But it's been a long time, so this was really nice to dip my hand back into it, to work with the staff."

She said the three permanent collections have been reorganized this past year, as well, giving the visitor the opportunity to fully view the artwork in all onsite collections.

Castellani said the museum means a great deal to the family and the community: "It's very fulfilling and it's just a mission my parents had been on since the late '60s to use art as a vehicle for education, for enjoyment, for growth, for enrichment – for all those kinds of things."

She said her family has close ties with NU that brought the gallery to the campus: "There was just a wonderful relationship there, and at the uni-

versity campus it's a perfect forum for using the arts for education."

Castellani said one of her parents' main goals was achieved five or six years ago with the inception of the art history museum studies program: "It allows students to come in and really use the collection in a different way than just non-majors would."

"Every year, the relationship between the academics and the museum tightens up and more and more instructors, professors, are using the museum in all of their varied disciplines," she said.

Walker, the museum's educator for 15 years, knows the collection inside and out. Before the pandemic hit, she had been curator of education for four years, and assumed her current position six months ago. She has a bachelor's in art history, a master's in museum studies, both from Buffalo State College, and is now getting an MBA at NU.

On a tour of the museum, she showed off the five new exhibitions, plus the three permanent collections, which include works by Picasso, Modigliani, Frederic Church and Charles Burchfield.

The new ones are:

- Salvador Dali's "Les Diners de Gala" – lithographs with a surrealistic twist on some of his favorite meals.
- "Artists View the Falls: 300 Years of Niagara Falls Imagery," dating from 1698 to 2006.

• "Acquisition Highlights 2010-2020: Paintings and Sculpture" – a 10-year retrospective of significant donations to the museum's permanent collection that draws from a diversity of artists.

"Everyone from Giacomo Balla of Italian futurism, to Mark Kostabi, who's a living contemporary artist," Walker explained. "What unifies the show is that everything was added to our collection within the past 10 years. And this was actually curated by Carla Castellani," Walker said.

• "Gather Together: Quilting Niagara," featuring traditional and contemporary quilts by local quilters from the Kenan Quilters' Guild.

• "The Buffalo Society of Artists 125 Catalogue Exhibition" – a showcase of contemporary mixed-media artworks.

The Castellani Art Museum is part of the free Discover Niagara Shuttle route.

"You can jump on the shuttle right outside of the museum and take it all the way to Lewiston, take it all the way up to Old Fort Niagara. It goes all the way out to Lockport this year, all the way down to the Falls," Walker said. "So you can really spend an entire day up here in Niagara County. Check out the museum, grab lunch in Lewiston, go see Niagara Falls. It's a short trip up from Buffalo. And if you haven't been to our museum yet, you really need to stop by this summer."

The new membership program offers reciprocal partnerships with 12 Niagara County cultural organizations.

"For example, the Underground Railroad Heritage Center offers a buy-one, get-one-free admission for our members. Every institution offers a different deal," Walker said. The network of institutions is called Cultural Alliance of Niagara.

Visit [www.artsniagara.org](http://www.artsniagara.org) to check the calendar and get more information on each organization. CAM is online at [www.castellaniartmuseum.org](http://www.castellaniartmuseum.org).

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