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**ALLENTOWN ART MUSEUM AND CITY CENTER OPEN DOWNTOWN CREATIVITY LAB
Glass-walled studio will showcase the artmaking process in action**



Allentown, PA—The Allentown Art Museum and City Center Lehigh Valley are partnering to bring art to Hamilton Street in Allentown’s downtown district. A street-level studio dubbed the Creativity Lab on the ground floor of Three City Center at 645 Hamilton allows passersby to witness the creative process firsthand and to participate in artmaking themselves. Starting on July 5 and continuing throughout the summer, Lehigh University architecture professor and artist Anthony Viscardi will be working on a monumental three-dimensional mural that the Museum has commissioned for installation in its Trexler Hall this fall. *Shadow Landings: An Immersive Art Installation* is scheduled to open in the Museum on November 2.

“The Creativity Lab of the Allentown Art Museum is a new and unique space on Hamilton Street that provides for the engagement of an artist with the community,” says David Mickenberg, president and CEO of the Museum. “The first of its kind, CL is an experimental and creative environment where Anthony will be able to conceive and build his fifty-five-foot mural while working with, and getting input from, the community.”

“City Center recognizes the important role that accessible art plays in creating a vibrant urban community,” says City Center Vice President, Director of Project Design & Corporate Branding Jane Heft. “We’re thrilled to partner with Allentown Art Museum to welcome the Creativity Lab at Three City Center, which is the fifth location within our development that we’ve dedicated to gallery and studio space for local artists.”

Additional City Center art spaces include the MEZZ Gallery in the Renaissance Allentown Hotel, Gallery 724 at 724 Hamilton Street, Gallery on the Walk on the ArtsWalk, and Ann Schlegel’s studio at 840 Hamilton Street.

The Creativity Lab's first in-house artist, Anthony Viscardi will be at work in the space on many weekdays this summer and will post a sign on the door when he is available to talk with visitors about his mural project, which explores shadows as generators of form. "Being able to observe daily the artist's exploration in the making of an idea, the creative process is demystified, becoming available to anyone who dares to wonder," Viscardi says.

In addition to offering daytime access to the artist, the Creativity Lab will host an open-studio night every third Thursday of the month. On July 21, August 18, September 15, and October 20 from 6:30 p.m. till 8 p.m., visitors can talk with Viscardi, listen in on a Q&A led by Museum staff, and see how the mural is progressing. Admission is free. The Museum is offering visitors to the Creativity Lab that night a discount on a selection of drinks at Grain restaurant, across the street. Discount drink tickets should be picked up at the Museum, at 31 North Fifth Street, earlier in the day and will be validated at the Creativity Lab for use that evening; tickets are limited to the first fifty visitors each night.

The Creativity Lab also will be the site of a series of free shadow-casting workshops led by Viscardi on Saturdays, July 23 through August 13, from 3 p.m. till 5:30 p.m. All ages are welcome. Participants, or "shadowhunters," will capture, record, draw, and construct shapes cast by the sun. The images created by participants will be incorporated into a vinyl graphic that will be displayed either in the Creativity Lab or another venue. For more information please contact Chris Potash at cpotash@allentownartmuseum.org.

Anthony Viscardi received full professorship in the Department of Art, Architecture, and Design at Lehigh University in 2007 and chaired the department from 2003 to 2010. He earned his Bachelor of Architecture from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and a Masters of Architecture from Georgia Institute of Technology. He cofounded Hoss/Viscardi & Co. Architectural Design Firm in Atlanta, where he served as Partner and Principal Designer from 1979 until 1992. Throughout his career in architectural practice and as a professor of architecture, Viscardi has continued to work as an artist. He was awarded a coveted MacDowell Colony Fellowship in 2012 to continue his theoretical drawing/visual investigations on "shadow mapping," the premise for his exhibition at the Allentown Museum.

Viscardi has had solo exhibitions at the Lehigh University Zoellner Arts Center, the Williams Center for the Arts at Lafayette College, the Atlanta College of Art, Lehigh University Wilson Gallery, Gallery164 in Buffalo, NY, and in architectural galleries FXFOWLE in New York City and HDR in Princeton. As well, he has participated in group exhibitions at Nexus Contemporary Art in Atlanta, University of the Arts and Third Street Art Gallery in Philadelphia, Auburn University Frank Seltzer Gallery, Allentown Art Museum, the Banana Factory Center for the Arts in Bethlehem, and in Milan, Rome and at the Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa in Venice, Italy,

Shadow Landings will build on the artist's prior exploration of the shadow as a mapping of space and time and will allow visitors to become part of the work as their own shadows mingle with those created by the installation.



The Allentown Art Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that participates in the cultural, educational, and economic life of the Lehigh Valley. Defined by a unique combination of tradition and innovation, our collections, educational partnerships, collaborative and community based programs, and exhibitions are dedicated to inspiring the broadest possible public engagement, access, and service. For more information please visit AllentownArtMuseum.org.

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