WELCOME to America’s official, national museum and education center for self-taught, intuitive artistry! Since its opening in 1995, the American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM) has sought to promote the recognition of intuitive, self-reliant, creative contribution as both an important historic and essential living piece of treasured human legacy, and has championed creative acts of social justice as life’s highest performance art. The one-of-a-kind American Visionary Art Museum is located on a 1.1 acre wonderland campus at 800 Key Highway, Baltimore Inner Harbor. Three renovated, historic, industrial buildings house wonders created by farmers, housewives, mechanics, retired folk, the disabled, the homeless, as well as the occasional neurosurgeon—all inspired by the fire within. From carved roots to embroidered rags, tattoos to toothpicks, the visionary transforms dreams, loss, hopes, and ideals into powerful works of art.

SOME HANDY INFO

ADMISSION:
$15.95 Adults
$13.95 Seniors
$9.95 Students
Free Children 6 and under
Free Fan Club Members
Discounted admission rates offered for Groups of 10 or more.

HOURS:
AVAM is OPEN 10am–6pm Tuesdays–Fridays.
CLOSED Mondays, and on Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.
For restaurant hours visit EncantadaBaltimore.com.

LOCATION:
800 Key Highway
Baltimore, MD 21230
410.244.1900 • http://avam.org

MEDIA CONTACT:
Nick Prevas, nick@avam.org
410.244.1900 x241

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WONDERLAND CAMPUS

Spanning three renovated, historic, industrial buildings, AVAM’s campus is 67,000 sq ft under roof & includes amazing outdoor wonders like the giant Whirligig, sculpture plazas, the dazzling Community Mosaic Wall, the LeRoy E. Hoffberger Speaker’s Corner, and a popular summer movie theater.

ZANVYL A. KRIEGER MAIN BUILDING
Originally the 1913 offices of the Baltimore Copper Paint Company, AVAM’s Main Building was transformed into the architectural gem it is today by architects Rebecca B. Swanston, AIA and Alex Castro starting in 1989. Renovations included a curving spiral layout inspired by the Fibonacci sequence, a spiral staircase with metal balustrade and sculptures by local artist David Hess, and eventually, the glittering exterior Community Mosaic Wall created by at-risk youth as part of AVAM’s Shining Youth/Shining Walls mosaic apprenticeship program—the largest in the country. In 1997, AVAM won the coveted National Award for Excellence from the Urban Land Institute, along with many other top design awards. Featuring four floors packed with fantastic exhibitions, a one-of-a-kind museum store: SIDESHOW, and the all-new restaurant: ENCANTADA, AVAM’s Main Building is your first stop on an unforgettable journey of enchantment and wonder.

ANITA RODDICK TALL SCULPTURE BARN
Formerly the Four Roses whiskey warehouse, the Sculpture Barn boasts 45-foot ceilings that can accommodate large sculptural works and is a perfect host site for lectures, private receptions and celebrations. The exterior facade features the iconic neon LOVE sign, and inside visitors will find a life-size, interactive chess set of sculpted metal angels and aliens made exclusively from found/scrap materials by North Carolina artist Lyle Estill, and the 1300 sq ft of painted panels titled The Seven Days of Creation by visionary artist William Thomas Thompson. THE WILDFLOWER GARDEN is home to a family of Critters by Clyde Jones, sculptures by Ted Ludwiczak, Nek Chand, a wooden Meditation Chapel built on-site by Ben Wilson, and more!

THE JIM ROUSE VISIONARY CENTER
In 2004, AVAM developed a second large Whiskey Warehouse and more than doubled its footprint to include an additional sculpture plaza and outdoor movie theater. Architectural firm Cho Benn Holback & Associates led the renovation, incorporating an expansive 1st floor exhibition space, a well-equipped 2nd floor classroom and conference room, and a gorgeous 3rd floor space that serves as a one-of-a-kind venue for museum events and private rentals—weddings, banquets, corporate events, etc. Named after the inspirational social visionary, the late James Rouse, the building further emphasizes AVAM’s commitment to the belief that, “Creative acts of social justice are life’s highest and best performance art.”

Artwork: Adam Kurtzman’s Giant Golden Hand, photo by Eric Bruce Salsbery. Building photos by Larry Yust, Dan Meyers, Paul Burk, & Alain Jaramillo.
CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

THE BIG HOPE SHOW
October 3, 2015 – September 4, 2016 • Levels 1 + 2, Main Building
The Big Hope Show opens on the eve of the American Visionary Art Museum’s 20th anniversary celebration and is an original and unabashedly idealistic, art exhibition that champions the radiant and transformative power of hope. Over twenty-five visionary artists, among them many “super survivors” of enormous personal traumas, exhibit soulful creations reflecting their personal transcendence, and, often, a heightened or newfound creativity and sense of humor.

MATT SESOW: SHOCK AND AWE
Memorial Day Weekend 2016 – June 4, 2017 • Level 3, Main Building
An exclusive exhibition of Washington, D.C.-based self-taught artist Matt Sesow’s “raw, visceral, good to the bone” paintings. Among the original 150 plus works on display, visitors will witness Sesow’s salute to the first 100 American soldiers killed in the Iraq War, his fantastical depictions of animals and birds, personalized tributes to great humanitarians, his own autobiographical paintings, and an illustrated “Key” to the artist’s repeated personal language icons.

PERMANENT COLLECTION GALLERY
Ongoing • Levels 1 + 2, Main Building
The 1st floor Rebecca and Joseph Meyerhoff Gallery, and 2nd floor Gretchen V. and Samuel M. Feldman Gallery feature rotating selections from the museum’s permanent collection of over 4,000 works of visionary art. Visitor favorites include Wayne Kusy’s Lusitania model made from over 193,000 toothpicks, the Applewood Figure created by an anonymous British mental patient, Mr. Imagination’s Bottlecap Throne, and works by Martin Ramirez, William Kurelek, Mary Proctor, Judith Scott, and many more.

MORE SIGHTS & WONDERS

JIM ROUSE VISIONARY CENTER
Ongoing • Level 1: The Cabaret Mechanical Theatre of London: a collection of whimsical, interactive automatons; Screen Painters Of Baltimore exhibit: a celebration of the uniquely Baltimore art form with full-size replica row-houses displaying screens painted by Baltimore’s finest; with: The Screen Painters (1989) documentary (inside the row-home!) that shines a light on the artists and their desire to paint; Kinetic Sculpture Race Vehicles featured in our annual East Coast Championship Race; Delton Smith’s World’s First Robot Family; Leonard Knight’s Love Balloon; Andrew Logan’s giant sculpture of Baltimore icon Divine, and tons more. Level 2: Remembering Jim Rouse Into Our Future exhibit; Thou Art Creative Classroom for K-12 and Adult workshops; Visionary Conference Room, and more. Level 3: Large banquet room for museum events and private rentals with access to David Hess’ Bird’s Nest Balcony.

OUTDOOR ARTWORK
Ongoing • Throughout our campus: Vollis Simpson’s 55’ tall Whirligig dedicated to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness • Andrew Logan’s glimmering Cosmic Galaxy Egg which features Hubble images of birthing nebulae and dying stars • Dr. Evermore’s Steel Phoenix • David Hess’ Bird’s Nest Balcony • Bob Benson’s Universal Tree of Life • Nancy Josephson’s blinged-out Gallery-A-Go-Go Bus • a Wildflower Sculpture Garden featuring Ben Wilson’s wooden Meditation Chapel plus Critters by Clyde Jones • A Very Visionary Star-Spangled Sidewalk, honoring the bicentennial of our national anthem.
WHAT IS A VISIONARY? Visionaries perceive potential and creative relationships where most of us don’t. English writer Jonathan Swift put it simply, “Vision is the art of seeing things invisible.” Such vision lies at the heart of all true invention, whether that special vision manifests as an astonishing work of art like those created by the intuitive artists featured at the American Visionary Art Museum or as a medical breakthrough, a melody never before sung, some deeper understanding of the cosmos, or as a way in which life could be better, more justly lived. Visionaries have always constituted humankind’s greatest “evolutionaries.”

Without visionaries’ willingness to be called fools, to make mistakes, to be wrong, few new “right” things would ever be birthed. Visionaries are brave scouts at the frontier of the unknown. They explore their visions with a passionate single-mindedness. Albert Einstein rightly observed, “Imagination is more important than knowledge.”

Creative acts intended to uplift, defend, and enlighten fulfill every function that can be asked of a work of art. They inspire us, make us think in new ways, and birth new beauty and dignity into our world.

WHAT IS ART? The ancients—the Greeks, Egyptians, Hopis, and New Guinea tribesmen—were among earth’s most prolific art-making peoples. Yet, none had any word for “art” in their respective languages. Rather, they each had a word that meant “well-made” or “beautifully performed.”

Our American Visionary Art Museum believes that this view of what art really means is as perfect an understanding of art as ever was. It speaks to an art incumbent upon all its citizens, pervasive throughout all the acts of our daily life. Its emphasis is on process and consciousness, not mere artifact.

Martin Luther King, Jr. expressed his profound respect for the true artistry each member of a society can uniquely evidence to bless our communities, “If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the Hosts of Heaven and earth would pause to say, Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.”
1964 • Museum Founder Rebecca Alban Hoffberger (then Puharich) has the idea for a unique new museum and education center that would emphasize intuitive creative invention and grassroots genius while she is employed as the Development Director of People Encouraging People, Inc.—a program of the Department of Psychiatry at Sinai Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

1989 • American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM, Inc) incorporated as 501(c)3 non-profit. The City of Baltimore offers AVAM exclusive developer’s rights on the 800 Key Highway Inner Harbor property, contingent on design and neighborhood approval and obtaining full project funding. Architects Rebecca Swanston, AIA and Alex Castro are introduced by Rebecca and agree to collaborate on a design. Scope of project and $7.6 million campaign now defined, fundraising begins. Otto Billig, M.D. and British founder of art therapy, Edward Adamson, each gift their important research archives and library collection to AVAM. LeRoy and Rebecca marry.

1992 • Maryland US Senator Barbara A. Mikulski spearheads leadership to pass a rare unanimous Resolution of Congress that designates the American Visionary Art Museum as America’s official national museum, education center, and repository for intuitive, self-taught artistry. Fundraising and more glowing global media accommodation 2,000 people. AVAM hosts 150+ weddings and private events/year. Total rentals and admissions income help generate one of the highest percentages of earned income to total annual operating costs for a museum in the U.S. Debt-free, AVAM’s Founding Seven Education Goals and Mission Statement are included in the American Association of Museums’ 2006 “Handbook of Best Museum Practices.” AVAM celebrates its 15th anniversary with a spectacular outdoor movie theater and renovating a large second whiskey warehouse that includes a well-equipped classroom and a top floor meeting center that can accommodate 500. Cho Benn Halback & Associates are JRVC expansion architects. AVAM now has a total of 67,000 sq ft under roof in addition to its two outdoor sculpture plazas, wildflower meditation garden, the LeRoy E. Hoffberger Speaker’s Corner, an amphitheater and a popular summer movie theater. Museum Permanent Collection reaches 4,000+ works and includes works of art, the film archives of Light-Saraf films, videos, research and documents related to visionary art, thought and practice. • Chicago legendary retailer, Ted Frankel, visits and fast returns to expand AVAM museum store. “Sideshow” opens.

1997 • AVAM awarded prestigious National Award for Excellence from the Urban Land Institute, along with many other top design awards, and receives rave reviews of thematic shows, education materials and architecture. Famed authors, humanitarian, scientists, actors, musicians and engineers are attracted from the start to visit, collaborate, and lend their visionary fresh thinking to enhance the exhibitions and educational programming. Three employees from the local homeless shelter are hired and go on to own their own homes. AVAM’s Founding Seven Education Goals and Mission Statement are included in the American Association book of Best Museum Practices. These Goals are beloved by teachers in many countries and were used, verbatim, to found NYC’s Lower Eastside Girls Club.

2000 • AVAM begins America’s largest youth-at-risk and youth incarcerated, mosaic apprenticeship program—artfully covering, with recycled mirror, glass, and china shards, our Museum’s 3-story exterior curved walls. This ‘Shining Youth/Shining Walls’ transformation program results in stunningly beautiful walls that are also beauty in action.

2004 • AVAM doubles its “Wonderland” campus to its current 11.1 acre footprint by developing a second sculpture plaza, adding a spectacular outdoor movie theater and renovating a large second whiskey warehouse that includes a well-equipped classroom and a top floor meeting center that can accommodate 500. Cho Benn Halback & Associates are JRVC expansion architects. AVAM now has a total of 47,000 sq ft under roof in addition to its two outdoor sculpture plazas, wildflower meditation garden, the LeRoy E. Hoffberger Speaker’s Corner, an amphitheater and a popular summer movie theater. Museum Permanent Collection reaches 4,000+ works and includes works of art, the film archives of Light-Saraf films, videos, research and documents related to visionary art, thought and practice. • Chicago legendary retailer, Ted Frankel, visits and fast returns to expand AVAM museum store. “Sideshow” opens.

2005 • Summer: Flicks From The Hill opens in The Hughes Family Outdoor Theater with starlit seating that can accommodate 2,000 people. 2009 • AVAM opens a summer arts camp for kids, followed by an after-school and library outreach programs. Exhibitions continue to surprise and delight visitors of all ages.

Today • The final phase of the Shining Youth/Shining Walls mosaic project is completed on AVAM’s Main Building. AVAM hosts 150+ weddings and private events/year. Total rentals and admissions income help generate one of the highest percentages of earned income to total annual operating costs for a museum in the U.S. Debt-free, our Board’s stated goal is set to raise a $25 million endowment before exploring the many exhibitions, unique education programs, “From Sea to Shining Sea.” There are visionary art environments open to the largest and continues to influence and all over the world.
EDUCATION

MISSION
AVAM provides a variety of activities and programming designed for learners of all ages. Over 5,000 K-12 students visit AVAM each school year for docent-led tours, scavenger hunts, and hands-on art-making workshops. Title 1 school groups are provided with free admission and workshops year-round.

OUTREACH
In 2012, AVAM developed off-site after-school arts programming in partnership with the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore City, which has expanded to include branches of the Baltimore County Public Library system as well. These free after-school experiences allow students to learn about AVAM’s visionary artists and the everyday materials they use through creating their own personal pieces. AVAM has also recently created outreach programs at a Howard County homeless shelter and senior center.

VISITOR ENGAGEMENT
Throughout the year, AVAM offers drop-in studio sessions for museum visitors to create their own artwork inspired by the museum’s collection and exhibitions. These sessions include the Spring Break Make & Take Workshops, and the Weekend Walk-In Workshop series, where one Saturday a month is designated as an open classroom workshop time with exhibition-themed workshops led by our Education team.

COMMUNITY EVENTS
Throughout the year, AVAM offers free family-friendly programs, including: January’s Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration: providing free admission, workshops, and entertainment to over 3,000+ annually; May’s Baltimore Kinetic Sculpture Race: where upwards of 10,000 spectators and participants experience an all-day land and sea race and witness the inventive spirit of teams pedaling human-powered sculptures; our Fourth of July Pet Parade: allowing visionary pets and their owners to showcase their talents and costume-making skills; the summer Flicks From The Hill outdoor film series: where thousands gather for free museum admission and engaging family programing before the movie; and December’s Sock Monkey Saturday: a massive family event and fiber arts workshop attracting 700+ participants each year with the spirit of making something unique and all yours.

A complete list of AVAM’s programs, events & educational offerings is @ AVAM.ORG.

AVAM’S EDUCATION GOALS
1. Expand the definition of a worthwhile life.
2. Engender respect for and delight in the gifts of others.
3. Increase awareness of the wide variety of choices available in life for all... particularly students.
4. Encourage each individual to build upon his or her own special knowledge and inner strengths.
5. Promote the use of innate intelligence, intuition, self-exploration, and creative self-reliance.
6. Confirm the great hunger for finding out just what each of us can do best, in our own voice, at any age.
7. Empower the individual to choose to do that something really, really well.

NEW FOR 2016!

WEEKEND WALK-IN
DROP-IN VISIONARY WORKSHOPS FOR ALL AGES!
Select Saturdays in 2016 • 1—4pm • Cost: $5/Participant
Join us for a hands-on, drop-in, art-making workshop once a month in the AVAM Classroom (2nd fl. JRC). Our Education staff will help you explore new creative territory and make a project inspired by one of our beloved visionary artists. Supplies and boundless inspiration provided!

2016 SCHEDULE:
JANUARY 2: Recycled Bot Shop
FEBRUARY 13: King’s Mouth
MARCH 5: Hope Chests
APRIL 2: Night Light Luminary
MAY 14: Visionary Vehicles
JUNE 11: Cosmic Eggs
JULY 2: Recycled Bot Shop
AUGUST 6: King’s Mouth
SEPTEMBER 3: Hope Chests
OCTOBER 1: Night Light Luminary
NOVEMBER 5: Visionary Vehicles

More info on the Weekend Walk-Ins & our other education programs @ AVAM.ORG.
In joyful recognition of LeRoy E. Hoffberger’s unique role as co-founder with Rebecca Hoffberger of the American Visionary Art Museum, and for his lifelong, extraordinary and passionate leadership as both humanitarian and cultural philanthropist, our national museum’s exterior, dazzling, youth-at-risk-built mosaic walls bear his good name.

This pro-youth program that covers our museum walls with recycled and sparkling mosaics first began in 2001 via a partnership with our museum’s near neighbor, the Southern High School, and its students identified as at great risk of dropping out. Their very hard team work created Phase I: the three-story tall shining mosaic facade that faces east, fronting Key Highway. The museum’s cafe balcony surface was then completed in 2006 in Phase II, working with youth in even greater need of mentoring—incarcerated juveniles in Baltimore City’s penal system. Its curved surface depicts a sunset and a moon-rise with circular “planets” that are wholly imagined and created by our individual youth apprentices. The stunning beauty of the mirrored mosaic walls encircling our national museum gives us a chance to share the tragic news that nearly 90% of the teens serving time in Baltimore City are doing so for NON-violent crimes! Our Visionary museum’s skilled apprenticeship program encourages teamwork, pride in creating something both exquisite and lasting, and results in real job skills, useful for the rest of their lives. After a threshold of dedicated apprenticeship hours, each participant is rewarded with a rare lifetime museum membership. Beginning in 2013, Phase III of our multi-year wall apprenticeship program began on the west/Federal Hill face of our main building—a night sky with an artistic Aurora Borealis swirling and glowing iridescent in greens and purples. The final Phase IV: the top concrete building crown on our roof was completed in 2015, and literally “crowns” or completes this multi-year project—a true radiant beacon of hope expressing LeRoy’s and our belief that caring investment in young people upfront makes far better ethical and economic sense than the cost of their correction and punishment.

The LeRoy E. Hoffberger Shining Youth/Shining Walls stand in glorious testimony to Roy’s enormous generosity of spirit and steadfast belief that young people are to be treasured by us all as the seeds of our City’s strength and vitality.

Project Directors: Phase I: Jack Livingston & Beth Secor, Phase II & III: Mari Gardner, Phase IV: Sara Harper

**CRITICAL PRAISE**

“The Visionary Art Museum provides America with its most essential, innovative cultural experience. Baltimore is privileged to have such a great institution. All our cities should participate in the vital, invaluable, unique perspective it provides.”

—COLIN EISLER, NYU INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS

“Many local art lovers think that Washington’s best museum is in Baltimore, specifically the stockpile of offbeat genius and piercing obsessions known as the American Visionary Art Museum.”

—WASHINGTON POST

AVAM is listed #1 in the “Top 10 places to see before you’re 10” list—the only museum ranked alongside national treasures like Niagara Falls, Muir Redwood Forest, and the Grand Canyon.

—TRAVEL + LEISURE MAGAZINE

“Baltimore, home of the first American Museum in 1786, is since (November, 1995) home to the most innovative: the delightful American Visionary Art Museum.”

—THE ECONOMIST

“The American Visionary Art Museum is my favorite museum. I LOVE this museum.”

—MATT GROENING, SIMPSONS CREATOR + “WHAT MAKES US SMILE?” CO-CURATOR

“AVAM is more than a museum for untrained artists. It is even more than just a museum. It is an artistic vision of better people in a better world.”

—HOWARD ROSENBLOOM, PHILANTHROPIST

“I was born and grew up in England, my parents are from India, I live part of the time in Santa Barbara, California and part of the time near Kyoto, Japan... and I have never found anywhere a place like this glorious museum... where there’s a real sense of vision and such beauty, such vibrancy, such excitement, color and imagination.”

—PICO IYER, TRAVEL WRITER AND JOURNALIST

“[AVAM] allows you to become intimate with the artwork in a profound way. The works on display give a concrete shape to the impermanent things such as dreams, imagination, and vision.”

—ART & ANTIQUES MAGAZINE

“This IS a wonderful place, isn’t it!”

—ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU

“This is a museum of infectious high spirits... a celebration of the infinite permutations of the creative spirit... a galloping success.”

—CATHERINE FOX, THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION

Patricia Schultz, author of “1,000 Places to See Before You Die,” curates our global museum collection covering... AVAM is ranked among the top 30 Must-See Global Museums along with the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, The Hermitage in St. Petersburg, and Museum of Modern Art in New York.

—DELTA SKY MAGAZINE
From AVAM—a race of wacky, imaginative, TOTALLY HUMAN-POWERED WORKS OF ART, DESIGNED TO TRAVEL ON LAND, THROUGH MUD, AND OVER DEEP HARBOR WATERS, constructed out of used bicycles, gears, and parts, created by a lunatic genius who tinkers around in the garage or backyard (do you know this person?)! The machines can be simple, small crafts, piloted by only one brave soul, or they can be over 50 feet long, extremely well-engineered, sophisticated vehicles powered by a team of pilots. Pilots (“Kinetauts”) compete for the most coveted GRAND MEDIOCRE EAST COAST CHAMPION AWARD (finishes right in the middle), and the highly prized NEXT TO THE LAST AWARD (finishes, well, next-to-last), and other serious trophies including ART, ENGINEERING, BEST BRIBES and more. The all-day race kicks off at 10AM at American Visionary Art Museum (arrive early to take part in the Opening Ceremony and Blessing of De Feet). Other great spots to see the vehicles are the 1st Checkpoint atop Federal Hill; The Water Entry at the boat ramp at Canton Waterfront Park; the uphill Mud-Pit in Patterson Park; the not-so-quick-Sand Pit in Patterson Park; and, of course, anywhere along the 15-mile route throughout Baltimore City.

**FLICKS FROM THE HILL**

FREE OUTDOOR MOVIES PRESENTED ON FEDERAL HILL

THURSDAYS: JULY 7–AUGUST 25, 2016 • SCREENINGS @ 9PM

EACH FLICKS NIGHT: AVAM IS OPEN & FREE 5-9PM • FUN PRE-FLICKS EVENTS!

Grab a blanket, picnic under the stars, and watch a great film selection inspired by AVAM’s current exhibition **THE BIG HOPE SHOW**. The Hughes Family Outdoor Theater features seating for more than a thousand on the natural amphitheater formed by Federal Hill; a 30-foot wide screen held from above by a Giant Golden Hand; a twinkling view of the city; and an amazing community experience that is **FREE**. Find out why AVAM’s **#Flicks** series was listed by Travel + Leisure Magazine as one of the “WORLD’S BEST FREE THINGS,” and frequently tops many other “Best of” lists around the city. Don’t miss **Pre-FLICKS Events** including FREE museum admission from 5–9pm, the Flicks Premiere Party, Tours de Federal Hill bike rides with partner Race Pace Bicycles, Zumba with partner Federal Hill Fitness, Yoga with partner Yoga Works, Food Truck night, and more! **Movie rain location** (inside): AVAM’s Jim Rouse Visionary Center, 3rd floor.


For the complete line-up of 2016 movies and Pre-FLICKS events, visit avam.org