

STMA Goes High Tech With Audio Tour

The Steffen Thomas Museum of Art is proud to announce the initiation of a new audio tour system using Creative Zens, an ipod-like listening device. Audio tours, employed by countless museums, tourist sites and educational institutions throughout the world, are a great, convenient way for visitors to learn as they listen and look.

Rick Spors, President/Owner of PC Tech Help, Inc., volunteered to create the STMA tour using information and images provided by the museum. Rick became acquainted with STMA during a Greene-Putnam Rotary Club meeting held at the museum on June 19th. He subsequently recruited Angela Criscoe, an instructor in Mass Communication at Georgia State University in Milledgeville, to assist with the project.

The program features a brief biography of Steffen Thomas and commentary read by Museum Director Elizabeth d'Huart, STMA docent Linda Toman and Pantheon Gallery's John McCarthy describing approximately 10 of the over 300 artworks displayed in the museum. An image of each of the selected pieces, including paintings, sculptures and ceramics, appears on the Creative Zen screen. The tour also contains a rendition of "How my Father, Steffen Thomas, Became a Sculptor" written and delivered by Lisa Conner, STMA's Arts Outreach Program© Director and Thomas's youngest child.

The Greene-Putnam Rotary Club donated funds for the 14 listening devices. In addition, the following private individuals matched the contribution: Micki Tanner and John Baird, Becky and Tom Branan, Peggy and Hal Eckard, Maureen Harty and Peter Faletti, Linda and Ron Maples, Linda and Dr. Lou Pack, Maxine and Denis Pepin, Kathee and Frank Gabriel, Louie Carter, Kay and Rick Spors, and Father Philip Ryan.

The new audio tour system made its debut on Thursday, September 25th during a VIP reception/tour preview held at the museum. Richard Matthews of Classic Wines supplied the drinks; Kimberly Nunery of Pounders, the hors d'oeuvres. Robbi Hycks-Wylie of Lakeside Companies provided motor coach transportation from Lake Oconee.

Reception guests unanimously agreed that the new system greatly enhances the Steffen Thomas Museum experience. "The audio tour provides a great perspective on the artist, his work, and his family," one participant wrote for a museum survey. Another guest praised the "clarity of the speakers and the careful pacing of the program."

The 20-minute audio tour, which can also be downloaded onto a computer, is now available to museum visitors. We are most grateful to all the participants who brought this important project to fruition.

The Steffen Thomas Museum of Art, located at 4200 Bethany Road in Buckhead, is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 am to 4 pm. Admission is adults, \$5; seniors and students, \$3; members and children under six, free. For more information, please call 706-342-7557 or visit [HYPERLINK "http://www.steffenthomas.org"](http://www.steffenthomas.org)