



festival
2010
june 4,5,6

**Stephanie Bergsma &
Kimberly VandenBerg**
Co-Chairs

c/o 1614 Vinecroft NW
Grand Rapids, MI
49544-1462

or

PO Box 68440
Grand Rapids, MI
49516-8440

616.459.1300

www.festivalgr.org

Contact:

Joann Reeves – 616-915-6502

Heidi Ragchaa – 616-308-2464

festivalgr@gmail.com

FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS 2010 POSTER CAPTURES FUN AND DIVERSITY IN WEST MICHIGAN

Grand Rapids, Mich. – November 16, 2009 – In West Michigan, Festival of the Arts means many different things to people, from culinary delights to music, the arts and more. That's why the 2010 Co-Chairs Stephanie Bergsma and Kimberly VandenBerg wanted to find local artists who would evoke the energy of Festival. This year's collaboration between Reb Roberts and Robert Neumann made it possible to capture all of what Festival of the Arts represents.

Roberts and Neumann have created a poster filled with youthful vibrancy, and the design and colors seem to "pop" with energy and creativity. "It's just like Festival itself, and exactly how we had imagined it," says Bergsma.

Reb Roberts, a self-taught folk artist, is co-owner of Sanctuary Folk Art Gallery with his wife and fellow artist Carmella Loftis. Ten years ago, they established their business on South Division Avenue, which added to the growth of the Avenue for the Arts.

Robert Neumann began his professional career in 1981, after receiving his photography degree with an emphasis in photojournalism. Today, he is a successful commercial photographer who travels the country and weaves together stories of everyday people through a unique blend of artistic photography.

Before creating the Festival 2010 poster, Neumann and Roberts had not previously worked together. "I've known and respected Reb's work for at least a decade, and I was honored to be asked to collaborate on this project," says Neumann.

Neumann spent a day taking photos of Alexander Calder's *La Grande Vitesse* to make sure he had many different angles and perspectives. As the sun traveled across the plaza, he was drawn to the shape of the sculpture and how the rivets appeared from below.

Neumann gave Roberts the final print as a canvas to work with. According to him, "Reb's use of colors and sense of design made the poster a true vision for Festival 2010."

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Festival of the Arts is a three-day community celebration in downtown Grand Rapids offering art, food, entertainment and fun activities for all ages. Always held the first full weekend of June, the dates for this year's Festival are June 4, 5 and 6. The 2010 event marks the 41st Festival of the Arts, making it one of the longest-running festivals in the state.

As one of the largest all-volunteer art events in the nation, Festival is a 501c3 nonprofit organization and receives support from the City of Grand Rapids, the Kent County Board of Commissioners and the Arts Council of Greater Grand Rapids, as well as numerous businesses, organizations and individuals. For more information about Festival of the Arts, please visit the new web site at www.festivalgr.org.

