

American Visionary Art Museum, Inc.
(Baltimore, MD)

Total Award: \$35,000 over 1 year

High on Life: Transcending Addiction II

Presidential Authority Grant

To support *High on Life: Transcending Addiction II*, an excerpt of a larger exhibition of art that features master works of art produced in response to the experiences and imagination of visionary artists who have struggled with the demons of addiction. The exhibition was inspired by a need to address the high rates of drug addiction in the Museum's community, however it also covered addictions to shopping and food. Beginning with sacred and shamanic use of plants, the exhibition explores classical works by spiritual esthetics played against the raw works of visionary grassroots artists. The exhibition also places addiction in a historical perspective. Visitors learn about the widespread use of opiates like laudanum in colonial America as well as abuse of anesthesia by medical practitioners. The artists include: Ray Masterson, who embroidered two-inch by three-inch works made from sock thread while a heroin addict in prison and Alex Grey whose works were influenced by his use of LSD. *High on Life: Transcending Addiction II* broadened the debate beyond the politicos and academics typically involved, taking it to the people whose daily lives were affected by the problem and providing the perfect forum in the perfect place for meaningful public and professional discussion of addiction.

Program Contribution Breakdown:

\$35,000 Arts and Culture Program: *Objective I, Strategy I*