

# DOWNTOWN AKRON QUARTERLY UPDATE



photos by Shane Wynn and Matthew Djianovic



**4TH QUARTER 2019**  
**DOWNTOWN AKRON SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## BLU-tique Hotel opening kicks off Akron's new year at Main and Market

By Jim Mackinnon, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec. 31, 2019



The end of 2019 is the beginning of the BLU-tique Hotel in downtown Akron.

The 71-room hotel officially opened Tuesday (Dec. 31), providing an early New Year's Eve celebration for the developers and local officials during a ribbon cutting inside the lobby of the renovated 1923 United Building at Main and Market streets.

The boutique hotel is a key piece for Akron developer Tony Troppe and

his "BLU-Zone" that includes music venue BLU Jazz+, BLU Plate restaurant, and other nearby properties.

And it's an important piece to the revitalization of downtown, along with the ongoing Bowery Project and other developments on the books.

Troppe kicked off the morning BLU-tique celebration by playing his flute and then speaking, recalling his history with the building.

[Click here to read the full story on beaconjournal.com.](#)



## Pritt Entertainment Group moving to historic Carlton Building in downtown Akron

Pritt Entertainment Group is on the move. After four years at their current location, PEG is relocating their headquarters to The Carlton Building, located in the heart of downtown Akron, directly across from Lock 3, the Civic Theatre and the newly-renovated Bowery District. Construction work on the building will begin this week.

"Our company has called Akron home since we started 11 years ago," said Ryan Pritt, President and Co-Founder of PEG, "and it was really important for us to continue to do so as we looked for our next home."

Located at 201 S. Main Street, The Carlton Building was purchased in December of 2018 by Pritt Properties, founded by Ryan and Jeffrey Pritt, who are also co-owners of Pritt Entertainment Group.

PEG will occupy the two upper levels of the approximately 10,000 sq. ft. building and will be completely renovating the space before the move. The PEG team worked with Philadelphia-based interior design firm, Groundswell, to create a design concept that would meet the unique requirements required by the company, and combine those with a modern, rustic aesthetic. This will provide a contemporary atmosphere, while paying homage to the history of the 119-year old building, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is the oldest-surviving building in the South Main Street Historic District.

[Click here for the full story.](#)



## Akron's Bowery project meets major deadlines, nears finish line

By Jim Mackinnon, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec. 28, 2019

The Bowery redevelopment project intended to revitalize a prominent part of downtown Akron made it to the Thanksgiving finish line — with some pieces not quite over that line just yet.

Most of the six downtown buildings have met their major construction deadlines, although finishing work on the long-vacant and blighted smaller structures will continue into upcoming weeks, said Don Taylor, head of Welty Building Co., general contractor and partner in the Bowery Development Group.

The tallest building at South Main and Bowery, the Landmark Building, met its Nov. 28 occupancy deadline, Taylor said.

"It's done," he said.

The upper floors have been converted into apartments, while ground-level space is intended for retail/commercial tenants.

"Those other buildings will be done by the end of December," Taylor said.



[Click here to read the full story on beaconjournal.com.](#)

# VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Gary L. Miller, Ph.D., named UA's 18th president

The University of Akron Board of Trustees today announced the selection of Gary L. Miller, Ph.D., as the University's 18th president. Miller currently serves as Chancellor at the University of Wisconsin - Green Bay. He will assume duties in Akron on Oct. 1, 2019.

"After a careful, thorough and inclusive candidate search, our Board of Trustees unanimously chose Dr. Miller to lead The University of Akron into the future," said Board Chair Joseph M. Gingo. "Dr. Miller has an outstanding record as an effective higher education leader and consensus builder. He brings not only two decades of senior-level higher education leadership, but also first-hand experience as a member of the teaching faculty and as a researcher. My Board colleagues and I believe he is the right person at the right time to lead our University."

Interim President Dr. John C. Green will continue in that role until October, then serve as special assistant to the president for strategy and transition until Jan. 31, 2020. While serving as special assistant to Miller, Dr. Green also will retain his titles of director of the Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, and distinguished professor of political science.

President-elect Miller said, "I am honored and excited by the prospect of leading the faculty and staff of The University of Akron. They have done much in a very short time to ready this University for reaffirmation, renewal, innovation and growth. I see a university well positioned for the creative institutional and community discussions needed to develop a new, forward-projecting design."

[Click here to read the full release on uakron.edu.](#)

**Several new or existing businesses made the move to downtown Akron or moved to a new location within the district over this past quarter ranging from beauty and barbershops, financial services, retail and more.**

**Downtown Akron Partnership is now in phase four of the pop-up retail program and continues to meet with interested businesses. Pop up supporter Burton D. Morgan Foundation has extended their current grant to broaden the types of entrepreneurs accepted into this program. New businesses moving into downtown can locate in any available space in the Special Improvement District.**

## Pop up businesses

### Indulge Chocolates

209 S. Main St. | [indulge-chocolate.com](http://indulge-chocolate.com)

Combining chocolate and ice cream, the three Northeast Ohio brothers behind Chill Ice Cream so opens their third storefront, with the addition of simply unique chocolates. Located on Main Street in downtown Akron, **Indulge Chocolates** is the spirited younger sister company of Chill Artisan Ice Cream Company which also has a location in downtown Akron.

## New businesses

### Exactly.

209 S. Main St. #602 | 866-515-6789

**Exactly** helps you sell your home and eliminate stress, for a flat fee.

### Fireland Title Group

209 S. Main St. #602 | 330-653-3552

Founded in 2013, **Fireland Title Group** is a title agency offering services for homeowners, investors, realtors, builders, lenders and more.

### Macho Nacho

17 Maiden Lane

Taco truck, **Macho Nacho**, now has a brick and mortar location next to Musica.

### Pritt Properties

201 S. Main St. | [prittproperties.com](http://prittproperties.com)

At **Pritt Properties**, we bring historic buildings back to life. We restore classic buildings with storied pasts, and transform them into modern spaces, while retaining their historic character.



Indulge Chocolates



The Carlton Building

# MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

## City of Akron announces new recycling app

The City of Akron, with support from Keep Akron Beautiful and The Recycling Partnership, has just launched a new app and online search tool for residents to learn about recycling correctly with their curbside carts. "Akron Recycles," powered by ReCollect, can be downloaded on Android and Apple devices from the app store and used to look up residential trash and recycling collection schedules, as well as search for recyclable items with the Waste Wizard tool.

"Akron Recycles" can help answer questions about materials quickly in the Waste Wizard tool with a simple search that yields an image of the item and the proper way to dispose of or recycle it.

The need to improve the quality of recyclables is a high priority for communities across the nation, including Akron, considering today's national recycling market conditions and the desire to continue a sustainable recycling program.

**For more information about Akron's recycling program, please visit [www.akronohio.gov/recycling](http://www.akronohio.gov/recycling).**

## Akron Art Museum to launch winter concert series

*Crains Akron Business, Dec. 18, 2019*

The Akron Art Museum will warm up winter with a new music series in January and February.

"Midwinter Blues and Other Tunes" will begin Thursday, Jan. 9, and continues every Thursday through Feb. 13, the museum announced on Wednesday, Dec. 18. The series will present an evening



that combines popular local bands alongside art activities, live artist demos and additional musical performances in the galleries, according to a news release.

**For the full schedule and more information, [click here](#).**

## CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING

**DAP Ambassador stats Jan-Dec 2019**



# 64,816

TRASH COLLECTED (LBS)



# 223

MOTORIST/VEHICLE ASSISTANCE

# 372

GRAFFITI REMOVED

# 3,277

PARKING ASSISTANCE

# 2,211

BUSINESS CONTACTS MADE

# 4,016

BUS STOPS CLEANED

# 8,059

SAFETY ESCORTS



# 19,163

HOSPITALITY ASSISTANCE

# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

## AKRON BEACON JOURNAL MOVES TO NEW OFFICE

In October, the **Akron Beacon Journal** moved their offices from their home for 81 years at the corner of Exchange and High St., to a newly renovated space in the AES building, 388 S. Main St.

## GOJO NAMES CAREY JAROS AS PRESIDENT, CEO

*By Dan Shingler, Crains Cleveland Business, Nov. 6, 2019*

Akron's **GOJO Industries** has a new chief executive. The company said late Tuesday, Nov. 5, that it has named Carey Jaros as its new president and CEO, effective Jan. 1. Current president Mark Lerner, who as a senior executive GOJO credits with helping it grow for more than 30 years, will become president emeritus and remain aboard as senior adviser, the company added. Jaros will be the second recent president of the 73-year-old company who is not a member of the Kanfer family, which still controls GOJO. **Read the full article in Crain's Cleveland Business.**

## UA LAUNCHES CYBERSECURITY TESTBED

*By Dan Shingler, Crains Cleveland Business, Dec. 9, 2019*

At the University of Akron's new cybersecurity facility in downtown Akron, viruses and malware can get in, but they can't get out. In fact, some malicious software weapons may spend their entire lives in the facility, so people can study how to kill them. The 2,000-square-foot facility, which opened Dec. 9 in UA's Polsky Building at 255 S. Main St., is what's known as a "testbed." For those working on cybersecurity issues, that means it's a facility that can replicate most any typical computer network and its security features, allowing them to figure out how to protect those systems from viruses, malware and hackers, and also how to recover and rebuild systems after an attack.

**Read the full article in Crain's Cleveland Business.**

## DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES RECOGNIZED AT WEATHERHEAD 100 AWARDS

Several downtown Akron businesses were recognized in December at the 2019 Weatherhead 100 awards in Cleveland. The Weatherhead 100, presented by the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University, celebrates "Northeast Ohio's spirit of entrepreneurship and recognizes companies that exemplify innovative success in our region." Recipients included **Consolidus, LLC, Metisentry, LLC, Pritt Entertainment Group** and **Tiny Circuits.**

## 100 YEAR CLUB OF THE WESTERN RESERVE HONORS TWO DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES

On Dec. 2, downtown Akron businesses, **Brouse McDowell LPA** and **Meaden & Moore**, were honored by the 100 Year Club of the Western Reserve. The club, created in 1953 honors, "an elite group of our region's corporations and institutions that have been in continuous existence for at least one hundred years."

## FIRSTENERGY CONTINUES COMMITMENT TO DOWNTOWN AKRON BY EXTENDING LEASE AT CORPORATE HQ

**FirstEnergy Corp.** (NYSE: FE) announced that it has signed a 10-year lease extension for its 19-story downtown headquarters, reaffirming its commitment to the city it has called home for over 100 years. The current contract was set to expire in June 2025. With the extension, FirstEnergy's headquarters will remain in downtown Akron through June 2035. **Read the full release here.**



Marcella Kanfer Rolnick and Carey Jaros



Cybersecurity Facility



Brouse McDowell



FirstEnergy

# BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

**DID YOU KNOW THAT EVERY DOWNTOWN AKRON BUSINESS HAS THEIR OWN PAGE ON DOWNTOWNAKRON.COM?**

**WE ENCOURAGE ALL BUSINESSES TO LOOK UP THEIR PAGE AND LET US KNOW ANY UPDATES OR CORRECTIONS.**

## COMPANY PROFILE

Each business page consists of the following elements:

- Company name, address, phone, website and social media links.
- Up to three photos of interior, exterior and/or product, and a company logo.
- Company description.
- Location generated on a map.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

DAP also has a page highlighting available job opportunities within the Special Improvement District. Whether it's an office job or service position, full or part time, we want this page to become a go-to source for those interested in working downtown.

**TO UPDATE YOUR PROFILE, PROVIDE A PHOTO OR TO LIST A JOB OPENING, PLEASE EMAIL [INFO@DOWNTOWNAKRON.COM](mailto:INFO@DOWNTOWNAKRON.COM).**

## QUARTERLY DISTRICT MTGS

Quarterly meetings for downtown stakeholders are held the second Thursday of the month. RSVP at [www.downtownakron.com/district](http://www.downtownakron.com/district)

### Historic Arts:

Jan. 9  
10-11 a.m. | Main Library

### Canal District:

Feb. 13  
2-3 p.m. | Barley House

### Northside:

Mar. 12  
1-2 p.m. | Jilly's Music Room

## METRO REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY GOES TOBACCO-FREE



Beginning January 1, 2020, all **METRO RTA** properties and campuses will become tobacco-free to create a clean and welcoming space. Tobacco products include all forms of tobacco, including but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes (vaping), smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco and any non-FDA approved nicotine delivery device. METRO properties include the Robert K. Pfaff Transit Center, Rolling Acres Transit Center, Independence Turnaround, METRO offices at 416 Kenmore Blvd., park and ride lots, and facility parking lots.

## DRIPS NAMED 20TH FASTED GROWING COMPANY

Downtown Akron based software company **Drips**, landed at number 20 on Deloitte's 2019 Technology Fast 500, Drips is the first conversational texting® company of its kind, founding a new category and leading the way for some of the biggest brands in the world to use automated, humanized conversations at scale.

## AKRON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OPENS MONSTER MISSION COURSE

*By Emily Mills, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec. 1, 2019*



Children will be able to feel like ninja warriors in a new exhibit at the **Akron Children's Museum**. The nonprofit museum now features a Monster Mission Course, a child-friendly version of the kinds of courses seen on the TV show "American Ninja Warrior," said Akron Children's Museum Executive Director Traci Buckner. The 2,600-square-foot indoor space includes a "warped wall," a curved wall that children try to run up; a vertical rock wall; monkey bars; a teeter-totter; and an obstacle course.

[Click here to read the full story on beaconjournal.com.](#)

## VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM RECEIVES NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

*By Beacon Journal, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec. 23, 2019*

After an 18-month process, the **Victim Assistance** Program has achieved national accreditation through the New York-based Council on Accreditation. The Akron agency provides 24-hour crisis intervention, advocacy and education to victims of crime and trauma and the professionals who serve this population. According to the agency, the accreditation is an objective, independent and reliable validation of Victim Assistance's performance. The standards driving accreditation ensure services are well-coordinated, culturally competent, evidence-based, outcomes-oriented and provided by a skilled and supported workforce. [Click here to read the full story on beaconjournal.com.](#)

## METISENTRY ACQUIRES MARYLAND-BASED SCHOLARVETS

*Crains Akron Business, Nov. 8, 2019*



**Metisentry, LLC** continues to expand in the military space, announcing it has acquired Silver Springs, Md.-based ScholarVets. ScholarVets is an online platform and social network that connects military veterans with one another, academic intuitions and employers, for the purpose of helping veterans to advance their civilian careers, according to its website. [Read the full article in Crain's Cleveland Business.](#)

# TRANSPORTATION & DEVELOPMENT

## ODOT reopens downtown Akron ramp to I-76/77

By Beacon Journal, Akron Beacon Journal, Dec. 19, 2019

Drivers heading west or north out of downtown Akron have regained a popular highway access point. The Ohio Department of Transportation announced that construction on the ramp from South Main Street to Interstates 76/77 is completed and it is now open.

## A change of scenery in downtown Akron

By Beacon Journal, Akron Beacon Journal, Oct. 28, 2019

A cluster of older downtown buildings is disappearing from the landscape as demolition continues on an entire city block adjacent to the Akron Children's Hospital campus.

Children's Hospital acquired the deteriorating buildings at 265 W. Bowery, 370 Water and 68 W. Exchange, and plans to replace them — at least initially — with a surface lot for employee parking, a hospital official told the Beacon Journal last month. The hospital left open the possibility for other uses in the future.



The demolished structures once housed Akron Pure Milk, Cotter Moving and Storage and B.W. Rogers, a distributor of industrial products. [Click here to read the full article on beaconjournal.com](#)

## State Street parking deck traffic pattern change

Due to construction changing construction patterns for the State Street Bridge, State Street parking deck (51 W. State St.) will be accessible from W. Bowery St. only. There is no longer access from Main St.



This traffic pattern will be in place until the completion of the bridge construction.

From the north: Using S. High Street, turn west (right) on W. Bowery St. Turn east (left) on State St. and enter the parking deck.

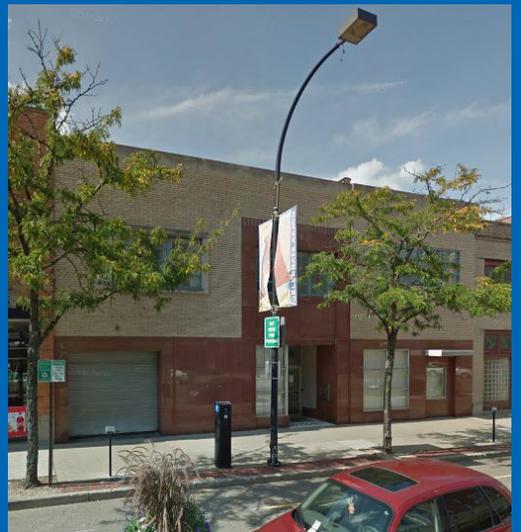
From the south: Using S. Broadway, turn west (left) on E. Exchange St., turn right (north) on W. Bowery St., turn right (east) on State St. and enter the deck.

From the west: Using Cedar St., turn left (north) on W. Bowery St., turn right (east) on State St. and enter the deck.

## FEATURED PROPERTY

368 S. Main St. | 330-475-5500

Renovated in 1977, this is an Ideal mixed-use redevelopment opportunity located in the Historic Main-Exchange District, in the heart of Downtown Akron. Historically, Downtown's first bank; most recently, government services offices. Close to downtown amenities such as, Lock 3, Canal Park, Akron Civic Theater, Canal Place, Towpath Trail, and many other retail, restaurant & entertainment options. This prime property is currently listed for sale. [Click here for more information.](#)



## FEATURED BUSINESS

DLZ

115 E. Market St. | 330-376-3917

With over 600 people in 22 offices, DLZ is one of the top consulting firms in the architectural, engineering, and surveying industry. The firm was ranked by Engineering News Record as Midwest Design Firm of the Year in 2016 and currently ranked as one of the Top 150 in the U.S. and the 8th largest in the Midwestern United States. DLZ professionals work together as a team to safely deliver a wide range of project sizes and types across the country.

# PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION

## Akron Receives Three Steam Boilers For New District Energy System Plant

The City of Akron and Akron Energy Systems (AES), the district energy provider for Akron, have received one of three high efficiency natural gas boilers to be installed in the City's energy production plant. Once the plant is operational in late 2019, the new boilers will provide up to 450,000 pounds of steam per hour to provide heat and cooling to Akron's downtown businesses.

Manufactured by Babcock & Wilcox Co., the boilers each have



an output of over 5,000 horsepower; utilize low emitting, state-of-the-art natural gas technology; provide a 30% smaller carbon footprint than a traditional gas boiler; and

are capable of operating on fuel oil in the event of a natural gas outage. The first boiler—weighing 97 tons and measuring 29 feet long and 17 feet high—passed by Akron City Hall on its way to the AES plant on Opportunity Parkway.



Akron's district energy system currently serves more than 10 million square feet of commercial space in downtown Akron, including the campuses of Cleveland Clinic/Akron General Medical Center and Akron Children's Hospital.

**[Click here to read the full release.](#)**

**[Check out the video of their journey here.](#)**

## Akron, Summit County partner to bring Smithers headquarters to downtown

*By Robin Goist, cleveland.com, Sept. 16, 2019*

Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro on Monday introduced legislation to County Council that would begin the process of the Smithers company moving its world headquarters to downtown Akron.

Over the coming months, Council Council, Akron City Council and Summit County's Development Finance Authority are expected to approve a series of somewhat complicated real estate transactions required for the move.



Smithers, a company that provides science, technology and business consulting, plans to build a \$16.9 million

headquarters and research development facility on a portion of 47 North Main Street near Ohio 59.

"This is an example of a public-private economic development project at its finest," said Brian Nelson, chief of staff for Shapiro. The deal involved Smithers, the county, the DFA, city of Akron, JobsOhio, FirstEnergy, Akron Children's Hospital, Huntington Bank and Team NEO.

Smithers currently employs 111 people in Akron and plans to create 84 jobs over the next four years, including people with advanced degrees to work in the R&D facility.

Although the trolley barn will be demolished, the future headquarters building at 47 North Main is itself historic, having once been called "the Terminal Building," according to DFA President Christopher Burnham.

The company will contribute \$7.1 million to the project, which it expects to borrow from a private lender.

Through a capital lease with the DFA, Smithers will also borrow \$5.7 million for the project. The City of Akron is expected to contribute \$2 million, primarily for parking lot and greenspace improvements. The city is also providing a \$48,102 grant to pay for the costs of a sanitary sewer extension.

**[Click here to read the full article on cleveland.com.](#)**

# WHAT'S GOING ON IN DOWNTOWN

## COTTAGE CRAWL

Saturday, Jan. 11 | 1-6 p.m.

Lock 3 | 200 S. Main St.



The Cottage Crawl is an indoor/outdoor beer tasting with fire pits, food and all Akron beer. Entrance into the event is free. Breweries include: Eighty-Three, Akronym, Crazy Mountain, Hoppin Frog, Fat Heads Lock 15, Missing Falls, Spider Monkey Brewing, R. Shea and Thirsty Dog.

## 3RD THURSDAY

Thursday, Jan. 16 | 4-8 p.m.

Downtown Akron locations



3rd Thursday is a monthly excursion highlighting the arts, culture and entertainment in downtown. Take the free trolley to more than 30 destinations from the Northside District to Main/Exchange Streets for art, music, shopping and dining.

## 26TH ANNUAL AKRON HOME & GARDEN SHOW

Jan. 24-26 | Fri. 12-9 p.m., Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.,

Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

John S. Knight Center | 77 E. Mill St.



The Akron Home and Garden Show features the latest products and ideas that homeowners can use for their next home and garden project. More than 170 vendors will be on hand to make your vision a reality.

## DANCING WITH THE STARS - LIVE TOUR 2020

Tuesday, Feb. 4 | 7:30 p.m.

Akron Civic Theatre | 182 S. Main St.

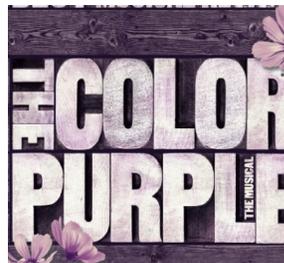


America's favorite dance show is going back on tour this winter with "Dancing with the Stars - Live Tour 2020." The longest tour to date will be dancing through Akron on February 4 at Akron Civic Theatre. The all-new production will feature fan-favorite professional dancers wowing audiences with every type of dance style as seen on ABC's hit show Dancing with the Stars.

## BROADWAY IN AKRON: 'THE COLOR PURPLE'

Tuesday/Wednesday, Feb. 11-12 | 7:30 p.m.

UA's EJ Thomas Hall | 198 Hill St.



The Color Purple is the 2016 Tony Award® winner for Best Musical Revival! Hailed as "a direct hit to the heart" (The Hollywood Reporter), this joyous American classic has conquered Broadway in an all-new "ravishingly reconceived production that is a glory to behold" (The New York Times).

## GRAPE ESCAPE

Saturday, Feb. 15 | 7 p.m.

Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad/Akron Northside Station | 27 Ridge St.



Climb aboard the train for an evening of wine tasting as you wind through Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Passengers are served five wine samples as the train weaves through the valley. This wine tasting excursion will leave you with lasting memories!

## BALLET EXCEL OHIO PRESENTS THE SNOW QUEEN

Mar. 14-15 | Sat. 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Sun. 2 p.m.

Akron Civic Theatre | 182 S. Main St.

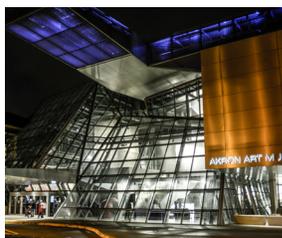


Ballet Excel Ohio's feature ballet of "The Snow Queen" is a brand-new ballet choreographed by renowned NYC choreographer Tom Gold and inspired by one of Hans Christian Anderson's most beloved children's stories.

## ART AND ALE

Saturday, Mar. 28 | 2-5 p.m., 6-9 p.m.

Akron Art Museum | 1 S. High St.



Now in its 13th year, ART & ALE, presented by Acme Fresh Market, features locally crafted brews from Ohio's best brewmakers, complemented by some of the region's favorite local food. This year, the Akron Art Museum is offering an expanded and enhanced Art & Ale experience with a new date and two sessions.

# Dance

ice cream



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#DOWNTOWNAKRON

Photo by Shane Wynn