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GVSU Gordon Gallery II Opening Remarks, delivered at the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on September 13, 2012

Arend D. Lubbers
Grand Valley State University

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GVSU Gordon Gallery II
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
September 13, 2012
Arend D. Lubbers

We are here to celebrate the opening of Gordon Gallery II because George Gordon really likes the paintings of Mathias Alten. He is a collector of Alten's paintings and has assembled an excellent collection that could not be contained in one gallery. Thus we are opening the second gallery tonight. He and Barbara are unusually generous acquirers of art. They want all of us and the entire art loving public to enjoy the paintings they have assembled and we are here tonight to do just that.

The university provides the Gordons the opportunity to have on permanent exhibit a significant collection of Alten's work, and it extends to them involvement in future planning for the galleries. They make this possible for the university by their generous artistic and financial support. Grand Valley is a happy beneficiary of what the Gordons have done. This is a special and distinguished collection and the prestige of the University is enhanced by it. But, equally important for the university: its students, particularly the 400 Art majors, have access for study to a large body of work of an important American impressionist.

I contemplate the Gordons' satisfaction. They analyzed, purchased, and enjoyed what they bought, and then they shared. I contemplate increasing numbers of people coming to see these paintings. I contemplate generations of students exposed to Alten's art as a total experience.

But, perhaps the most important effect these galleries will have is on the reputation of the artist. He is a very good painter who deserves to rank among the best of American impressionists, yet is relatively unknown even though his work can be found throughout the country. Now, through George and Barbara's generosity and artistic knowledge, Mathias Alten's work is exhibited more comprehensively than that of most artists. I contemplate the time when Mathias Alten's work will be

more widely recognized and acclaimed. He has George and Barbara Gordon to thank for that. I wish he was here to enjoy it like we are.