



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Grandmother Power: A Global Phenomenon*
Opening at the Grand Rapids Public Museum in September**

Grand Rapids, MI - The Grand Rapids Public Museum (GRPM) is pleased to announce that on September 6, the museum, together with its strategic and creative partner Genesis Inc., will open a new exhibition of the works of renowned photographer Paola Gianturco called *Grandmother Power: A Global Phenomenon*.

Grandmother Power: A Global Phenomenon is based off the book of the same title published by powerHouse Books. *Grandmother Power* won ForeWord Reviews 2012 Book of the Year Award for Women's Studies, the 2013 International Book Award for Multicultural Nonfiction, and the 2013 About.com Readers' Choice Award for Favorite Grandparenting Book. The exhibition will feature images and stories of grandmothers worldwide who are acting courageously and effectively to create a better future for grandchildren everywhere.

There are more grandmothers in the world today than ever before. They are younger, healthier, better educated, and better off than they have ever been. They are energetic and effective, and they are modeling important lessons of collaboration, generosity, patience, perseverance and resilience.

Grandmother Power includes stories of grandmothers in Canada, Swaziland, and South Africa who collaborate to care for AIDS orphans; grandmothers in India who are becoming solar engineers, while those in Thailand fight environmental degradation. The exhibition will include eight powerful stories from Paola's book, highlighting women in South Africa, Swaziland, Thailand, the Philippines, Argentina, Canada, the United States, India and Senegal. Visitors will have a chance to add their own grandmother to the story, through a special digital interactive experience.

Grandmother Power will open on Friday, September 6 for the general public. A special members-only preview will be held on Thursday, September 5 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Here, members will have the special chance to see the exhibit before it opens to the public, and hear a special presentation from Paola Gianturco about her experiences with these incredible women. Become a member of the GRPM online at grpm.org.



"This is an exciting exhibition for the Grand Rapids Public Museum to have developed and to have debut here in Grand Rapids. The Grandmother Power movement is inspiring. As visitors learn and see the amazing work being done by grandmothers on a global scale, we've created a direct connection to our Grand Rapids community, and grandmothers that are active and doing great things locally, said Dale Robertson, President and CEO of the Grand Rapids Public Museum. "An interactive website in the exhibition will also allow visitors to add their own grandma to the story with a photo and text. When the exhibit begins traveling, people from all over the world will be adding to this website, and once it returns to Grand Rapids, their stories will be a permanent part of the Grand Rapids Public Museum collection."

A cell phone tour will accompany the exhibition. Visitors can enhance their experience by using the free, audio cell phone tour during their tour. Narrated by Paola Gianturco, the audio tour walks visitors through each of the stories, telling more personal accounts of these amazing women.

Georgia Everse, Managing Partner of Genesis Inc. said "Grandmother Power is unexpected and eye opening. It completely validates the Museum's purpose of instilling a deeper understanding of the world around us. The exhibition will impact visitors at an emotional level and redefine the way many of us think and feel about grandmothers and the important role they play in creating a better future for their grandchildren. Our hope is that the loving activism of these global and local heroes will be empowering to all who hear their stories".

The run of the exhibit will include groundbreaking programming developed by GRPM to identify and highlight local grandmothers and ties to the community of Grand Rapids. Programming includes: Grandmother Power Lunch Series, featuring local speakers on various issues; lectures; a day of community service; Ethnic Traditions Festival; and much more! Programming partners to date include: the Gerontology Network, Pamela Alderman, Kids Food Basket, Lupe Ramos-Montigny, Jackson Kaguri, and the Community Media Center.

Grandmother Power will be on display at the Grand Rapids Public Museum through February 2, 2014. The exhibit is being offered free with general admission. The museum has plans to travel the exhibition both nationally and internationally following its time in Grand Rapids.

The GRPM is thankful to our generous sponsors to date: DesignTex, Van Andel Institute, Comfort Keepers, and Lupe Ramos-Montigny. Media sponsorship provided by: Cumulus Media, Michigan Radio and Women's Lifestyle Magazine. Sponsorship opportunities are available for *Grandmother Power* at local and national touring levels. Please call 616.929.1704 for details.

Paola Gianturco, Author

For the past 16 years, Paola Gianturco has worked as a photojournalist, documenting women's lives in 55 countries. powerHouse Books has published five of her acclaimed photographic books. All are philanthropic projects, for which she donates her royalties to carefully selected non-profit organizations that relate to each book's content.

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Paola's fifth book, *Grandmother Power: A Global Phenomenon* reveals a new international activist grandmother movement. The book features 120 activist grandmothers on five continents who are fighting courageously and effectively - against poverty, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and human rights abuse – to create a better world for grandchildren everywhere. Gianturco is giving 100% of her author royalties from this book to the

Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign of the Stephen Lewis Foundation, which benefits grandmothers raising AIDS orphans in 15 African countries.

Grandmother Power won the 2013 About.com Reader's Choice Award for Favorite Grand Parenting Book, and the 2013 International Book Award for Multicultural Nonfiction.

Paola's photographs have appeared in Marie Claire, Essence Magazine, The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Business Week, San Francisco Chronicle, Chicago Tribune, Christian Science Monitor, and the Washington Post, among others. Paola has been a guest on The Oprah Winfrey Show, CNN, NPR, and Voice of America programs, as well as many other television and radio programs across the country and around the world.

Her work has been exhibited by the United Nations – New York; UNESCO Paris, The U.S. Senate Russell Rotunda; The Field Museum, Chicago; The Smithsonian Folklife Festival, Washington D.C., the International Museum of Women, the Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, and the San Jose Museum of Art, among others.

Paola co-developed and taught Executive Institutes on Women and Leadership at Stanford University, and served on the Board of the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID). She was a principal in the first women-owned advertising agency in the United States and is a current member of International Women's Forum. Learn more about Paola's work at <http://globalgrandmotherpower.com/>.

Genesis Inc.

Since 1967, Genesis has successfully positioned ideas, messages, products, services, destinations and brands for hundreds of clients of all sizes, across a wide variety of industries and global markets. Genesis specializes in ideas and implementation with capabilities ranging from new concept development to successful market realization. Genesis Inc is the Grand Rapids Public Museum's strategic and creative partner for brand and marketing efforts, and led the concepting, creative development and design of the Grandmother Power exhibition.

www.genesisinc.com

Grand Rapids Public Museum

The Grand Rapids Public Museum, accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, is located in downtown Grand Rapids, MI at 272 Pearl Street, NW. The mission of the museum is to be a living monument of artifacts, ideas and stories told through exhibitions, events and educational programming designed to inspire, motivate and celebrate our human bond. We enrich the life of our community through experiences of the wider world in a uniquely Grand Rapids context. For additional information including hours of operation, admission fees and exhibit/event listings, please visit www.grmuseum.org.