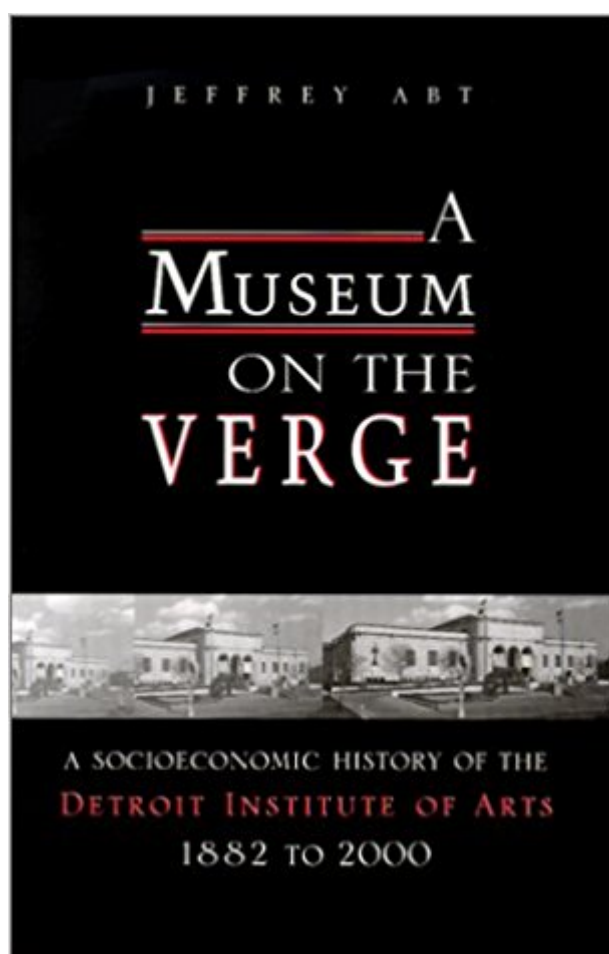


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# A Museum On The Verge: A Socioeconomic History Of The Detroit Institute Of Arts, 1882-2000



## Synopsis

The Detroit Institute of Arts is one of America's largest and oldest municipal art museums. However, even as the museum grew into a distinguished collection, there were threats of closure. The DIA has walked a financial tightrope since it opened just over a century ago, and was nearly closed by government funding cuts in the 1970s and 1990s. Now Jeffrey Abt tells how the DIA has had to struggle to maintain its fine art collection with barely enough income to remain open. *A Museum on the Verge* goes behind the scenes at the DIA to disclose the political, economic, and social forces that shaped the museum from its founding to the present day. Abt's account is supplemented by a wealth of material, including legal documents and numerical data taken at five-year intervals from the 1880s through 2000 that is presented in both tables and graphs. The data, which comprehensively survey vital statistics such as attendance, collections growth, and finances, provide a rich resource for comparative research on other museums.

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"A fascinating, well-researched, and well-written view. . . . This excellent case study . . . can be applied to . . . difficulties generally faced by American institutions. -- Historical Society of Michigan

An examination of a prestigious museum's struggle to survive.

Abt's book is hard to find, but if you can pick it up, buy it immediately and cherish it. He might not

have known it when he wrote it, but Abt confirms Chafets (Devil's Night) and Kersey's (Escape from Detroit) that once the black population took control of Detroit, the city went to hell. However, Abt concentrates on the role the black political establishment (Coleman Young) played in ceasing the funding of the DIA. Today, the assets (held by the city -- an 82 percent black city) are on the verge of being sold to off some of the \$17 billion in debt the black-controlled city has racked up. Read this book and weep at what's in store for the DIA.

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