

museum

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Diversity in the Museum Workplace

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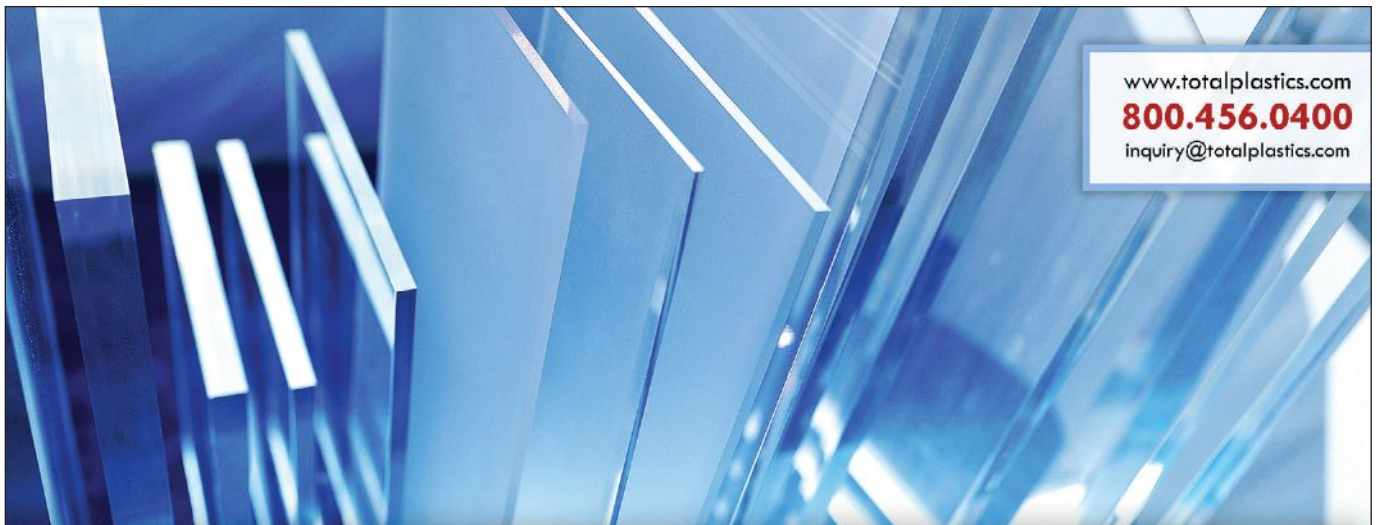
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Our Commitment to Diversity

DIVERSITY IS NOT A slogan or a tagline. Diversity is a strength and a value that must be embraced in our institutions and found among our audiences, our boards and those we employ.

I am proud that, more than a year ago, AAM's Board of Directors put that ethos into writing by adopting a policy to make diversity and inclusion integral to the Alliance's DNA. You can find it in the About Us section of our website (aam-us.org/about-us). I am determined to put that policy into action and, in cooperation with our many partners and members, to advance substantive, long-term changes across our field.

I am happy to report that this work has already begun in earnest. AAM is collecting and sharing examples of diversity and inclusion in practice from within and outside of the museum field. We are creating professional development opportunities around integrating diverse and inclusive best practices into museum operations and outreach. In 2015, we awarded 73 percent of our annual meeting fellowships (a total of 29 out of 40 fellowships) to diverse applicants, and we are envisioning how our fellowship program can even better support our diversity and inclusion efforts going forward.

Our work in this area is ongoing and will only gain momentum in 2016. Our action plan for the year ahead includes enlisting the expertise and passion of our Professional

Networks—including DivCom, the LGBTQ Alliance and the Latino and Indigenous Peoples Museum Networks—in providing support, identifying opportunities for collaboration and advocating for best practices.

We are proud of these efforts, but there's so much more work to be done. The uncomfortable fact remains that museum professionals as a group do not represent the full makeup of the United States. According to the 2015 Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey, museum professionals are less diverse than the U.S. population as a whole. That divide is only going to expand as our population changes. As the Center for the Future of Museums noted in its inaugural report, "Museums & Society 2034: Trends and Potential Futures," minorities are likely to comprise just under half of the population by 2034. Several states have already seen a minority become the majority.

Our field must actively combat the growing rift by examining the talent in (and outside of) the museum professional pipeline and learning what may block the path for diverse candidates. We must continue to present our collections, programs and resources in ways that reflect and welcome broader audiences. And we must recognize that diversity is the prerogative—and future—of all our institutions, not only those that are located in certain places or focus on certain issues.



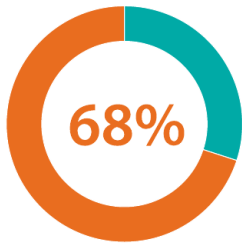
The evolution will happen neither overnight nor without sustained, focused effort. This issue of *Museum* highlights several examples of diversity and inclusion in the museum field. We are excited to have museum futurist Nicole Ivy with AAM's Center for the Future of Museums (CFM) serving as guest editor. In addition to soliciting content and contributing a feature for this issue, Nicole is exploring diversity and the future of work for the remainder of her two-year fellowship through the American Council of Learned Societies. You can follow our progress on the CFM blog (futureofmuseums.blogspot.com).

The articles and stories in this issue are meant to guide and inspire, not to serve as a checklist. I hope the examples found within these pages provide strategies that you can replicate in your institutions and among your staff and volunteers. I invite you to share your success stories with us, too.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Lott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

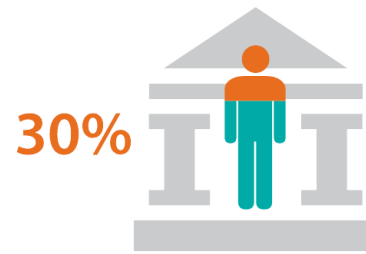
Laura L. Lott is the Alliance's president and CEO.

» By the NUMBERS



2/3 of Americans find no conflict between their personal religious beliefs and science

Source: Pew Research Center



30%

Increased likelihood that a child who visits museums regularly will grow up to be an avid museum-goer as an adult

Source: Reach Advisors | Museums R+D



28%: The percentage of museum members who view their membership primarily as a **charitable gift**. A majority view it primarily as a **service product**.

Source: Reach Advisors | Museums R+D

4% African Americans

3% Latinos

African Americans comprise only **4%** of art museum curators, conservators, educators and leaders; **Latinos** make up only **3%**

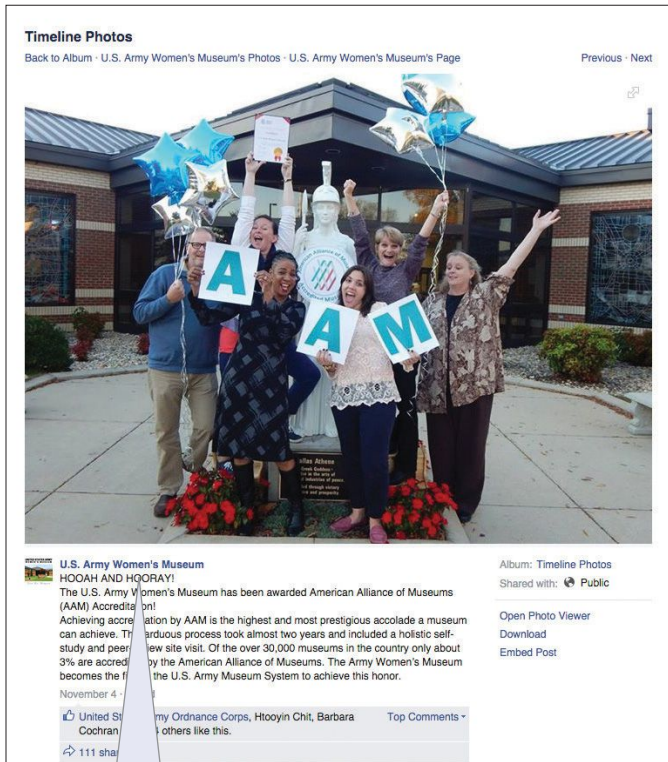
Source: The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation: Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey



Women make up **60%** of art museum staff nationwide; most are employed in positions within the leadership pipeline

Source: The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation: Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey

From the U.S. Army Women's Museum:



HOOAH AND HOORAY!

The U.S. Army Women's Museum has been awarded American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Accreditation! Achieving accreditation by AAM is the highest and most prestigious accolade a museum can achieve. This arduous process took almost two years and included a holistic self-study and peer-review site visit. Of the over 30,000 museums in the country only about 3% are accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Army Women's Museum becomes the fifth in the U.S. Army Museum System to achieve this honor.



Corrections

Elizabeth (Elee) Wood (at left), director of the museum studies program at Indiana University—Purdue University Indianapolis and recipient of the John Cotton Dana Award for Leadership, was misidentified in the November/December issue.

The National Civil Rights Museum—Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, was inadvertently omitted from the list of the 2015 TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Awards for the top 25 museums in the United States. In the same article, the Metropolitan Museum of Art was misidentified.

We regret these errors.

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Renwick Gallery

Washington, D.C. | “Wonder” marked the reopening of the Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C., this past November. The country’s first structure created to display artworks for public view, the museum, located across the street from the White House, had been closed for two years to complete a \$30 million renovation. On its reopening day, the Renwick, which houses the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s program of craft and decorative arts, debuted an exhibition titled “Wonder,” featuring installations by nine contemporary artists that filled each of their updated galleries. All of the museum’s public and gallery spaces have been outfitted with energy-efficient LED lighting. Perhaps more noticeable is the revamped Grand Staircase, now adorned with a dramatic red carpet designed by French architect Odile Decq.

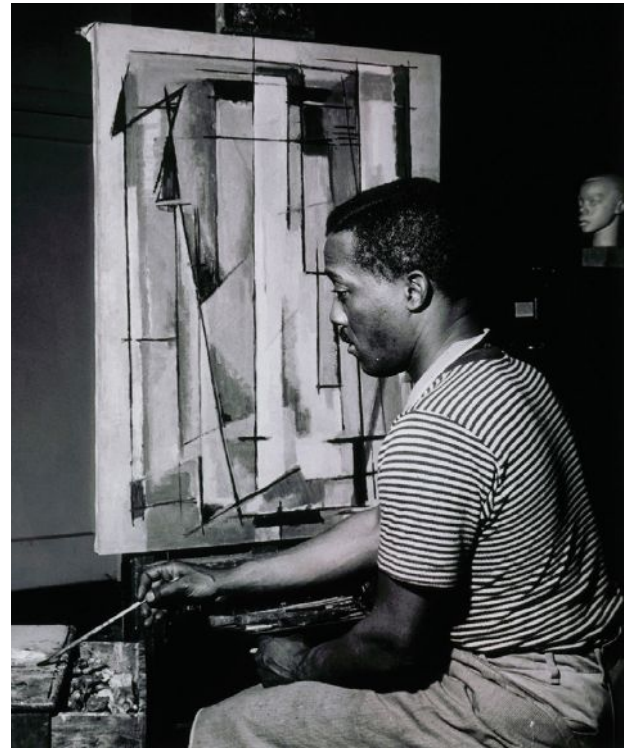
This was the first major update to the building, which was praised as the “American Louvre” when it opened shortly after the Civil War, in 45 years. While adding contemporary touches, the Renwick stayed true to its origins by preserving the original windows, moldings and decorative features. In addition, throughout 2016 the museum’s Octagon Room hosts an exhibition exploring its storied history, including its brush with demolition and subsequent sparing thanks to First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy.



The Broad

Los Angeles | The Broad made its long-anticipated grand opening on Los Angeles' Grand Avenue last fall. A \$140 million project, the new museum was built by and is dedicated to the collection of philanthropists Eli and Edythe Broad—an assemblage of nearly 2,000 works of contemporary art. Some 250 of these are on view in the Broad's inaugural installation, featuring highlights by Jasper Johns, Jeff Koons, Barbara Kruger and Cindy Sherman, among dozens of other artists. Another eye-catcher is the Infinity Mirror Room by Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama, in which LED lights reflect endlessly off of rows of mirrors.

Echoing the edgy nature of the art inside, the 120,000-square-foot building, designed by the architectural firm Diller Scofidio + Renfro, bears a honeycomb-like "veil" that allows natural light to stream in. A 105-foot escalator (and a cylindrical glass elevator) spans the museum's three floors, two of which are home to more than 50,000 square feet of gallery space, and a vault affords views of the Broads' extensive collection in storage. The building also is home to the Broad Art Foundation's lending library, whose mission is to widely loan works in order to enhance the public's access to contemporary art.

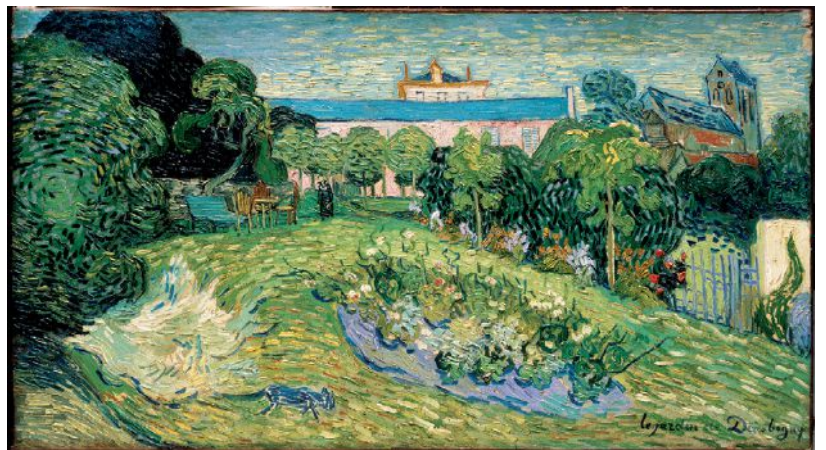


Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts

Philadelphia | Norman Lewis (1909–1979) was a key contributor to the development of Abstract Expressionism. The nature of his times (and the color of his skin), however, mean that his name is virtually unknown compared to those of his white contemporaries. "Procession: The Art of Norman Lewis" aims to correct this oversight by revealing the artist's role in American art as a whole and, more specifically, in the Harlem community, which first inspired him to paint. To fall 2016. Venues: Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia; Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, Texas; Chicago Cultural Center.

Taft Museum of Art

Cincinnati, Ohio | Long before household names such as Claude Monet and Camille Pissarro captured the essence of light on canvas, Charles François Daubigny was floating along French rivers to sketch the atmosphere of his surroundings. Daubigny set the scene, so to speak, for Impressionism, serving as a mentor for Monet and Pissarro—yet he is far less recognized among the movement's fans than are his mentees. "Daubigny, Monet, Van Gogh: Impressions of Landscape" reconsiders Daubigny's role in sparking and leading the development of this widely beloved genre. To May 29, 2016.



Detroit Institute of Arts

A single gallery at the Detroit Institute of Arts now spans more than 8,500 years of history. Reopened last fall, the Ancient Middle East gallery was revamped and reinstalled; it now holds more than 175 works that date between 8000 BCE and 650 CE and represent five ancient empires. Among them are a floor mosaic portraying the Tigris river, stone reliefs from the palaces of Persepolis and a golden Persian earring dating back multiple millennia. The ancient art is illuminated with current technology, such as a computer station that invites visitors to jot down their thoughts in cuneiform.

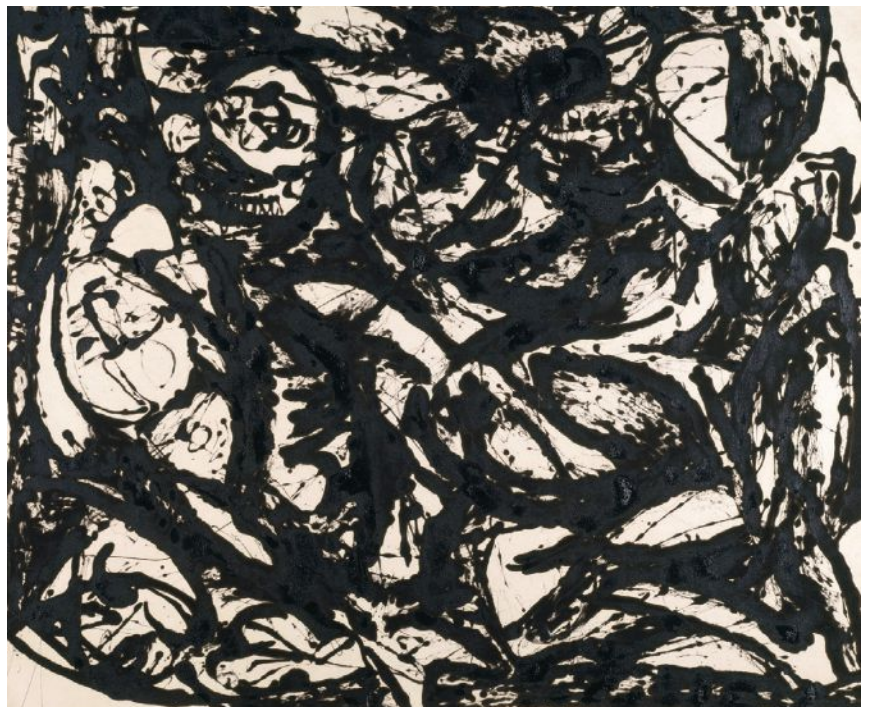


Walker Art Center

Minneapolis | No norm was left unquestioned during the 1960s and early 1970s. As the public rose up against conventional social and political values in search of something better, the experimentation naturally extended to the arts, leading to radical new spins on films, books and furniture, to name a few genres. “Hippie Modernism: The Struggle for Utopia” displays the tangible creations that were formed as the counterculture forged a path to a new reality. To May 21, 2017. Venues: Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, Mich.; University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.

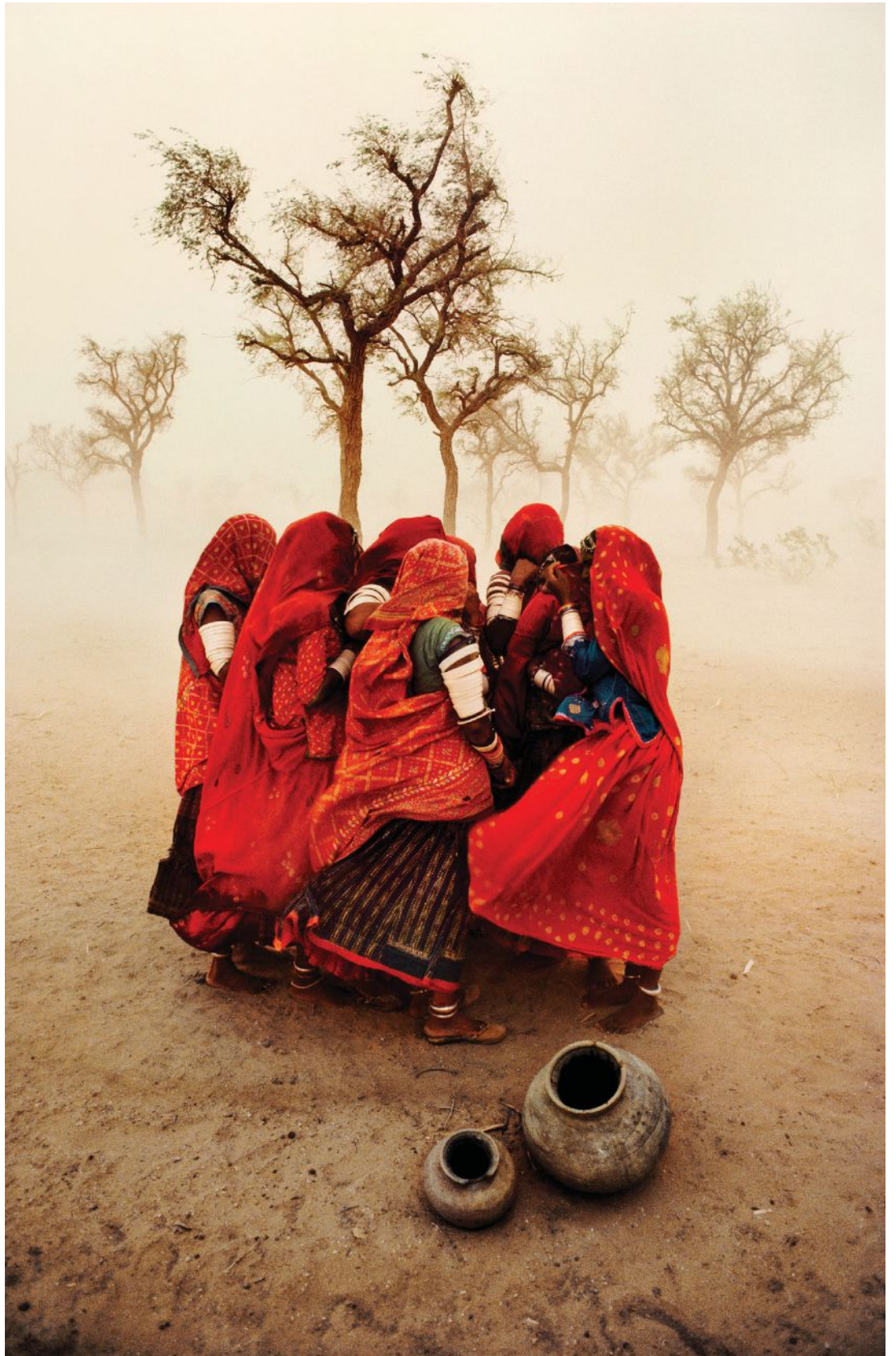
Dallas Museum of Art

Jackson Pollock is synonymous with his infamous drip paintings; other selections from his brief career have been largely overlooked. “Jackson Pollock: Blind Spots” brings to light works that have not been on public display for more than half a century, as well as a few that were thought to be lost completely. Key among these are the artist’s controversial black paintings, a series he made during the early 1950s, as well as a selection of his works on paper and three-dimensional pieces. Along with reevaluating these little-seen works, the exhibition provides new perspectives on Pollock’s methods. To March 20, 2016.



Rubin Museum of Art

New York | Steve McCurry is the photographer behind one of the world's most memorable images: *Afghan Girl*, a portrait of a young refugee whose wide eyes and sharp gaze captivated viewers. In "Steve McCurry: India," more than three dozen of his often-iconic photos trace his travels through the diverse South Asian country. Sections of the exhibition touch on India's people and places, from its monsoons to its rural landscapes, and from its bustling rail system to its rich spiritual life. Works of Himalayan art complement the photographs and bridge between the ancient and today. To April 5, 2016.





Museum of International Folk Art

Santa Fe | Vivacious dancing takes the floor in "Flamenco: From Spain to New Mexico," an exploration of this longstanding tradition and art form, which UNESCO recently declared a Masterpiece of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity. Stepping back to flamenco's origins in 15th-century Spain, the exhibition follows the dance's evolution from a rural custom to the sumptuous, costumed performances of today. Several of such costumes are on view, alongside musical instruments, posters, playbills and other materials that have chronicled the dance over the centuries. To Sept. 11, 2016.



**Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum,
Bowdoin College**

Brunswick, Maine | Fur-laden moccasins are a practical necessity for keeping warm in the north—but there’s no reason they shouldn’t come with a little flair. Ever since traders and explorers introduced beads to the region in the mid-18th century, women in chilly locales from Alaska to Greenland have applied them to smarten up footwear, clothing, bags, dolls and artwork. “Dressing It Up: Beadwork in Northern Communities” showcases the distinct traditions that have emerged and taken hold as part of this widespread trend. To March 27, 2016.

Cape Fear Museum of History and Science

Wilmington, N.C. | “Reflections in Black and White” touches on both the pre-color-film photographs on display and the racial tensions that they encompass. Focused on the 1950s, the exhibition features cameras that were cutting-edge at the time; it also displays the scenes that this now-dated equipment captured during the Jim Crow era. Taken by both black and white citizens of North Carolina, the images reveal the nature of life before legalized segregation—and may spark conversations among visitors about contemporary race relations. To May 2017.



Whitney Museum of American Art

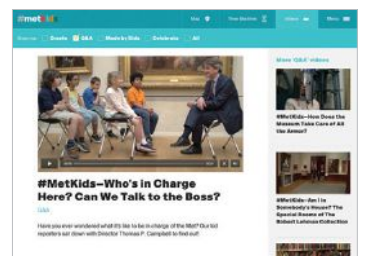
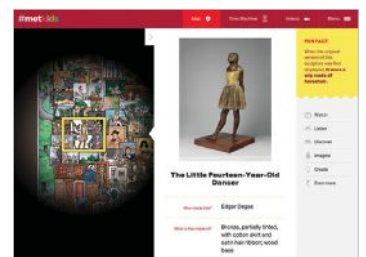
New York | Artist Frank Stella opened his personal collections and archives for “Frank Stella: A Retrospective,” a traveling exhibition reflecting his oeuvre to date. Born in 1936, Stella began shifting the scope of American art a little over two decades later; early works, such as the rarely seen *East Broadway* of 1958, demonstrate where he began. Over his more than 60-year career, Stella has repeatedly reinvented his work—from his original moves toward minimalism to more recent pieces inspired by music and literature—as well as the art world around him. To Feb. 26, 2017. Venues: Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas; de Young Museum, San Francisco.

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The Newseum in Washington, D.C., has brought its collections to the classroom with NewseumED, a new online resource for educators and their students. By signing up for a free account, users can access more than 35,000 publications and artifacts—primary sources that can be used to study both historical and present-day news stories. Related lesson plans and activities can be downloaded from the site for formal learning experiences in elementary school, high school or even university classes. More casual visitors can use NewseumED to peruse the collection, or to prepare for or follow up on an in-person museum visit. newseumed.org

Young art fans contributed to and can now surf to #MetKids, an online exploration of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Introduced last fall, the Web feature is geared toward users between ages 7 and 12. To reach this target audience, the museum recruited children from all five of the Big Apple's boroughs to inform the site's content and design. Rich with multimedia content, #MetKids offers 40 videos in its first iteration, as well as 125 objects from the collection paired with interesting facts and prompts for related projects. Kids can browse through the Met's riches via a Where's Waldo-like map or by hopping into the site's Time Machine to see works that fall within a particular historical period, geographical location or big-picture theme. metmuseum.org/collection/metkids



Just as Bill Withers and Joan Jett were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame last year, the National Toy Hall of Fame added three new honorees to its esteemed lineup. The Strong in Rochester, N.Y., announced in November that the puppet, Twister game and Super Soaker had been chosen from a group of 12 finalists, beating out contenders such as Jenga, Battleship and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. The puppet is notable for its lengthy history and appearance in nearly every world culture. Twister was initially passed off as a fad before achieving lasting fame among partygoers, and the Super Soaker has been a summertime delight since it was released in the 1980s. Anyone can nominate toys for the Hall of Fame; winners are determined by the museum's curators and historians.



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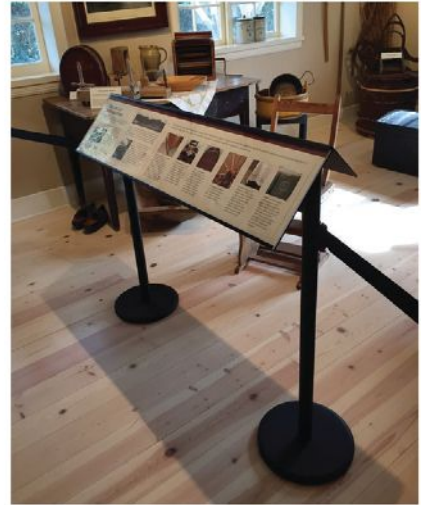
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“NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US”

Reflections on Inclusive Practices at Cultural Institutions

SHERI LEVINSKY-RASKIN AND GREG STEVENS

The phrase “nothing about us without us” is a centuries-old political slogan asserting that no policy should be created without the full and direct participation of those it affects. It was adopted by the disability rights movement in the 1990s as a call to action around the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In line with this powerful statement, AAM brought together more than two dozen subject matter experts and nearly 2,500 participants from the disability community—as well as from access consortia, museums, libraries, archives and educational institutions—to discuss how to make the field more inclusive. The group convened in a three-part webinar series titled “Stories of Inclusion: Inclusive Practices at Cultural Institutions,” which AAM launched in October 2015 as part of a multi-year initiative. Through presentations, case studies and conversations, experts and attendees explored the ADA and Universal Design; physical and cognitive disabilities; partnerships, collaborations and access networks; program planning; building institutional support; life skills development; and inclusive hiring practices.



The Intrepid Museum hosted a simulated World War II-era USO dance and sing-along for individuals with dementia and their caregivers.

The quick-paced dialogue that emerged was informative and supportive. Attendees posed questions to the group and answers were provided. Participants asked for resources and responses poured in with links to websites, publications, case studies and research. Informal groups gathered in dozens of local “watch and talk” events to extend the discussion before, during and after each program. The following summary reflects what transpired as these colleagues convened in webinars, on Twitter (#AAMInclusion) and at

in-person events, contributing to a lively exchange of ideas, information and inspiration.

Awareness

We started the series with a brief exploration of trends in cultural practice, led by Betty Siegel, director of VSA and accessibility at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. She offered a quick overview of U.S. law and international regulation related to disability rights. Valerie Fletcher, executive director of the Institute for Human Centered

TAKING ACTION—FIND, JOIN OR START A LOCAL ACCESS NETWORK

Among the many topics of conversation throughout the webinar series was the importance of local networks. These channels provide opportunities for individuals and organizations to continually learn and share with one another, and support efforts in such areas as outreach, community participation and staff training.

A few examples of local access networks represented by presenters and attendees included the Museum Access Consortium (MAC) in New York City, Cultural Access New England (CANE), ARTability, Access Indy and the Bay Area Arts Access Collective (BAAAC). Several national organizations have local chapters serving our audiences, including the Hearing Loss Association of America, Art Beyond Sight (ABS), the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Alzheimer's Association. Anyone not already involved and engaged with local groups was encouraged to get involved, given the breadth of opportunity and sharing nature of the community.

Describing BAAAC, Cecile Puretz, cofounder of the collective and the access and community engagement manager at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, emphasized the need for museum professionals, educators, artists and members of the disability community to join together to reach “the common goal of promoting access and equity in museums and cultural organizations.” This was further supported by Eileen Bagnall, executive director of VSA Arizona, in her presentation about ARTability and how a state-level program can provide resources, technology, communications, training, funded professional development and marketing assistance to member organizations throughout the state. “It all goes toward creating an inclusive community where people with and without disabilities can learn through, participate in and enjoy the arts,” Bagnall stated, and where “all individuals with disabilities who aspire to careers in the arts should have the opportunity to develop appropriate skills.”

Networks can take many shapes, including a formal consortium, the “watch and talk” events that took place at 60 institutions and the one that began organically during online conversations among attendees. Tweets and photos were posted about local gatherings of colleagues and community members who watched the webinars, including “#AAMInclusion Full House at the @museumofscience watch and talk event!” and “Getting ready to start the @AAMers #AAMInclusion webinar at Maryland State Archives!” Attendees and presenters shared e-mail addresses with one another to create an offline network and form an “access revolution” nationwide. The enthusiasm for getting together and working together was infectious. As @MAConsortium tweeted, using a shorthand term for accessibility, “Let’s start this #a11y revolution.”

Kris Johnson, founder of Access Indy and program coordinator at the Indiana School for the Deaf, initiated the conversation thread that led to the group’s development. She said she hopes that there will eventually be representation from each state, including those with active museum communities. For Johnson, this is a great opportunity to “configure a system of communication at a national level to disseminate information and professional development opportunities related to access and inclusion.” Stay tuned for posts to AAM’s Museum Junction (community.aam-us.org) for ways to get involved.

Comments overall clearly underscored the importance of connecting with local communities. As articulated by Hannah Goodwin, accessibility manager at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and a steering committee member for CANE, “A great way to continue the conversation locally, and to help move things forward, is to join a local knowledge network. The more we talk to each other and share what we are doing, the better things get!”

Sheri Levinsky-Raskin and Greg Stevens

» My TAKE

Design in Boston, joined Siegel in sharing current demographic information. Beth Ziebarth, director of the Smithsonian Institution's accessibility program in Washington, D.C., added to the overview by reminding us that disability rights are civil rights. She also explained the theory of experience preference—taking into account that different people focus on different elements of museum experiences, such as ideas, people, objects and physical dimensions—to help address the “whole person” as we develop programs for all visitors.

Throughout the series, colleagues and attendees emphasized going beyond compliance to develop access

and inclusion that benefit everyone. Michelle Arpey, information services manager at the New York State Archives, pointed out that it is “not just about requirements—a compliant site design is easier for everyone to use.” Several colleagues suggested that disability or functional limitation is a common element of the human experience. Fletcher added, “Variation in ability is ordinary now, not special, and affects most of us for at least part of our lives.”

Collaborations and partnerships are key to effectively meeting the needs of the disability community. “One of the most important lessons I’ve learned through cofounding the Bay Area Arts

Access Collective,” said Cecile Puret, access and community engagement manager at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, “is that through bringing together a diversity of voices to help shape our programs, we strengthen our collective capacity to build awareness and momentum for greater access and inclusion. The power of the collective is empowering and democratizing.”

Elizabeth Merritt, AAM vice president for strategic foresight and founding director of the Center for the Future of Museums, articulated significant demographic changes, the needs of an aging population, trends in technology and shifts in the way we think about

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(dis)ability. “The future is focused on both cognitive and physical disability,” she noted, “related to a profound shift in how we use technology—from corrective ‘assistive technology’ to ‘augmentative technology’ that expands our abilities.”

Action

Among other presenters, Christine Reich, director of exhibit development and conservation at the Museum of Science, Boston, emphasized that inclusion starts with an institutional vision for access, supported by a holistic approach to continuous improvement and change through organizational learning. “This includes involving people with disabilities in our work, embedding inclusive practice in our work and communication, engaging in ongoing experimentation and promoting inclusive practice as something that benefits people with and without disabilities,” Reich explained.

At the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York City, Barbara Johnson Stemler oversees a range of access programs for individuals with disabilities, including hands-on and family programs, pre-visit lessons, early morning openings for children with autism and their families and a program called “Stories Within” for individuals with dementia and their caregivers. “We focus on developing social-emotional and life skills: problem solving, respect, self-regulation, collaboration, communication, embracing strengths and areas of need,” described Stemler. “These are strategies that work for all audiences.”



Above: This photo from the 1940s shows students from North Carolina’s Governor Morehead School for the Blind engaging in a tactile learning experience at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences. Below: “Morning at the Museum” program at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.



A teenage boy with low vision holds a glass element by Dale Chihuly during a guided tour at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Many colleagues discussed the value of including the disability community’s perspectives in program planning. Christine Murray, senior content designer for Antenna International in San Francisco, described a dynamic process for including the Deaf community in the development of an American Sign Language (ASL) tour for Alcatraz Island. The project included a valuable listening phase and robust testing, experimentation and refinement. “Over 75 percent of the people who helped create the tours were from the Deaf community: co-creators, designers, talent and audience testers,” Murray reported.

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WHAT'S NEXT?

As co-developers and moderators of this series, what resonated most for us was how the webinars revealed so many topics for future exploration. There is a real thirst to delve deeper into discussions centering on accessibility and inclusion in terms of both visitors to our institutions and our staff.

Some of the ideas shared during the webinars referenced ways to involve community members as co-creators of their experiences. Cecile Poretz, co-founder of the Bay Area Arts Access Collective and the access and community engagement manager at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, worked with people with disabilities to build awareness for visitors without disabilities, helping the latter group learn about access and inclusion. She sought content, input and feedback from community members representing a range of disabilities in the development of the exhibition “Patient No More,” organized by the Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University. Others turned the conversation about inclusion inward, calling for introspection and examination of internal practices and staff support.

A few of the topics that arose from attendee questions and comments during the webinars and on Twitter (#AAMInclusion) regarded hiring practices, staff training, outreach, community relationships, partnerships, internships for individuals with disabilities, resource sharing, lower cost options for smaller budgets and institutional inclusion statements. Even more revealing was how these topics related to the 2016 AAM Annual Meeting theme of “power, influence and responsibility,” as museums look to improve and advance their inclusive practices externally and internally.

The AAM Education Professional Network (EdCom) will explore this topic more specifically at its Marketplace of Ideas in May 2016 in Washington, D.C. EdCom will facilitate discussions about how museums define inclusion and how accessibility, accountability and advocacy are approached in practice. The Marketplace will feature examples of inclusion statements already adopted by a range of institutions. Find the call for participation and more information on Museum Junction (community.aam-us.org).

For more information about the 2016 AAM Annual Meeting, visit aam-us.org/events/annual-meeting.

Sheri Levinsky-Raskin and Greg Stevens

Francesca Rosenberg, director of community, access and school programs at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City (MoMA), highlighted MoMA’s series of staff training videos that include people with disabilities. “We decided the most effective way to train staff would be to identify their levels of awareness, their attitudes and their misconceptions about people with disabilities, and then for staff to hear from people with disabilities,” Rosenberg said. The videos are available on the MoMA website (moma.org).

Not all institutions, however, have the resources to fully implement accessible and inclusive strategies or programming. According to Kat Burkhart, executive director and curator (and the only paid staff member) at the Carnegie Museum of Montgomery County in Crawfordsville, Indiana, “Our goal is to make everyone welcome at the museum, regardless of their ability. But we also have limited staff and resources, so we do the best we can. We are very upfront and honest about what we can and cannot do. We are mostly low-tech, but we try: QR codes on labels, large-print materials, emphasizing our accessible entrance. Little things make a difference.”

Advocacy

So much of our commitment to the cause stems from our personal and professional experiences with disability. “We need to recognize the variety of preferences, needs and learning modalities that we all have,” suggested Cindy VandenBosch, former co-chair and project leader for Cultural



Disability Open House at the de Young Museum in San Francisco.

Connections for People with Autism at the Museum Access Consortium in New York City. “People with disabilities are already coming to our institutions; our challenge is to change our collective mindset, our practice and our communication. Rather than defining disabilities, perhaps it’s better to think about ‘variations in the human spirit.’”

In addition to identifying and serving people with disabilities as visitors, presenters addressed the issue of adopting inclusive hiring practices in our cultural institutions. Barbara Cohen-Stratynier, curator of exhibitions at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, suggested that “cultural institutions must commit to the ‘human variation’ community with regard to staff, volunteers and interns.” Beth Redmond-Jones, senior

director of public programs at the San Diego Natural History Museum (and the mother of an adult child with autism), was equally emphatic about programming and employment opportunities: “It’s not just a focus on childhood programs; children transition to adulthood. We need to provide new content, new ways of doing things, especially internships and other work opportunities.”

Gathering information, sharing resources, exchanging ideas and promoting best practices: all are part of advocating for accessibility and inclusion. Fletcher articulated that our vision of inclusion supports the common shared goals of the cultural sector and that we must “catalyze a community of cultural learners and innovators who believe in life and all its variations.”

Sheri Levinsky-Raskin is the assistant vice president for education and evaluation at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York City. Greg Stevens is assistant director for professional development at the American Alliance of Museums.

This article is based on the three-part AAM webinar series “Stories of Inclusion: Inclusive Practices at Cultural Institutions.” The series was produced in collaboration with the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), the Museum Access Consortium and the Education Committee (EdCom) and Diversity Committee (DivCom), two of AAM’s 22 professional networks. The series was supported in part by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and is available for download in the AAM Recorded Webinar Library: aam-us.org/resources/online-programs

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Keep Moving Forward

Johnnetta Betsch Cole, director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art and a distinguished scholar, educator and humanitarian, delivered the keynote address at the Alliance's 2015 annual meeting in Atlanta. She made the case that museums can and must be of social value by creating change around one of the most critical issues of our time—the issue of diversity. Read her powerful words below.

Drawing on my roots in a southern black church and my involvement in the civil rights movement, I greet each of you as my sisters and my brothers. Good morning! And if I draw once again on my roots in a southern black church, I would say, "It's a great gettin' up morning!"

I want to thank sister Chair Kaywin Feldman and brother President Ford Bell and the organizers of this year's AAM conference for giving me the honor of offering this keynote address as we gather in a city that is often described as the cradle of the civil rights movement...a movement that called for, struggled for and, indeed, brought about monumental changes in our nation and inspired other movements for freedom and justice in America and around the world. We are in this city called Atlanta, a city that is the birthplace of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr...the man Nina Simone called the "dark prince of peace."

We are in a city called Atlanta that is the home of major institutions that address issues of social justice: the Martin Luther King National Historic Site, the Carter Center and the National Center for Civil and Human Rights.

Because we are in such a city, the theme for this 2015 AAM Annual Meeting is especially appropriate: "The social value of museums:

inspiring change." Over the course of the next few days that we are together, there will be many responses to this theme.

What I have chosen to do in this keynote address is to make the case that our museums can and must be of social value by not only inspiring but creating change around one of the most critical issues of our time—the issue of diversity. For us in the world of museums, that means inspiring and creating far greater diversity in our workforces, our exhibitions, our educational programs and among our visitors.

I want to turn to our colleagues who are here from museums around the world to say this: As I speak about the need for greater diversity in the U.S. museum, please know that I know that your realities may be quite different. I only hope that some of the points I will make will be helpful to you.

I also want to acknowledge the other slant in this talk, and that is that I am drawing most heavily on the question of diversity in art museums. And to my colleagues who work in zoological parks and aquariums, while I will not make specific references to your organizations, please know that I know that you too are wrestling with questions of diversity.

Colleagues, all, I believe that we cannot fully carry out the visions and the missions of our museums—and, indeed, our museums cannot



Johnnetta Betsch Cole delivers the keynote address at the 2015 AAM Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo in Atlanta.

continue to be of social value—if we do not do what is required to have more diversity in who works in our museums, in the work we present in our museums, in the audiences we welcome to our museums and in the philanthropic and board leadership in our museums.

One of my *sheroes*, the late Dr. Maya Angelou, issued a call to all women and men who are parents when she said, “It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.” In our museums, we have the possibility to teach that same important message.

When we look back at the history of American museums, we see that they were products of and reflections of the political, economic and social times. Back in the day, museums were run by and largely catered to

middle-aged and middle-income and upper-class white folks. And the collections, exhibitions and educational programs reflected what one of my colleagues, Dr. Beverly Guy-Sheftall at Spelman College, calls the Three Ws: They were largely focused on Western places and ideas, the overwhelming majority of the staff and the visitors were white folks and the exhibitions were largely womanless.

[...] Like all African Americans who grew up in the pre-civil rights days of legal segregation in the South, as a youngster I went to colored schools, used the colored “public” library, only drank from colored water fountains and could only sit in the back of the bus. There were no art galleries or museums where I or any black people could visit. But how fortunate I was to have a mother who had a passion for visual

arts. As we say in the art world, “She had the eye!” And she had the will and the means to adorn our home with reproductions of artworks that, ironically, I would not have seen in museums had I been permitted to visit them. For in our home were reproductions of masterworks of African American artists and books on the art of Henry Tanner, Romare Bearden, Elizabeth Catlett, Jacob Lawrence, Lois Mailou Jones, Charles White, Augusta Savage and Aaron Douglas.

Today, with legalized segregation a thing of the past, I can go to any museum whose entrance fee—if there is one—I can afford. And yet, too often I will not find much in those museums which reflects the history, *herstory*, culture and art of who I am, and [that of] underrepresented people of our country and the world.

Today, from a legal standpoint, every American museum must honor EEO guidelines. In addition, it is the right thing to do to have diversity in our museums’ staff, boards, programs and audiences. It is also the smart thing to do if we want our museums to be vibrant 21st-century places that reflect the diversity of our nation and the world.

A comprehensive look at diversity in our museums would include an assessment of the presence and the absence of the range of underrepresented groups—that is, people whose primary identity is based on their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, nationality, class, physical abilities and disabilities. I have used the term “primary identity” because each of us has multiple identities.

Another of my *sheroes*, Audre Lorde, had a wonderful way of making this point about our multiple identities. I had the privilege and the joy of knowing and learning from Audre Lorde when we both taught at Hunter College. Before she would begin a talk and offer a reading from her work, she would introduce herself by

saying, “I am Audre Lorde, a black woman, feminist, lesbian, professor, poet, mother, warrior!” And then Audre Lorde would say, “Please do not relate to me as if I have but one identity. For I do not wake up in the morning and from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. I am black, but when 8 a.m. comes, I become a woman, and only for an hour because at 9 a.m., I will be a feminist, only to become a lesbian on the stroke of 10 a.m.”

Let me return to the point that embracing, encouraging and sustaining a diverse workforce in our museums is the right thing to do. That is, there should be an equal opportunity for all qualified people to not only enter the workforce at our museums, but to be welcomed there and supported to advance there.

There is a second reason for having and sustaining a diverse workforce. Namely, it is the smart thing to do. There is a business case for diversity. It says [that] if businesses are to compete effectively in this global economy, they must have within their company employees of diverse backgrounds who will bring different and innovative ideas to the table. It is also my experience that being with people of diverse backgrounds can be and often is intellectually exciting!

This business case for diversity in American companies, and in our museums, rests heavily on demographic realities. Over the past few decades, there have been massive demographic and social shifts. According to U.S. census data, currently 35 percent of all U.S. residents are “minorities.” Demographers have stated that this trend will not only continue but will accelerate well into the next several decades. In the next 30 years, the U.S. will become a “majority minority” country, with white folks no longer in the majority.

The future of American philanthropy, like the future of everything else in the country, will be shaped by increasing racial and ethnic diversity. According to the Minnesota Council on Foundations, “Who donates and what they

[T]he most important book any museum director should read is the U.S. census.

give will be profoundly impacted, and public policy will become more representative of minority communities.”

As Arnold Lehman, the retiring director of the Brooklyn Museum, puts it, “For our museums, diversity is a critical issue” and “the most important book any museum director should read is the U.S. census.”

What is the state of workforce diversity in our American museums? Today, the professional staff at most American museums do not mirror the diversity of American people... In the 241 museums of the Association of Art Museum Directors, fewer than 5 percent have people of color in senior management positions.

[...] Of course, once a museum is successful in recruiting a diverse staff, the question is, “What kind of environment, atmosphere and culture will these diverse colleagues encounter?” I cannot stress enough the importance of an inclusive culture that says in countless ways, “All colleagues from all backgrounds are welcome at this museum table!”

In addition to asking about racial and ethnic diversity among museum staff, we must also ask who visits our museums. While people of color make up over one-third of the American population, according to a National Endowment for Arts report, they make up only 9 percent of museum visitors.

Brother President Ford Bell makes this point: “The big challenge is going to be how museums deal with the increasingly diverse American public, which could be 30 percent or more Hispanic by 2050. If you go to a museum and don’t see anyone who looks like you, from visitors to staff, and the boards are not reflecting the community, you may be less likely to come back, or even to go in the first place.”

Marketing studies affirm the rather obvious fact that African Americans are more likely to attend events that are characterized as “black themed” and events where black people are well represented among performers. Studies of Latino attitudes toward museums show similar results. A report by the Smithsonian American History Museum found second-generation Latinos surveyed had “very strong expectations that museums should include diverse staff, bilingual interpretation, Latino perspectives and some Latino-themed content.”

In Houston, our colleague the late Peter Marzio of the Museum of Fine Arts started a Latin American department in response to the city’s rapidly expanding Latino community. Peter also added several permanent Asian art galleries in response to Houston’s growing and diverse Asian community. And he did not start these exhibitions and programs in some vacuum, but rather by engaging the local community and seeing what they wanted. This has resulted in very strong local support, donations and engagement. As an example, the Korean community donated over \$2 million for a permanent art collection.

I turn now to the situation of those of us who are described in a Native American saying as “holding up half of the sky”...us womenfolk. Where do we stand in terms of women on museum staffs?

Among the museums in the Association of Art Museum Directors, women make up slightly less than 50 percent of the directors. However, of the 243 members of the Association of Art Museum Directors, there are only 5 African American women! It is also important to note that, the larger a museum’s budget, the less likely it is that the director is a woman.

[...] Women lag behind men in directorships held at museums with budgets over \$15 million. We women folks hold only 245 of all art museum directorships, and women earn 71 cents for every dollar earned by male directors.

Calvert Investments discovered that companies whose commitment to diversity was viewed as “robust” were not only at a financial advantage, but were also better positioned to generate long-term shareholder value. In addition, advocacy groups like Catalyst, a nonprofit organization that promotes inclusive workplaces for women, found that Fortune 500 companies with higher percentages of women board members significantly outperformed companies with fewer female members. This is the business case for why promoting diversity and inclusion makes good financial sense! And let us note that women have more philanthropic clout than ever before, consistently outgiving their male counterparts.

I also want to make an observation in terms

of American museums and LGBTQ communities. Whatever the number of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals there are among museum professionals—such statistics are not available—it is clear that American museums have paid grossly insufficient attention to artworks done by and about individuals of these communities.

The exhibition at the Smithsonian [National] Portrait Gallery “Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture” (November 18, 2011–February 12, 2012) was the first museum exhibition to focus on themes of gender and sexuality in modern American portraiture. As you may recall, there was a major controversy around that exhibition when the Smithsonian removed a 1987 video about the suffering caused by AIDS. At the Smithsonian, we continue to talk about what we have learned from that controversy.

We must also address the question of how inclusive our museums are in terms of

An image from the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Latin American Art collection.



exhibitions by and about differently abled people. And we must ask ourselves to what extent our museums welcome disabled professional staff, and the extent to which our museums accommodate and welcome people with disabilities.

Finally, in terms of underrepresented groups, I pose this question: How are our museums doing in terms of igniting the interest of the folks that I respectfully, yet playfully, call the “young’uns”? As you know, millennials are quite different from yesterday’s museumgoers in how they see the world, how they engage with technology and how they pursue their interests. It is not being overly dramatic to say that, unless we make changes in our museums that will speak to the patterns and interests of young people, when the middle-age to older folks who are now our core visitors go on off to glory, our museum galleries will be places in which there are a dwindling number of visitors. We all know that our museums must become more technologically savvy if we are to court the millennials, whose electronic devices have become extensions of their bodies.

Not only is reaching out to the millennial generation important for cultivating healthy visitorship, but it is critical for preparing the next generation of donors and trustees. While the baby boomer generation has been the main source of charitable giving and philanthropic leadership for decades, the realities and habits of the millennial generation are not the same as [those of] the current, aging generation.

From a recent TrendsWatch report compiled by our American Alliance of Museums and a recent *New York Times* article, “Wooing a New Generation of Museum Patrons,” we learn this: While charitable giving in the United States has remained stable for the last 40 years, there is reason for concern. Boomers today control 70 percent of the nation’s disposable income. Millennials don’t yet have nearly as much cash on hand. And those who do are increasingly

drawn to social, rather than artistic, causes.

The fiscal reality of the millennial generation is not the same as the reality of older generations. Tax laws are changing and wealth is becoming increasingly concentrated, which will in turn affect the philanthropic habits and the focus on giving of the younger generation. Also, there may just be fewer wealthy patrons and donors, making donor relations and cultivation a more critical and targeted effort.

[...] If your museum is large or small, old or young, famous or not yet famous, the need for seeking and sustaining diversity in your museums and in mine has never been greater. If we are to be relevant in this ever-changing world, to stay artistically and financially viable, all of our museums must boldly—indeed, bodaciously—commit to rethinking about what takes place in our museums, to whom our museums belong and who the colleagues are who have the privilege of telling important stories through the power of science, history, culture and art.

As members of AAM, you, my colleagues, are aware of efforts in this organization to address issues of diversity in our museums. There are also programs initiated by other museum organizations, like AAMD, and by foundations, like Ford and Mellon, to encourage far greater involvement of underrepresented groups in every facet of American museums.

There is no city that is a more appropriate place for us to commit to the task of bringing greater diversity to who works in American museums and to the work that our museums do. And there is no time that is more appropriate for us to carry out this commitment than right now! So, let us heed the counsel of Atlanta’s son, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in terms of how we are to get this critical work done. He said, “If you can’t fly, then run. If you can’t run, then walk; if you can’t walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.”



Setting the Standard for LGBTQ Inclusion

**RENAE YOUNGS, CHRISTOPHER LEITCH
AND MICHAEL LESPERANCE**

It's a common assumption that the arts and culture fields are populated with LGBTQ folks who find welcoming working environments in museums, historical societies, zoos and arboreta.

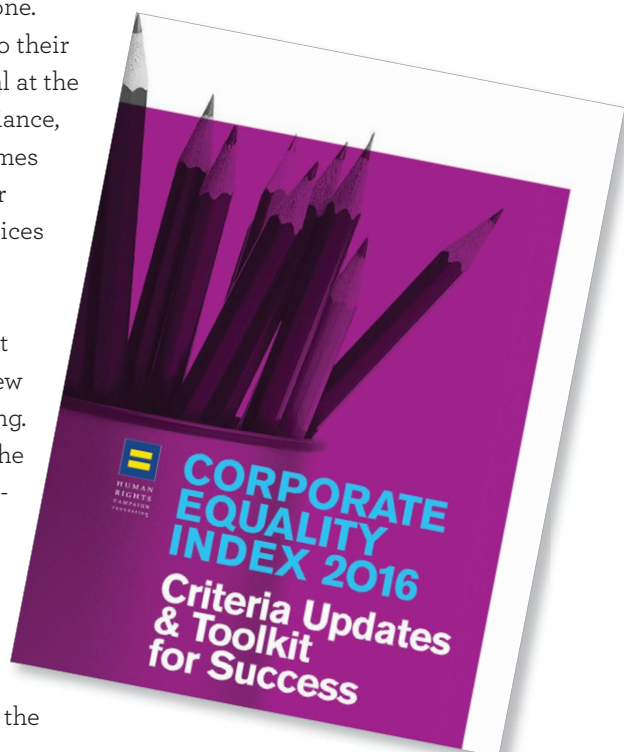
The truth is that the culture sector lags behind the corporate workplace in formalizing its commitment to LGBTQ staff and visitors.

Over the past two years, AAM's LGBTQ Alliance has been developing a broad set of Welcoming Guidelines to help museums be more inclusive of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer staff and visitors. The guidelines touch on all areas of museum work and are expected to be published online in 2016.

As with any policy that supports the inclusion of diverse perspectives or abilities in museums, the Welcoming Guidelines can help establish workplaces that are cordial and productive for everyone.

"If cultural institutions really want to appeal to their audiences," observed Mike Lesperance, principal at the Design Minds, Inc., and chair of the LGBTQ Alliance, "they need to create an environment that welcomes and reflects the needs of all visitors. What better way to start than by encouraging diversity practices for staff?"

Annette Gavigan, exhibits registrar at the California Academy of Sciences, chaired the first phase of the guidelines' development, which grew out of a session at the 2013 AAM Annual Meeting. She also wrote the human resources section of the guidelines referenced here. Renae Youngs, director of research and evaluation at the Minnesota State Arts Board, and independent museum professional Christopher Leitch lead the volunteer team, a sub-committee of AAM's LGBTQ Alliance Professional Network. They are compiling and synthesizing existing resources from the



museum field and from related or inspirational fields, such as the business sector, libraries and formal education.

The group is organizing its proposals according to AAM's Characteristics of Excellence for U.S. Museums and drawing from the Corporate Equality Index (CEI) established by the Human Rights Campaign, a national LGBTQ advocacy group. The Welcoming Guidelines will include a matrix for institutions to easily align AAM's standards with LGBTQ best practices, reflecting the CEI.

The guidelines stress three points, listed below with excerpts from the draft recommendations.

LGBTQ diversity is on purpose

The guidelines urge museums to make inclusion a strategic priority and to design policies and practices that facilitate diverse recruitment and hiring. Baseline recommendations include adopting non-discrimination policies that apply to sexual orientation and gender expression or identity. Museums should actively recruit LGBTQ prospects for board, staff and volunteer positions through professional associations (such as the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce), recruitment events and job sites.

Your museum can encourage LGBTQ diversity

A simple first step is forming an organization-wide diversity council or LGBTQ affinity group. These teams can be tasked with surveying peer institutions and identifying resources that can facilitate a culture of inclusion. Implementing museum-wide LGBTQ-specific training and accountability demonstrates "commitment to diversity and cultural competency through new hire trainings, supervisor trainings, professional development and/or gender transition supportive trainings."

[The Welcoming Guidelines] urge museums to make inclusion a strategic priority and to design policies and practices that facilitate diverse recruitment and hiring.

Your museum can stop discouraging LGBTQ diversity

Actively and passively, a culture of exclusion can develop at your museum unless steps are taken to prevent it. If life events—marriages, births and adoptions, etc.—are recognized and celebrated among staff, all who desire to participate should be encouraged to do so and be treated equally. Employee and public data collection forms should "include optional questions on sexual orientation and gender identity." Importantly, access to safe and appropriate restrooms must be guaranteed to staff, volunteers and museum patrons "through gender-neutral/family restrooms and/or actively disseminated and enforced policies granting transgendered individuals access to restrooms consistent with their identified/presented gender."

This document, in its final form, is intended to be scalable, with adoptable suggestions for museums of all sizes. It will also serve as both a reference resource and a self-assessment tool for museums to track their progress as they become more welcoming institutions.

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Professional Networks

Our 22 Professional Networks—based on job responsibilities and areas of common interest—are a benefit of individual professional membership in the Alliance. These vibrant groups offer opportunities to learn from colleagues across the museum field, and they are premier resources for networking. You can join as many networks as you wish. Visit aam-us.org/resources/professional-networks for more information on how to get involved!

Asian Pacific American: issues relevant to the Asian Pacific American community

CARE: audience research and evaluation; the voice of the visitor in all aspects of operations

COMPT: professional preparation, training and development of staff

CURCOM: curatorial practice and collections research, care and exhibition

DAM: development, fundraising and membership

DIVCOM: diversity and inclusion

EDCOM: learning theories, educational practices and programming

Historic House Museums: issues common and unique to historic houses

Indigenous Peoples Museum Network: issues relevant to museums and indigenous peoples

Latino: needs of Latino and Latin American professionals and professionals who work in interpreting Latino issues

Leadership and Management: leadership, governance, administration, finance and human resources

LGBTQ Alliance: issues relevant to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community

Media & Technology: use of media and technology to meet museums' public mission

NAME: exhibit development and design

PACCIN: proper care, handling, packing, crating and transporting of collections

PIC Green: environmental sustainable practices

PRAM: public relations and marketing

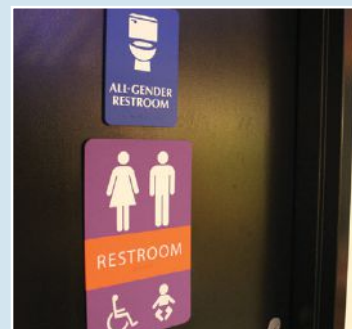
Registrars: registration and collections management

Security: security, fire, health and safety issues

SMAC: advancing small museums

Traveling Exhibitions: issues relevant to traveling exhibitions

Visitor Services: services to visitors as a core component of operations



All gender restroom signs from the Whitney Museum of American Art (left), the American Folk Art Museum (center) and the Chicago Children's Museum (right).

The Labor of Diversity

NICOLE IVY

Museums serve as places of collaboration, education and reflection. They exist in stunning variety, from institutions with collections of living species to those whose holdings are predominantly virtual. With their broad array of content, forms and missions, museums represent some of the greatest diversity among all contemporary institutions. New ones continue to emerge to meet the needs and interests of our country's ever-changing populace. This variety largely sustains the relevancy of the field. It ensures that the objects and ideas we value—as rare, instructive or cautionary—will remain part of our shared cultural heritage. It makes sense, then, that diversity should be an important consideration within our field.

But *diversity* as a buzzword alone misses the point. A commitment to diversity mandates the hard work of honestly evaluating our hiring practices. It calls us to ensure that our compensation policies are equitable and clear, and that pathways to leadership in the field are made accessible.

At last year's annual meeting, a group of activist-minded museum workers organized a rogue session to consider how museums might "turn the social justice lens inward." This movement, Museum Workers Speak (#MuseumWorkersSpeak), advocates for critical reflection, organization and action

around museum employment and fair labor practices. I share the concerns raised by #MuseumWorkersSpeak, my fellow contributors to this issue of *Museum* and many, many others about the future of our field as an equitable institution. I want to ensure that museum work remains attainable for qualified people with a range of life experiences and backgrounds. As we equip our museums to be sustainable and responsive for the 21st century, we must also make certain that they are inclusive workplaces.

Barriers to diversity exist at many points in the pipeline to museum employment. Chief among these are high student debt as a



prerequisite of entry into the field, the prevalence of unpaid and underpaid work and a hiring process in which homogenous groups replicate themselves. By addressing these issues, museums can position themselves to engage and attract professionals that reflect the breadth of our rapidly diversifying society.

What is Diversity, Anyway?

In her keynote speech at the 2015 AAM Annual Meeting (page 26), Johnnetta Betsch Cole reminded us of the complexities of diversity. She asserted that our diversity efforts should honor the experiences of people “whose primary identity is based on their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, nationality, class, physical abilities and disabilities.” We should also acknowledge, she noted, that our identities are often overlapping and numerous.

Without that acknowledgement, we risk flattening worlds of human difference and diminishing our effectiveness. We risk turning the potentially productive language of diversity into mere tokenism and jargon. Anna Holmes, founding editor of the blog *Jezebel*, warned against this watering-down of the word *diversity* in a recent *New York Times Magazine* article. “When the word is proudly invoked in a corporate context,” she wrote, “it acquires a certain sheen.” Holmes observed that “[it’s] almost as if cheerfully and frequently uttering the word ‘diversity’ is the equivalent of doing

the work of actually making it a reality.” Taken together with Cole’s charge, Holmes’s critique is helpful for avoiding the pitfalls of current “diversity-speak.” Diversity without sustained action is moot.

Student Debt

Increasingly, the path toward a museum career requires earning a graduate degree in museum studies. These programs can carry price tags totaling tens of thousands of dollars beyond the cost of undergraduate education. Young people with significant undergraduate student loan debt may be reluctant to borrow further against their futures to secure an advanced degree—especially in a field where expected incomes barely cover the costs of repayment.

This scenario is not simply hypothetical. The Center for the Future of Museums (CFM) has reported that 80 percent of students in museum studies programs are female and 80 percent of them are white. The data reveal that museum studies graduate programs tend to attract people who can afford either to carry sizeable amounts of student debt or to finance a good portion of the cost through independent resources. First-generation college students, students from rural and urban impoverished communities and students who are working parents may not be able to do either.

The prevalence of this debt limits job seekers’ access to the credentials that would make them



competitive in the current job market. If the cost of admission to the field remains out of reach for workers who aren't overwhelmingly white and female, then diversity becomes an empty goal.

Unpaid, Underpaid

The prevalence of unpaid work—and work paying less than a living wage—in the field also affects museums' ability to attract professionals who don't have access to financial reserves. Elizabeth Merritt's article (page 46) offers an in-depth look at this dynamic. Tweets from the #MuseumWorkersSpeak April 2015 meeting also provide a snapshot of the conversation on diversity, inclusion and employment:

- "I see a brain-drain due to talented people who can't afford to work in museums and leave the field."
- "Discouraging to see directors' salaries & perks when staff at minimum wage."
- "Not just museum attendance for those who can afford tickets, but are museum jobs only for those who can afford them?"
- "If 'entry level museum wage' [equals] \$0 (ie. unpaid I'ship) then the next wage up the ladder doesn't need to be much bigger [...] therefore unpaid internships affect the WHOLE museum pay scale"
- "Unpaid work replaces paid position, excludes ppl [of] low socioeconomic background from field"

The refrain in these statements is powerfully clear: The current trend of the obligatory unpaid museum internship makes the pathway to museum employment less accessible for workers without means. In the words of Michelle Millar Fisher, researcher and former manager of the Guggenheim's internship program, in her November 2015 guest post on the *Museum 2.0* blog, "If you're reading this at work, you're probably reading it within ten feet of an unpaid intern." Fisher wrote that young people entering

the field are part of what the *Economist* has termed "the internship generation"; they navigate a market that increasingly demands free labor in exchange for professional credentials. Indeed, internships offer valuable training, experience and networking opportunities to new professionals. But when internships don't provide stipends, they open the door to employee exploitation and indirectly privilege those who can afford to work for free. When unpaid labor becomes the hallmark of an employment pipeline, access to that pipeline is limited to those who can afford it.

Unintended Bias

Managers often hire people who are similar to themselves. The Cubiks consultancy's International Survey on Job and Cultural Fit (2013) found that more than 80 percent of employers across the globe placed "cultural fit" at the top of their priority list when recruiting new hires. In a study of more than 120 employers, sociologist Lauren A. Rivera found that interviewers were largely drawn to people whose hobbies and histories mirrored their own. As she explained:

Bonding over rowing college crew, getting certified in scuba, sipping single-malt Scotches in the Highlands or dining at Michelin-starred restaurants was evidence of fit; sharing a love of teamwork or a passion for pleasing clients was not.

Rivera found that even when the companies she surveyed boasted demographic diversity, employees more often than not shared similar social and class backgrounds: People tend to live, work and play in the same circles and regions as their colleagues.

Indeed, hiring people who will fit naturally into the existing culture can create productive workplaces. Having teams of people who share core values can foster efficiency and collaboration. But the very concept of "fit" is vulnerable

to unintentional forms of cultural bias, which erode opportunities for maintaining work environments in which people's varied experiences and perspectives are applied toward a common goal. The benefits of cultural fit are fast eroded by the replication of sameness.

And often, this replication is imperceptible to those who continue it. A 2012 Yale University study asked scientists to evaluate two candidates for a position as a lab manager. The scientists all received the same application, with some copies bearing randomly assigned male applicant names and others bearing female names. Those given submissions of a fictional male rated the applications higher on factors such as "competency" than did scientists given applications with female names. The group of scientists was willing to pay male applicants, on average, \$4,000 more than they gave female applicants. Interestingly, men and women scientists alike tended to rate the male applicants higher.

The implications for museums are significant: In order to increase our diversity, we must change how we approach the hiring process. We must make sure that "cultural fit" is not shorthand for "cultural homogeneity." CFM is currently pioneering a FutureLab project to address precisely this issue. Working with tech firms GapJumpers and Textio, we are developing a pilot project that will use algorithms to mitigate unintended hiring bias. We will launch this work publicly in a session at the 2016 AAM Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.

Some Ways Forward

The task of encouraging diversity, while monumental, is not impossible. Programs such as the Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship Program and the Center for Curatorial Leadership's Diversity Mentoring Initiative allow a wide range of candidates to prepare for future curatorial careers. The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) recently partnered with the United Negro

College Fund to provide paid internships for more than a dozen college juniors interested in museum practice, an initiative supported by funding from AAMD members as well as the National Endowment for the Arts, the Henry Luce Foundation and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation. In 2014, the Minnesota Historical Society became the first museum in the country to have a department devoted to creating systematic change and inclusive institutions, called the Department of Diversity and Community Engagement (DICE). Founded and led by historian and museum outreach specialist Chris Taylor, DICE endeavors to create an intentional, integrated and comprehensive strategy for diversity and inclusion work at the museum and, ultimately, to aid the field at large.

Museums can help by extending their search for talent beyond the traditional academic sources. Hiring managers—and human resources departments in general—can look to people with forms of expertise that are not typically associated with museum studies degrees. Community organizers, people with backgrounds in new media and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math), cultural thought leaders and those skilled in multilingual communications can all bring innovative skills to museums.

The field also needs more data and stronger research on diversity and employment. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation report on diversity in art museums has been a powerful tool for understanding the landscape. Its findings evidence what many nonwhite museum professionals have known anecdotally—namely, that leadership among staff and boards remains largely devoid of people of color. With better research, we can better understand the labor in our museums, assess where improvement is needed and act to make the museums we want a reality.

Nicole Ivy, PhD, is a museum futurist at the Center for the Future of Museums and a public fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies.

Bringing Self-Examination to the Center of Social Justice Work in Museums

ROSE PAQUET KINSLEY AND ALETHEIA WITTMAN

We wrote a letter in response to the July/August 2015 issue of this magazine, which focused on themes of social justice. What follows here expands on our views as introduced in that letter.

As museums seek to align with social justice causes, their attention often turns first to external events and local communities. Museums ought to look at issues that exist within their structures in addition to joining the fight for social justice outside their walls. Our objective isn't to dissuade museums from aligning with social justice endeavors, but rather to expand the conversation to include internal practices and institutional legacies that prevent us from doing our best work.

Why is it important that museums turn the social justice lens inward? A lack of introspection and visible internal change projects the idea that museums have something special others lack—that they are the “chosen” group to help those that cannot help themselves. There are some clear problems with this line of thinking. First, it assumes an exceptionalism that distances museums from other organizations and institutions trying to address social justice. Second, it obscures the fact that museums have many of their own issues to deal with. Museums can be strong partners toward positive social change, but this effort ought to be accompanied by critical self-examination.

In particular, we call on museums to evaluate three key topics: institutional legacies, staffing and language. These deeply inter-related issues represent recurrent themes in ongoing conversations with our friends and Inluseum collaborators.

The Inluseum is a project and blog we cofounded in 2012 to encourage critical discourse and reflective practice regarding inclusion in museums. At the time, no such outlet existed, and we found it difficult to locate others who were thinking about and conducting related work. It dawned on us that this opacity and lack of connection would continue to slow true progress, so we decided to launch the Inluseum blog as a multi-voice platform where museum practitioners and scholars could share their ideas and discoveries. We see the multi-voice model as key to inclusive work. Rather than centering on our limited perspectives, the Inluseum blog invites authors to represent themselves and contribute to a collection of viewpoints. We're convinced that this bridging of people, examples and ideas helps increase the visibility of inclusion-related work, which is crucial to building momentum for lasting change.

In addition to the blog, we have brought people together offline through events and workshops and experimented with what we believe are “next practices” (an extension of “best practices”) for inclusion-related work in museums. These experiments have resulted in collaborative digital and analogue exhibits, among other outcomes. In short, the Inluseum is the ongoing product of many entangled collaborations, reflecting current practices and scholarship and creating a vision for what a radically inclusive museum can look like.

1. Institutional Legacies

“We want to work with communities, but how do we get started?” “When we reached out, we were met with suspicion.” “It takes a long time to build trust!” “How do we sustain relationships?”

Through our work with the Inclusion, we have frequently heard these observations and questions. In reality, though, every museum has been part of a larger network of relationships with community groups, funders, collectors and so on since its founding. In other words, each museum has an institutional legacy that needs to be reckoned with to better understand its present-day challenges in working with communities.

Questions that can help probe this legacy include: Who are my museum founders? Where did their money come from? Where did the collections come from; were they looted or forcibly removed from source communities? What does my museum not have in its collections and why? Did my museum practice active exclusion during, for example, the Jim Crow era? How else has my museum maintained practices over the years that reinforce service to some groups over others? Today, who are the authors of the stories that my museum tells?

While considering and seeking answers to these questions might be an uncomfortable task, it is a necessary place to start. Consider, for example, a museum that, under Jim Crow laws, restricted or prohibited African Americans from visiting. A few decades later, it is not surprising that this museum would see few African Americans walking through its doors and would have difficulty establishing and sustaining relationships with those who, a few generations prior, were actively excluded.

Museums’ desires to form inclusive relationships with their communities cannot be disassociated from the relationships they had in the past. Even if that history predates everyone on staff, we must educate ourselves and make amends for them today. Legacies

<h1>TABOO</h1> <h2>INCLUSEUM EDITION</h2> <p>The objective of this game is for a player to have their partners guess the word on the player's card without using the word itself or the three additional words listed on the card.</p>	
<h3>DIVERSITY</h3> <p>Inclusion Community Access</p>	<h3>INCLUSION</h3> <p>Diversity Community Access</p>
<h3>ACCESS</h3> <p>Inclusion Community Diversity</p>	<h3>COMMUNITY</h3> <p>Inclusion Diversity Access</p>

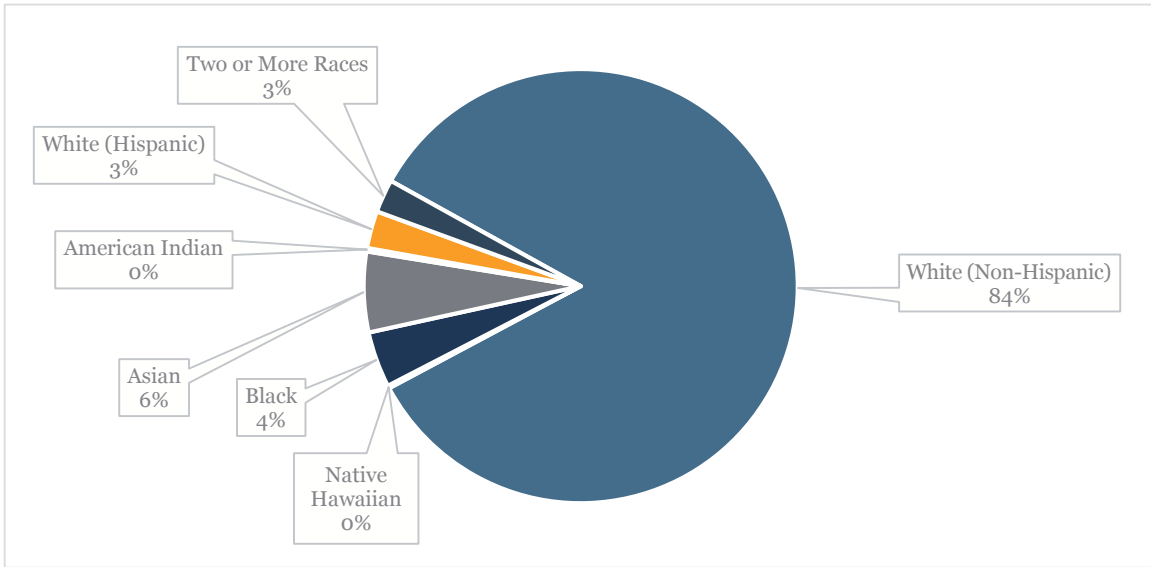
© The Inclusion

based on systems of power and oppression will not go away simply by ignoring them. Dealing with them allows us to get to the heart of who our museums are for—determining for whom (and by whom) our cultural institutions are designed and, by extension, whose experiences are acknowledged by museums and whose are not.

2. Staffing

Deeply connected to the question of “Who are museums for?” is “Who works in museums?” This question also arises when we turn the social justice lens inward, and it links to a growing realization, as affirmed by recent research, that the field lacks diversity. In its 2015 survey of art museum staff demographics, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation found that women made up 60 percent and non-Hispanic whites constituted 72 percent of the art museum task force. The overrepresentation of non-Hispanic whites might not seem problematic since this group currently makes up 62 percent of the total United States

Race and Ethnicity (Curators, Conservators, Educators and Leadership Only)



Source: *The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation: Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey*

population. The Mellon Foundation found, however, that “there is significant variation in demographic diversity across different types of museum employment. Non-Hispanic white staff continue to dominate the job categories most closely associated with the intellectual and educational mission of museums, including those of curators, conservators, educators and leadership.”

This lack of diversity in sections of our organizational charts is often ascribed to a broken pipeline to museum employment. Based on this assessment, strategies have been developed to help those not currently represented to acquire the qualifications for museum work. For example, in 2014, the Mellon Foundation developed a paid fellowship program in partnership with five major art museums to help prepare undergraduate students from traditionally underrepresented groups for curatorial careers.

As we recently discussed on the Inclusion blog (in collaboration with Joseph Gonzales, Nicole Ivy and Porchia Moore), initiatives aimed at “fixing” the pipeline do little to restructure the work itself, change the requisite qualifications or shift the institutional culture. Such initiatives will fall short if the workplace culture that new employees find after getting

through the pipeline is set up to tokenize them or undervalue their contributions. So, let’s broadly question the practices that are implicitly favored by museums’ current employment arrangements. They are upheld by expectations that candidates with high levels of academic achievement and institutional references should accept low-wage positions, and that they should adjust their needs according to the existing workplace culture. As part of this critical self-assessment, let’s also ponder the role of intersecting privileges, such as race and class, in determining who works and studies in the field.

3. Language

We are at an exciting moment in the museum field, in which a host of individuals are interrogating how commonly used words reinforce exclusion or distract us from its root causes. Terms such as *social justice*, *inclusion*, *diversity*, *access*, *equality*, *social value* and *community* have become ubiquitous, yet they might be narrowly understood or highly coded—that is, they may take on meanings based on implied associations. These words also have positive connotations; every museum wants to deliver social value and provide access to the community, right? However, when the implicit meanings of these words go unaddressed, we

lose chances to explore challenges and make strategic changes. For example, casual use of the term *community* can fail to clarify who is or is not represented by that label and why.

Our collaborator Porchia Moore has written and spoken extensively on words and their meanings, drawing attention to the coded way *community* is used to refer to black and brown people. As Moore demonstrated in her *Incluseum* article “R-E-S-P-E-C-T! Church Ladies, Magical Negroes, and Model Minorities: Understanding Inclusion from Community to Communities,” this pattern silently plays into respectability politics, wherein only some communities, those perceived to be approachable and accessible, are sought out to speak on behalf of the entire group. Are museums subconsciously seeking to work with communities and individuals that they believe will not disrupt or transform them? With a closer look at the use of the term *community*, some of the implied biases could become clearer and, as a result, challenged.

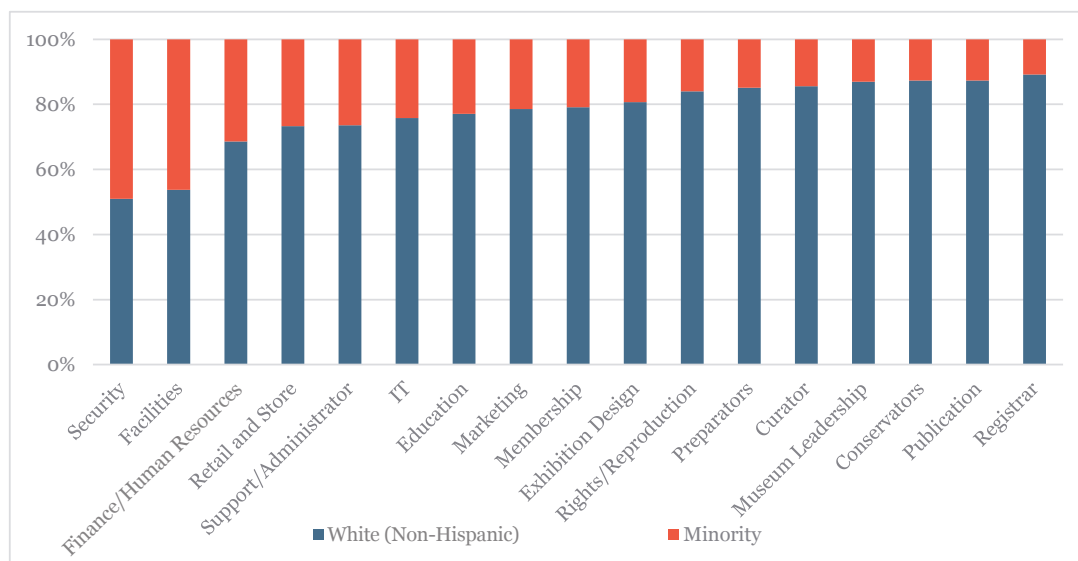
Our use of words and how they inhibit inclusion is also being explored by those thinking critically about the corporate and public sectors. In a recent *New York Times* article, “Has

‘Diversity’ Lost its Meaning,” Sally Kohn began:

How does a word become so muddled that it loses much of its meaning? How does it go from communicating something idealistic to something cynical and suspect? If that word is “diversity,” the answer is: through a combination of overuse, imprecision, inertia and self-serving intentions.

In her piece, Kohn highlighted the large disparity between the progress that leaders, companies and institutions claim they want and what they actually do about it. She applied to her discussion the work of Nancy Leong of the University of Denver, who coined the term *racial capitalism*, defining it as an individual or group deriving value from the racial identity of another. In museums, as in other sectors, deploying the word *diversity* can confer moral credibility. It also is often discussed as crucial for institutional survival in a deeply shifting demographic landscape. In these two examples, the institution is situated as the primary (or only) beneficiary of diversity discourses, which feeds into the logic of racial capitalism. And when these benefits come to institutions that do little to actually address their part in

White Non-Hispanic and Under Represented Minority, By Job Category



Source: *The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation: Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey*

ongoing inequities experienced by people of color, it is no surprise that museums may meet reproach when they reach out to work with these communities.

Likewise, integrating words such as *community* or *inclusion* into mission statements or strategic plans can benefit museums, but may mean little and possibly add insult to injury to historically excluded groups if museums do not open up to deeply felt change. Tools such as Margaret Middleton's Family-Inclusive Language chart (see opposite page) and our Inclusion Taboo cards (page 41) are just two resources museums can use to scrutinize their words and get to the core of what they mean to express.

Conclusion

Our goal is to leverage this moment of increasing interest in diversity and inclusion to ensure that it is more than superficial buzz. We must address the realities that will keep plaguing us if left unacknowledged. Whether through

policy leadership, grassroots movements, centralized resources or practice-focused tools, the way forward must encompass all three issues discussed above. We have stayed away from providing how-to formulas because we believe that each museum is unique and must find its own way to address institutional legacies, employment practices and use of language. That said, the Inclusion blog will continue to feature the exceptional inclusion-related work of practitioners and scholars to inspire others in the field and serve as examples of next practices.

Rose Paquet Kinsley and Aletheia Wittman are based in Seattle. In addition to coordinating the Inclusion, they consult and advise nonprofit organizations on inclusion-related work. You can reach them at inclusion@gmail.com. Alyssa Greenberg, Margaret Middleton, Porchia Moore, Adrienne Russell, Chris Taylor and Nikhil Trivedi contributed to the thinking that went into this article.

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Family-Inclusive LANGUAGE

avoid	why?	instead
<p>“parents” “mom” “dad” “mom and dad”</p>	<p>Not everyone accompanying a child is a parent. Grandparents, step-parents, and nannies may not identify as parents.</p> <p>Not all children have a mom and dad.</p>	<p>“grownup” “adult” “caregiver”</p>
<p>“son” “daughter”</p>	<p>The children in someone’s care could be grandchildren, nieces, nephews, godchildren, etc.</p> <p>You may also not want to assume the gender of a child.</p>	<p>“children”</p>
<p>“extended family”</p>	<p>The term is usually meant to include grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins but for folks of many cultures this isn’t “extended” family—it’s just family</p>	<p>“family”</p>
<p>“family resemblance”</p>	<p>We’re conditioned to look for similar features in family members so you may see resemblance where there is none. Many families include step-parents, adoptive parents, or parents who conceived with donated eggs or sperm.</p> <p>Inversely, don’t assume that a child who doesn’t look like their caregiver is adopted—many multi-racial children resemble one parent more than the other.</p>	<p>keep it to yourself</p>
<p>“members of a household”</p>	<p>Families don’t always live together. For example, families with divorced parents or incarcerated parents.</p>	<p>“family members”</p>

2014 Margaret Middleton @magmidd

The Museum Sacrifice Measure

Elizabeth Merritt, vice president for strategic foresight and founding director,
Center for the Future of Museums, American Alliance of Museums

*This article is adapted from a series of essays that first appeared on the Center
for the Future of Museums Blog (futureofmuseums.blogspot.com).*





How much are you willing to give up to work in a museum? How much did you give up to work in a museum?

I'm not talking about quality-of-life issues, such as relocating to a new city, having to explain over and over again at parties what a "registrar" is or spending the day in a windowless cubicle tucked in next to collections storage.

I'm talking about cold hard cash.

This question is prompted by an article I read in the *New York Times* about the motivations that lead well-educated young people to flock to Portland, Oregon, despite the dearth of jobs there. Evidently, many people are willing to sacrifice income for "vibe." They choose to live on a barista's wages, rather than finding a higher-paying job that actually uses their degree, in order to enjoy "a politically open culture that supports gay rights and the legalization of marijuana—in addition to the right of way for unicyclists or the ability to marry in a 24/7 doughnut shop."

What caught my eye was an attempt to quantify this seemingly irrational decision-making. The article noted that David Albouy, a University of Illinois economics professor, "has created a metric, the sacrifice measure, which essentially charts how poor a person is willing to be in order to live in a particular city."

I think we need to work out a similar metric quantifying how poor people are willing to be in order to work in a museum.

A lot of highly educated, seriously smart people work in museums. Among respondents to the 2014 National Museum Salary Survey, 90 percent had earned at least a bachelor's degree (compared to 30.4 percent of the general population). Of the museum staff who hold certain positions, such as that of director, curator or educator, well over half have a graduate degree, compared to 10.9 percent of the general populace. I suspect that lurking in the back of the psyche of many museum folk is the belief that, given our smarts and the time and money we put into higher education, we could have chosen a more lucrative profession. (I know my dad

not-so-secretly hoped I would become a doctor. When I took my first museum job, which paid \$12,500 per year, he was, shall we say, less than thrilled.)

This sacrifice measure is important because it has a pernicious influence on many aspects of our field. It depresses wages, since we have, in effect, an oversupply of highly qualified people willing to underbid each other to secure the non-financial benefits of museum work. In turn, low wages may contribute to a lack of diversity in the field. Fierce competition for desirable positions favors those who are willing and able to beef up their resumes with unpaid or underpaid internships, and that definitely disadvantages young people who are not economically privileged.

And I fear that the psychology of sacrifice helps create a culture of entitlement and resistance to change. Some people seem to feel that the money they left on the table to work in our field—the wages they could have earned as doctors or lawyers or business consultants—has bought them autonomy. Not everybody shares this attitude, of course, but I encounter it, voiced or implied, at every conference I attend and at many of the museums I work with.

Some are people who have spent years (or decades) becoming experts in their scholarly fields. They've put in their time, paid their dues and matured into positions where they can do work they know to be excellent. So, they may listen to colleagues enthusing about the need for

participatory engagement, crowdsourced input and curators to act as facilitators and feel, quite reasonably, that somebody “moved their cheese” (a phrase writer Spencer Johnson uses to describe the indignation caused by disruption to a comfortable routine). Some went into the field to help create the kind of museum experience they fell in love with—a traditional one of scholarship and quiet contemplation—and are frustrated to find that not everyone loves (or is willing to support) that tradition.

In the United States, where museums generally do not receive a majority of their budget from the government, we are subject to the same market forces as any other business. Even within the constraints of our missions, we have to provide an experience people are willing to pay for—if not because they actually enjoy it, at least because they are willing to support it as an abstract “good.” And yet, I have had multiple conversations with museum professionals who expressed resentment that no one is willing to pay them for what *they* want to produce and that their wages don't reflect their real value to society.

Now I wonder if I've misunderstood these conversations, to some degree. I wonder whether it isn't so much that the aggrieved party feels people ought to support museums regardless of whether they actually enjoy going to them. Instead, I wonder if the complainants feel, to some extent, that they *themselves* have paid the

I suspect that lurking in the back of the psyche of many museum folk is the belief that, given our smarts and the time and money we put into higher education, we could have chosen a more lucrative profession.

cost of supporting their museum with the sacrifice of wages they might have earned had they chosen another path. If I chose to work as a curator for \$40,000 a year, rather than earning \$140,000 as a doctor, I might feel what I “bought” with that \$100,000 difference is creative and intellectual freedom. After all (I might think, in moments of frustration), I am, in effect, *giving* this \$100,000 to the museum, in the form of my undervalued work. In return, I might reason, the museum owes me the kind of workplace I was willing to sacrifice for.

When I first published these thoughts on the CFM Blog, a number of commenters pointed out that various categories of people, in museums and other sectors, have sacrificed income for their chosen careers, but they are quite pleased with the trade and remain open to new ideas. For example, when Nina Simon (@NinaKSimon, director of the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History) summarized my original post on Twitter (“Thought bomb from @futureofmuseums: does making salary sacrifices make museum staff more resistant to change?”), Mia Ridge (@Mia_out, digital curator at the British Library) observed that, by that logic, technologists should be the most resistant of all—yet they’re the ones “pushing for org change.” (Her reasoning was based on the fact that technologists have greater earning power in the non-museum marketplace than do curators and registrars. Depressing, but true.) Ridge’s comment prompted me to refine my thesis, untangling why some people are happy taking lower pay to work in a museum while others aren’t and, in a bigger sense, what constitutes a fair wage for museum work.

Since we are exploring the value of labor, let’s adapt an economic concept to define the fair market value for a job. Following the formula



for a standard fair market value, we can equate a job’s worth with the compensation (cash + intangibles) that an employer and a job applicant agree on when both parties are knowledgeable, willing and unpressured. If this is so, what leads some employees to feel that their compensation is, indeed, fair and others to feel they are being exploited and undercompensated? Why might a person who forwent a hefty salary to work in a museum be happy to deal with the rapid changes taking place in our field, while someone who sacrificed less might be both unhappy and resistant to change?

I suspect that our valuable, marketable technology types are open to change because they *want* to move museums in the direction market forces are driving the field: away from authority and control and toward openness and collaboration. I leave it to technologists such as Ridge and her peers to comment on how much pay they think they gave up to work in museums and what they have gotten in return for that sacrifice. I’m guessing the payoff has something to do with the joy of inventing a role that did not exist before and of messing about with really cool content. Because their expectations of how technology can transform museums are in line with those of their employers, technologists have



an accurate understanding of the job when they accept an offer. They know what they're getting in return for passing up higher pay in the private sector.

When I encounter the “who moved my cheese” reaction, it tends to be from museum staff who occupy more traditional roles. I suspect many of these people went into museum work with a vision of the job based on the norms of decades ago. Or, they believed in a romantic version of museum work that was compelling and attractive but never entirely accurate. In either case, they *thought* they knew what they were getting into...but they were wrong. Either it wasn't that way when they arrived, or it was true when they started in the field decades ago, but the world has changed. They may feel they traded salary for non-financial benefits, such as authority or the freedom to pursue their own interests, but the reality of the situation is something very different.

What about the other two factors that go into calculating fair market value—being “willing and unpressured”? In a post on the blog *Static Made*, Jeffrey Inscho lamented the high rate of churn among museum technology staff. He wrote, “It's no secret the cultural sector can't compete with the private sector in terms of salaries and benefits. Many people make their lifeswork with technology not because they're passionate about

hardware and code, but because it can be a lucrative profession.”

Once museum technologists have gotten “a few years of success under their belt,” he went on, “they jump ship for more sustainable financial waters. Who can blame them? I must admit I don't think technologists are isolated here, as I'm hard-pressed to name another museum role (other than curator and maybe conservator?) that couldn't earn more outside the sector.”

I think Inscho hit the psychological nail on the head. People who feel they have a lot of options may stay in a given job because they are “willing and unpressured.” Each time museum technologists pass up applying for higher-paying jobs outside the sector or turn down actual offers, they reaffirm to themselves that the choice they have made to stay in museums is fair—that it fits their needs and values.

By contrast, when I was a registrar-cum-collections manager, at conferences I'd get together with fellow collections types over beer and we'd air our anxieties over what other kind of work we *could* get if we decided to leave. What the heck would prospective employers make of “I was a collections manager for 10 years” (even *after* you explain that it doesn't have anything to do with repossessing cars)?

When I worked in museums, more than once I had to manage the expectations of curators

who felt certain that, if they were working in a university, they would have more respect, more autonomy and better pay—plus tenure. Now, I listen to friends with university appointments lament how they are treated as second-class citizens until they *get* tenure (if they ever do), moan about their teaching load and stress about the grants and overhead they are expected to bring in. Quality-of-life issues aside, there is a huge oversupply of qualified applicants for full-time research positions in colleges and universities. A curator may calculate that the chance of getting the non-museum job that most closely aligns to his or her training is roughly on par with winning the lottery.

So, changing expectations + lack of other options = unhappy and resistant to change. Put like that, it seems dead obvious—and it suggests the most crucial steps museum managers can take to forestall resentment and resistance. When guiding staff through times of major change, it may be both compassionate and effective to provide access to high-quality, thoughtful career counseling and life coaching. This may help an unhappy employee think through his or her options and choose to either recommit to the museum or to leave, but feel good about the outcome. When filling positions, museums can create processes that ensure applicants understand the institution's culture and that interviewers understand each applicant's vision for working in a museum. No organization should take institutional culture for granted—it should be as thoughtfully cultivated as any other strategic goal. Many elements contribute to the “vibe” that makes Portland (or a museum) a desirable place to work.

Finally, museums need to bootstrap their bureaucracies into the 21st century. Many of the frustrations I hear museum workers voice are about practices that are quickly becoming anachronisms. In this rapidly changing era, both

startups and large, established companies are pioneering new management tactics. Flex time and telecommuting are on the rise. Consensus is building that the dreaded annual performance review is both ineffective and a poor use of time. New organizational structures—whether flat, team-based or holacratic—offer increased authority and autonomy to all staff. Since museums can't compete with the private sector on wages, it is even more important that we become early adopters of such practices that create attractive (and high-performing) workplaces.

We all know there are economic inequities that need to be addressed in our sector: the pay ratio between directors and frontline staff, the need to pay a living wage, the debt young people take on in order to enter the profession. We can and should redress those issues—but even then, our field is probably going to pay less than the private sector. Creating a supportive environment, building a shared understanding of the work and helping staff plan their careers may ensure that talented, dedicated people remain willing to sacrifice salaries to work in a museum.

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- p. 12:** (top) *Untitled*, Clay Geerdes, 1972, photograph, Estate of Clay Geerdes; (bottom left) Votive Plaque, unknown artist, Assyrian, Iraq, 722–705 BCE, clay, Detroit Institute of Arts; (bottom right) *Number 15, 1951*, *Jackson Pollock, 1951*, enamel on canvas, Museum Ludwig, Cologne © 2015 The Pollock-Krasner Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.
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- p. 64:** *Sweet Kitty*, Osamu Watanabe, 2014, decorations on fiber-reinforced plastic.



Courtesy of The Strong, Rochester, New York.

Tell us a story ...

about a future of education in which museums play a starring role

What will it be like to be a learner in 2040? Maybe some children will apprentice at a museum instead of going to “school.” Maybe museum educators will teach thousands via the Web.

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Career Path: Paving the Way

PHYLLIS HECHT

Graduate school changed my life. A simple but true statement for me, and one that others, I'm sure, relate to as well. My graduate school faculty, advisors, courses and activities broadened my knowledge and gave me new skills and confidence. I entered the museum education program at George Washington University 10 years or so after attaining undergraduate degrees in journalism and art history from the University of Maryland. I had already worked at a variety of jobs, from designer/producer of multi-projector slideshows at a recording studio to editor at a newsletter company, to graphic designer/project manager at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. I loved my museum position and was passionate about communicating exhibition, education and press information through the design of words and images. I was fortunate to be able to take a leave of absence from my job while I went back to school.

My decision to go to graduate school stemmed from my desire to build on my journalism background, embrace my art history roots and increase my knowledge of object-based learning and communication. My master's degree program fulfilled these expectations and more. It paved the way to

attaining new colleagues, skills and opportunities as I armed myself with a toolkit that included learning theory, interpretation methods, evaluation techniques and teaching skills.

After completing my degree, I continued in my position at the National Gallery with a new understanding of the importance of the museum's role as educator. My studies, however, did not end with graduate school. I would soon dive into learning the new skills required for the Internet revolution and for the expanded role technology would play in the museum. I jumped at the opportunity to work on the development team for the gallery's website and took on the position of art director and, later, manager. My undergraduate and graduate degrees along with my work experiences became a solid foundation not only for working in a 21st-century museum, but also for the next steps of my career.

These next steps involved teaching in the communication program at Johns Hopkins University (JHU), writing about the future of technology in museums and participating in AAM's Standing Professional Committees (now Professional Networks). As an adjunct at the university, I met others who wanted to focus on the issues and challenges of the

21st-century museum. Through a confluence of ideas and support, we created JHU's online museum studies graduate program, which launched in 2008. As director of the program, I examine, along with my colleagues, the challenges facing current and future museum professionals. We recognize the need for museum-related graduate programs to develop curricula that focus on the issues of the 21st-century museum—from audience expectations to global perspectives, advocacy, accessibility, best practices in media and technology



and museums as agents of social change.

Graduate school is, of course, more than an innovative curriculum. It is a chance to hone critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, tap into excellent mentors and become part of the professional community. Today's access to social media and Web tools provides incredible opportunities to keep current with the field and connect with colleagues worldwide. Many of us in the museum field have had long, winding roads to rewarding careers. Graduate education can provide a foundation for the next step on the road.

Phyllis Hecht is director of the online museum studies program at Johns Hopkins University. This article is adapted from A Life in Museums: Managing Your Museum Career, edited by Greg Stevens and Wendy Luke, and published by the AAM Press.

It's no secret that the museum job market is flooded with smart, capable professionals and that jobs are hard to come by. That's why the Alliance recently refreshed the Careers and JobHQ section of our website with more resources to help you find a job, build your network and manage your career, including a **new searchable directory of museum studies and related programs**. Check it out! aam-us.org/resources/careers

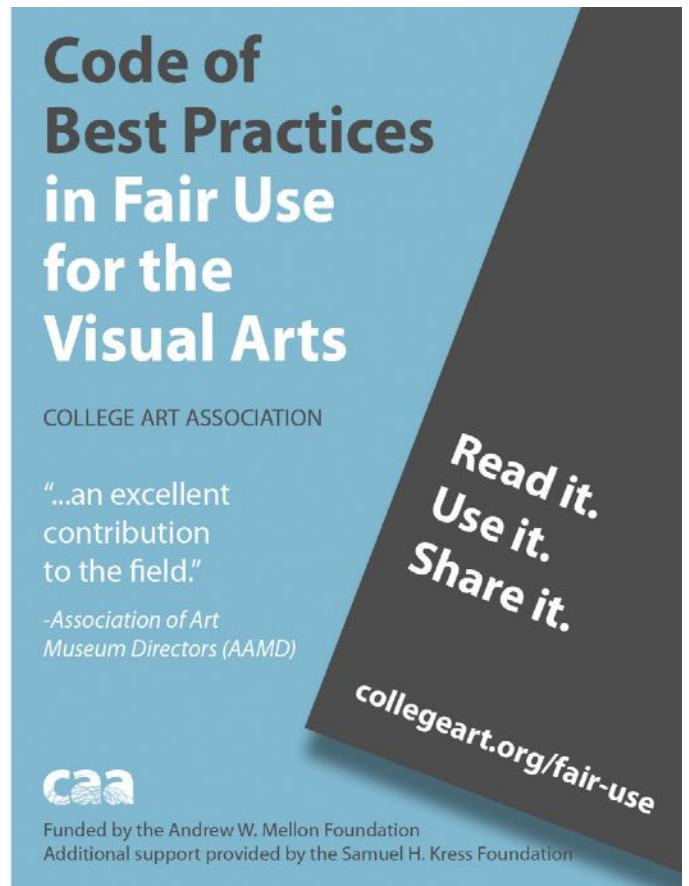


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U.S. Department of the Interior Collections and Outreach to Non-Federal Partners

TERRY CHILDS AND ELIZABETH VARNER

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) manages an estimated 194 million objects and archives in trust for the American public and seeks to make them available for research, exhibition and education nationwide. For more than 100 years, research and compliance activities on federal and Indian lands have generated diverse collections of artifacts, specimens and archives, such as prehistoric pottery, vertebrate fossils and biological specimens. Ten DOI bureaus and offices manage scientific, historic, cultural and art collections in 1,998 bureau facilities. DOI also depends on the curatorial skills and the facilities of at least 837 non-federal partner repositories, many of which are AAM member museums.

One of the reasons the collection is so large is that five DOI bureaus (Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service) manage hundreds of millions of acres of federal and Indian lands. These lands have served as outdoor laboratories for many research projects—in particular, archaeological and paleontological expeditions—resulting in substantial collections. Complying with federal laws for activities such as dam construction, energy exploration, development and road construction also results in a constant influx of DOI museum collections. Moreover, the collections are growing exponentially, as DOI bureaus and offices work with non-federal museums to identify DOI holdings.

DOI bureaus and offices maintain responsibility and accountability for their collections housed in federal and non-federal museums in accordance with federal historic

and paleontological preservation laws. What many may not know is that DOI's museum collections are also subject to federal personal property laws, regulations and policies. These mandates, which require DOI bureaus and offices to maintain responsibility and accountability for collections as federal property, serve a similar purpose to AAM ethics and standards for collections care—maintaining the collections in trust for the public.

Additionally, DOI's museum collection responsibilities are subject to review by federal oversight offices, including the DOI Office of the Inspector General (OIG). In 1990 and 2009, the OIG conducted audits of DOI collections and issued a number of recommendations to improve accountability and care. (The report can be downloaded at doi.gov/museum.) The OIG findings included deficiencies in the inventory of DOI museum collections, as well as a lack of knowledge about all of the non-federal museums that house DOI collections and the number of objects therein. The OIG recommended that DOI correct these deficiencies in order to meet statutory requirements. DOI has accomplished 10 of the 13 OIG recommendations from 2009, but additional work remains.

In an effort to address the remaining OIG recommendations, DOI obtained approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to collect information from non-federal museums. A critical component of the request to OMB was a voluntary survey to determine where DOI collections are housed and how many objects exist in those collections. DOI plans to conduct the survey this year. The primary long-term goal is to develop effective and

1. Non-land managing bureaus include the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Indian Arts and Crafts Board, Interior Museum, Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians and the U.S. Geological Survey.

mutually beneficial partnerships with all of the museums that work hard to house and care for DOI collections, making them available for research and exhibition and preserving them for future generations.

DOI managers and their curators, archaeologists, paleontologists and other experts across the United States want to engage with our partner museums. Please reach out to your bureau contact or the Interior Museum Program if you have any questions or concerns, or if you believe your museum houses DOI collections. If you need a starting point, please contact us.

Terry Childs is manager and curator, Interior Museum Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. She can be reached at 202-513-7563 or terry_childs@ios.doi.gov. Elizabeth Varner is staff curator, Interior Museum Program. She can be reached at 202-513-7564 or elizabeth_varner@ios.doi.gov.

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*Director, Education and Outreach,
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Show Your Solidarity with the Museum Field

Two Ways to Participate in Museums Advocacy Day, Feb. 22–23, 2016

Join Us! Register by January 22

Two California museum professionals came to Museums Advocacy Day and ended up testifying in support of museums. Here's what Jenny Benjamin, director of the Museum of Vision, San Francisco, said about her experience:



Congressman John Ratcliffe meets with museum advocates and Great American Museum Advocate Robert Gray.

"I have two sisters, and they worked for members of Congress during their early careers. They were very insistent that I go [to Museums Advocacy Day] because they knew that every voice that goes to Congress, every letter you write, is incredibly important. With that incentive, I went to Washington, D.C. AAM made it exceptionally easy, which was very important to me. I knew they were going to train me; I knew they were going to set all my appointments so I didn't have to worry. Obviously, talking to members of Congress can be a little nerve-wracking, but it was a great experience. The most interesting part of my day was over lunch...I assumed that the cafeteria would be filled with staff people and maybe some tourists. But the people I was eating lunch with down there were all [citizen] lobbyists. They were all people like me, actually. I met people from the teachers association, I met open space advocates, and I loved them all. I loved their causes, and I thought, 'We should have been here before now, because if I like their causes, I bet their members of Congress do, too!'

Now, being from a small museum, I spend a lot of time scheduling my year, and I expected that Museums Advocacy Day would be just that, one day, and I would come home and

maybe next year I would think about going again...While in D.C., a colleague of mine, Elsa Bailey, was asked by our local congresswoman [Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA)] to make a presentation [about funding for museums] to her district office and a local council that she had set up. We put together a group of other small museums—a group of museums, by the way, that I never met, had no previous contact with. I called them out of the blue. I said, 'Your congresswoman wants to know about you,' and everybody came. Everybody came because they realized that here was a way for everyone who didn't get to go to D.C. to still [advocate for museums]. The district office was very nice; the local council was made up of local elected officials, business leaders, union leaders, people I hadn't had a lot of contact with before. They asked good questions and they were interested in us, and suddenly Museums Advocacy Day not only led to federal advocacy but also local advocacy...The local paper even came to cover it, so we all got in the paper, too. This was a huge benefit...Advocacy raised the profile of about a dozen small museums in our district, and so now I'm planning on keeping advocacy in my day-to-day schedule because of this great experience."

Learn more and register at aam-us.org/advocacy.



Advocates enjoy a congressional reception after a day of visits to Capitol Hill.



Advocates meet with a member of Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur's legislative staff.

Advocate from Anywhere

Can't come to Museums Advocacy Day this year? No worries—you can advocate from anywhere!

Fortunately, you don't have to be in Washington, D.C., to make an impact. Every voice matters. Add your voice to the cause and use our tools to advocate from anywhere. You can:

- Use our template letters to contact your members of Congress.
- Get our How-To Guide for Inviting Your Legislators to Meet Locally.
- Get Publicity Tools to make the most of your advocacy efforts.
- Use our dozens of Advocacy Resources to brush up on your advocacy skills.
- Use the #museumsadvocacy hashtag to participate on social media.

Visit bit.ly/1kNPVok to access the Advocate from Anywhere toolkit and materials. Happy advocating!



Left: Advocate Paul Hammond meets with Congresswoman Doris Matsui. Right: Advocate Shawn Lum meets with Congressman Ken Calvert.

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PEOPLE

NEW JOBS

Petra Králíčková to director of national development, National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.



Franklin Sirmans to director, Pérez Art Museum Miami, Florida.



William Belcher to director of external affairs, Hyde Collection, Glens Falls, New York.



Maria R. Estorino Dooling to vice president of museum collections, HistoryMiami Museum, Florida.

Pavel Pyš to curator of visual arts, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Daniel Atkinson to associate curator of education and public programs, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Maya Weisinger to access and audiences coordinator, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Emmet Byrne to associate curator of design, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Maxwell L. Anderson to director of grant programs, New Cities Foundation, New York, New York.

Lorie Mertes to director of public programs, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.

Kayleigh Bryant-Greenwell to public programs coordinator, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.



Adam Tobin to executive director, Chabot Space & Science Center, Oakland, California.



Anne Manning to director of education and interpretive programs, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri.

Ethan Lasser to head of the division of European and American art and Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., Curator of American Art, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

A. Cassandra Albinson to Margaret S. Winthrop Curator of European Art, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Elizabeth M. Rudy to Carl A. Weyerhaeuser Associate Curator of Prints, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Rachel Saunders to Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Associate Curator of Asian Art, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Michael Deetsch to Emma Leah Bippus Director of Education and Engagement, Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio.

Denis Finley to director of communications, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia.

Michael Berlucchi to community engagement manager, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia.

Jackie Baez to human resources manager, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia.

Stacy Hemler to special events coordinator, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia.

Brad Hall to preparator, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia.

Laura McFie to Glass Studio staff instructor, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia.

Emily Bartelt to Glass Studio staff instructor, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia.

Gayle Forman to Glass Studio staff instructor, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia.

Van Eric Harned to Glass Studio staff instructor, Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia.

Whitney Owens to chief learning officer, Cincinnati Museum Center, Ohio.

James Ross to trustee, Newport Restoration Foundation, Rhode Island.



Aimee E. Newell to president, Masonic Library & Museum Association, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.



Chris Kuhar to board of directors, Association of Zoos & Aquariums, Silver Spring, Maryland.

KUDOS



Andrea Bailey Cox, executive director and chief executive officer of Art & History Museums—Maitland, Florida, joined the *Orlando Business Journal's* 2015 class of 40 Under 40 in October. *The Orlando*

Business Journal's 19th Annual 40 Under 40 Awards highlighted the most successful young businesspeople in Central Florida. Winners were selected from 400 nominations and are all professionals who have made significant achievements in their careers while also making a difference in the community.

The Discovery Museums in Acton, Massachusetts, broke ground on a \$1.5 million project to develop Discovery Woods, a fully inclusive nature playscape for children and families. The space is expected to open in summer 2016, with a building expansion project to commence in early 2017 (pending available funding). Fundraising to create an outdoor amphitheater and creative play exhibits is also planned.

IN MEMORIAM

Jeanne Hamilton Watson, co-creator and founding director of the International Conference of Museums (ICOM) International Historic House Committee, passed away in early September. Her passion for history, trail preservation, education and advocacy fueled a lifetime of achievement. In recognition of her work and dedication, Watson received the ICOM-US International Service Citation in 2012.

Rowena R. Stewart, a nationally known director of African American museums, passed away in September. Stewart provided leadership and support for major African American historical museums and societies

including the Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum in Philadelphia and the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society. After retiring in 2002, Stewart continued to contribute to the museum community as a consultant focused on historical preservation and education programs.



Renowned Field Museum scientist **Bill Stanley** passed away in October while on expedition in Africa. Stanley was responsible for the Chicago museum's 29 million specimens and objects and was known for combining humor with scientific expertise. He was a popular figure in the field; colleagues even named a mouse and a frog in his honor.

Congratulations to the Museums Selected for the Small Museums Accreditation Academy

Ten museums are embarking on a yearlong accreditation readiness program. Guided by an esteemed advisory panel composed of leaders of small museums—and funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts—this program will make the Alliance's Continuum of Excellence (aam-us.org/resources/assessment-programs) more accessible to small museums.

The academy is a guided online experience that combines live sessions, mentoring and collaborative activities for board and staff. The program is aimed at museums with approximately five or fewer staff members that have accreditation as a goal. At the end of the program, each museum will have its core documents verified, have a stronger culture of excellence and be prepared to apply for accreditation.

The initiative builds on the creation of AAM's Continuum of Excellence in 2012, providing a natural ascension toward accreditation through the Pledge of Excellence, Museum Assessment Program (MAP), Core Documents Verification and other discipline-specific assessment programs. Print and electronic resources are available to all interested museums.

Alliance Shows Support for the Illinois State Museum

In October, the Illinois State Museum confronted disaster: closure due to a state budget stalemate. This 139-year-old museum—which comprises five branches around the state—has been a major educational resource for more than 40,000 Illinois students each year, as well as a regional economic powerhouse and an internationally recognized research facility.

It was clear from early negotiations between Governor Bruce Rauner and the Illinois state legislature that if the budget was not approved and the museum system was forced to close, its accreditation would be threatened. According to testimony submitted last summer to the state's Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability—and to the case advocates made to the museum's governing body, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources—closure would have many ramifications, including the loss of accreditation and the threat of lawsuits.

It was no surprise that the Accreditation Commission—which operates independently from the American Alliance of Museums—voted to put the museum on probation, citing grave concerns about the closure's impact on its long-term viability: “affecting its ability to retain a professional staff and operate at the highest professional level; impairing the museum's ability to care for the 13.5 million specimens in its collection; impacting donor support; risking its role as a major educational resource in the state of Illinois; and harming its reputation as a premier international museum and research institution.”

The Alliance stands with the museum, its heartbroken community members and its professional staff, including those who were forced to resign or retire. We will continue our efforts to reopen the museum, and we encourage staff of all museums—across the nation—to advocate on their institutions' behalf before a crisis develops. At press time, the entire museum system remained closed as Governor Bruce Rauner and the Illinois state legislature were determining how to proceed.

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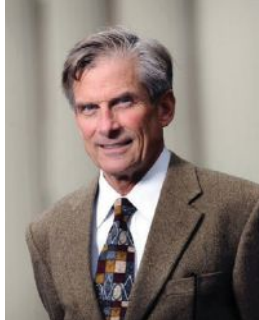
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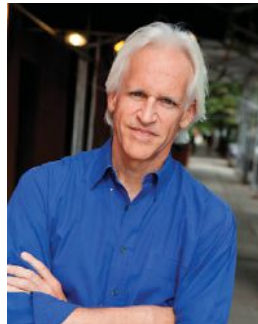
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*National Endowment
for the Arts*



Mo Rocca (invited)
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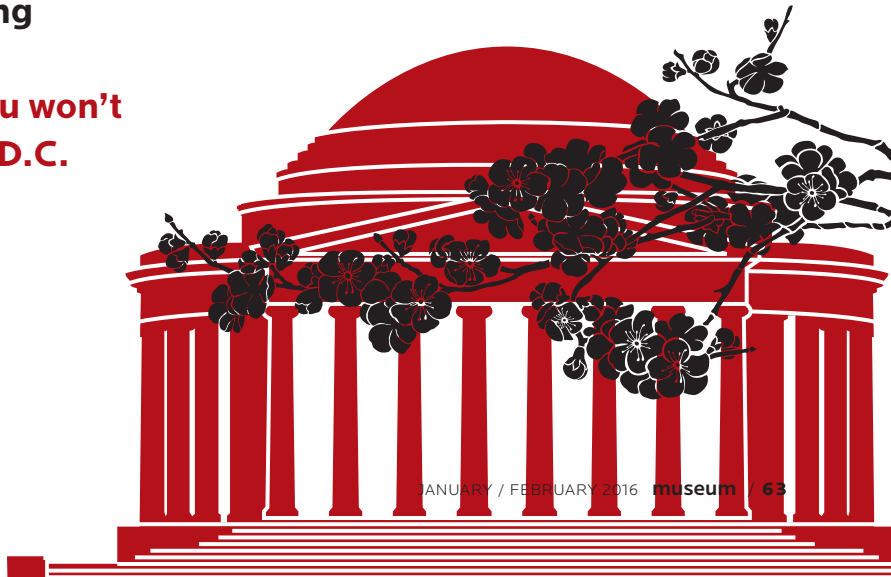
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It's hard to believe, but the ever-youthful Hello Kitty recently celebrated her 40th birthday. In celebration, the first U.S. retrospective devoted to the globally popular cat is on view at Seattle's EMP Museum through May 15, 2016. Featuring plush toys, a vintage telephone and a dress worn by Lady Gaga, among hundreds of other tribute items, "Hello! Exploring the Supercute World of Hello Kitty" demonstrates the whiskered wonder's influence on pop culture, products and art. In fact, artists around the world have been inspired to render her likeness. This 2014 work, by Japanese artist Osamu Watanabe, is appropriately and affectionately titled "Sweet Kitty."

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