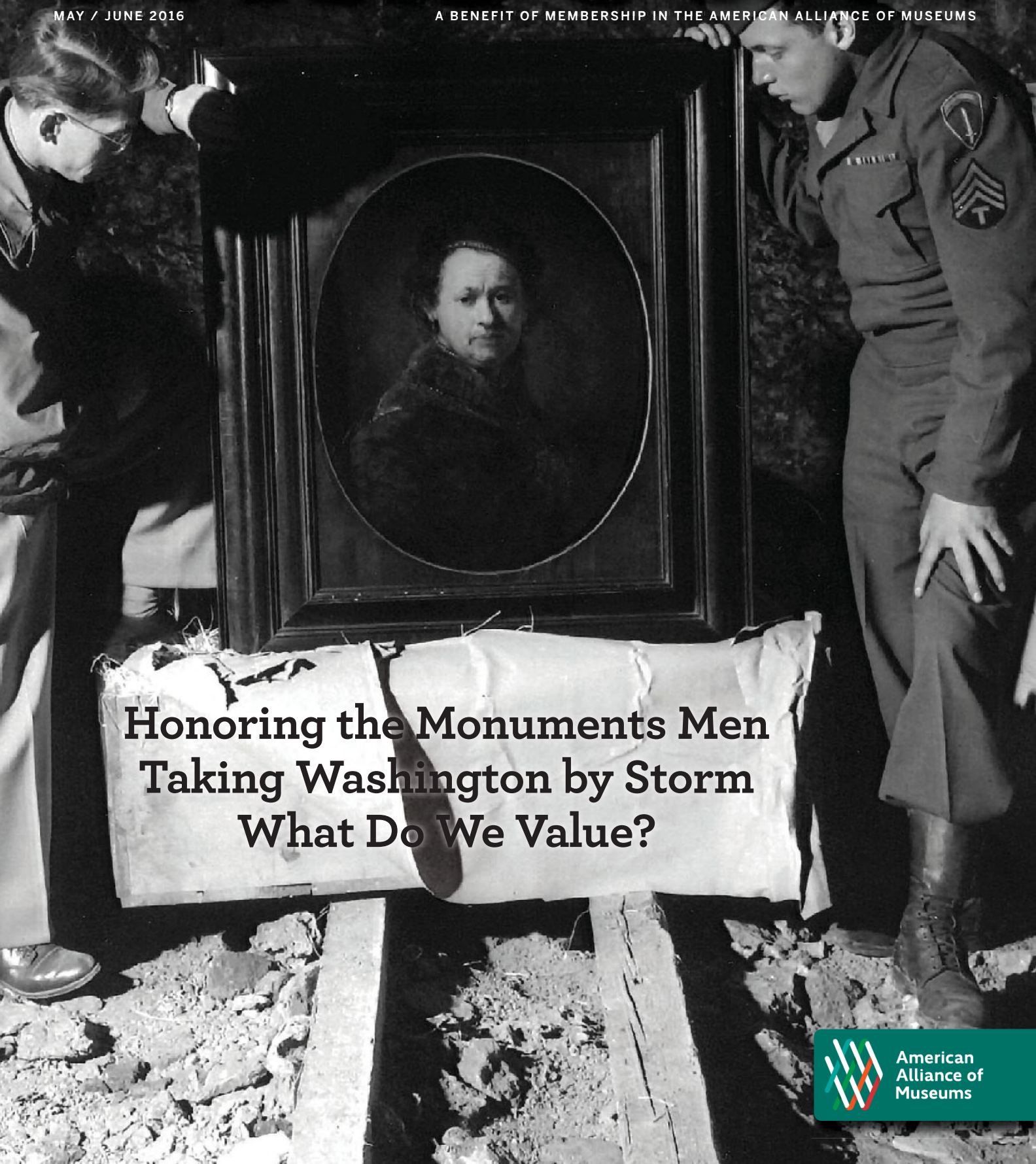


# **museum**

MAY / JUNE 2016

A BENEFIT OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF MUSEUMS



## **Honoring the Monuments Men Taking Washington by Storm What Do We Value?**



**American  
Alliance of  
Museums**



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# WHAT DO WE VALUE?



*David J. Skorton became the 13th secretary of the Smithsonian Institution last July, overseeing 19 museums and galleries, 20 libraries, the National Zoo and numerous research centers. Educated as a cardiologist, Skorton previously served as president of the University of Iowa and Cornell University, has had a longstanding interest in science and the humanities and in his spare time plays the jazz flute and is an amateur beekeeper. He is a featured speaker during the AAM 2016 Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo.*

**“We are drowning in information, while starving for wisdom.”** —Scientist E.O. Wilson

**W**hat do we value as individuals? What do we value as communities? And what do we value as nations? As we gather for the annual AAM meeting in Washington, DC, I think these are important questions to ask, because we will not attain wisdom if we do not know what we value. And we will not use the potential power and influence of our museums responsibly if they are not grounded in our values.

For all of us, answering these questions is more critical today than ever before. As individuals and in

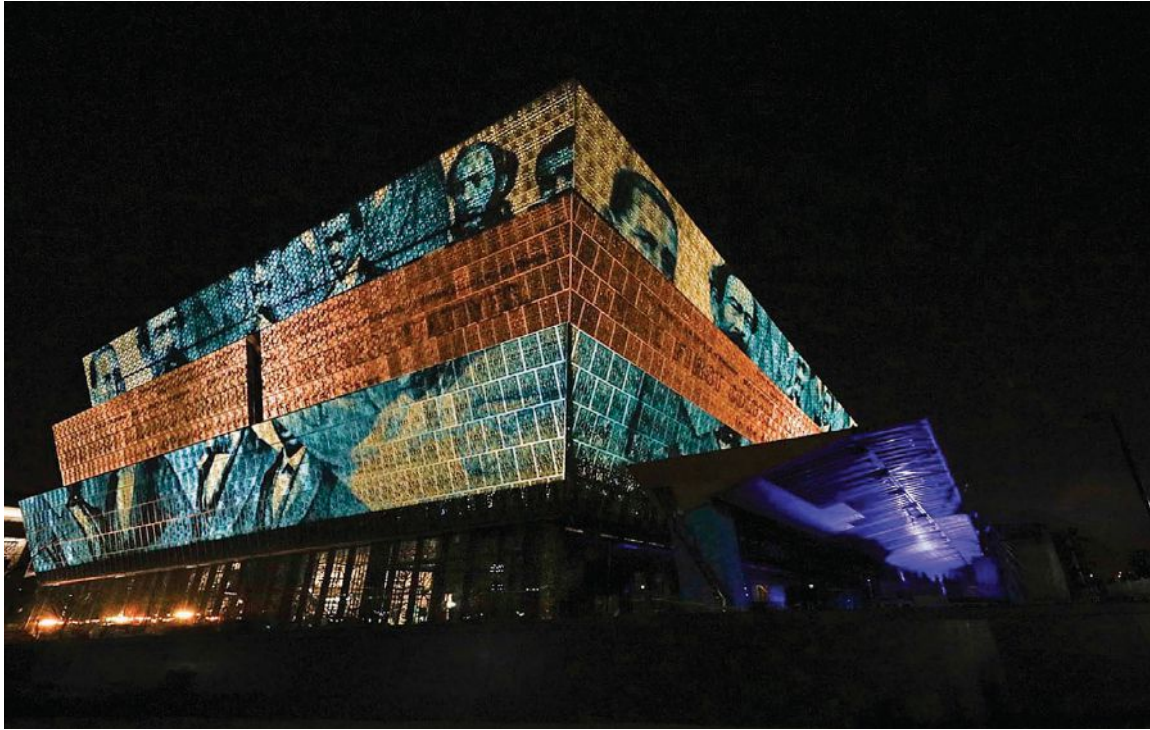
our countries, our core values—how they are identified, shared, applied and supported—are debated on college campuses, on the streets of our cities and in our nations’ capitals around the world. Meanwhile, democratic and humanistic ideals are threatened by everything from terroristic acts of extremist ideology to the social atrophy that comes from cynicism and apathy.

As we gather here in the heart of American democracy, it is worth noting that the American people’s trust has drastically eroded in the

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Above: David J. Skorton receives the symbolic key to the Institution from the Smithsonian Chancellor, Chief Justice of the United States John Roberts, during Skorton’s installation ceremony at the historic Arts and Industries Building on Oct. 19, 2015. Right: The Washington Monument and the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture on the National Mall in Washington, DC.





institutions that have traditionally embodied those ideals. According to a 2015 Pew Research poll, only 19 percent of Americans say they can trust the government always or most of the time. In the same survey, only 14 percent say Congress has a positive effect on the way things are going in the country, while 75 percent say its impact is negative. And a 2015 Gallup poll shows disapproval of the Supreme Court at an all-time high of 50 percent.

How do we begin to rebuild the foundation of our democratic ideals and give people around the world a sense that institutions are responsive to their needs? I cannot offer formal policy solutions. I can, however, as a scientist, educator and museum leader, help identify some of the tools that may enable us as individuals and institutions to address the challenges of the day—and preserve and nurture what we value. We need to be more creative, innovative and flexible in solving society's most intractable problems.

### **New Ways of Thinking**

As Albert Einstein observed, “We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” What kind of thinking is demanded today?

Fresh, creative, innovative thinking. Thinking alone, thinking in groups. Active, engaged thinking. Thinking that includes the courage to go where the observations and conclusions take us, uninhibited by dogma or prior bias. These are easy to aspire to, but hard to achieve. How do we get there?

First, we must look at problems with what has been referred to as “beginner's eye and mind.” Too often we avoid thinking about important and complex issues not because they are actually unsolvable, but because the “experts have already spoken.”

Instead, we need to teach the skills necessary to be open minded, approach problems without prior bias, see the problems clearly—and achieve wisdom. This is the Zen notion of “the beginner's eye and mind.” As Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki described it, “In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities; in the expert's mind there are few.”

Second, to solve community issues, we must learn to think as a community. The traditional scientific method has been wonderfully successful. Modern life is indebted to it. However, the method has proven less successful on its own in solving some of society's more complex and seemingly intractable problems, such as poverty, hunger, lack of education, social injustice, access to health care

and economic inequality—all problems that require close listening, emotional distancing, weighing of arguments and counter arguments and—among the most critical—the direct participation of those most affected by the issues.

Third, and the pivotal point, is to teach others to think creatively. One of the most effective ways to do so is through the arts and humanities. So, in this country, we need to reverse our nation’s seeming disinterest and disinvestment in the arts and humanities, but do so in a way that does not sacrifice our investment in science. This commitment must be based on an understanding that the arts and humanities complement science and that together they make us all better thinkers, better innovators, better decision makers and better citizens.

### **Appreciating the Human Experience**

To understand what it means to be human and to understand the complex problems that the world now faces requires us to deploy every technique of understanding at our disposal, including and especially those at the heart of the visual and performing arts, social sciences and cultural studies.

As author Daniel Pink observed, “The last few decades have belonged to a certain kind of person with a certain kind of mind—computer programmers who could crank code, lawyers who could craft contracts, MBAs who could crunch numbers....The future belongs to a very different kind of person with a very different kind of mind—creators and empathizers, pattern recognizers and meaning makers. These people—artists, inventors, designers, storytellers, caregivers, consolers, big-picture thinkers—will now reap society’s richest rewards and share its greatest joys.”

All of us in the arts and humanities, including those at institutions like the Smithsonian and other cultural organizations, should also actively and clearly demonstrate how these disciplines help us articulate and appreciate the human experience.

Drew Gilpin Faust, president of Harvard University, eloquently described the value of an education in the arts and humanities, noting: “It is far better to create in students the capacities to confront the circumstances of life with a combination of realism and resilience and with habits of mind and skills of analysis that transcend the pres-

## **Our American government must take the lead in reinvesting in the arts and humanities, both in rhetoric and with resources.**

Yet, from the federal to the local level in this country, we are investing less and less in education and in the arts and humanities. Not surprisingly, when funding cuts in education are made, it is often the arts and humanities that suffer disproportionately.

It has been said that science helps us to understand what we can do; the arts and humanities—our culture and values—help us decide what to do. Studying the arts and humanities develops critical-thinking skills and nimble habits of mind, provides historical and cultural perspective and fosters the ability to analyze, synthesize and communicate.

ent. Students in the humanities learn how to think critically and communicate their ideas clearly, and those transferrable skills lead to rewarding lives and careers in every field of endeavor.”

I have heard many times that the private sector in the United States can and should shoulder more and more of the support of the arts. Patrons of the arts, humanities and sciences, from the Medicis to modern-day philanthropists like Smithsonian Regent David Rubenstein, have shown the immense good that philanthropy can do. But I do not believe we can rely primarily on charitable giving from individuals and corporations. Our American government must

take the lead in reinvesting in the arts and humanities, both in rhetoric and with resources.

## The Power of Museums

In my new position as secretary of the Smithsonian, I am learning quickly the leading role museums and other cultural institutions can play in our communities, the country and the world, and how they can affect and stimulate discourse and action. Museums have a great power, but it is a more ethereal power. It is what political scientist Joseph Nye coined “soft power” 25 years ago to refer to the power of ideas, knowledge, values and culture to influence rather than the power of military and financial might.

As Gail Dexter Lord and Ngaire Blankenberg wrote in *Cities, Museums and Soft Power*:

“Museums empower people when they are patrons for artists and thinkers; when they amplify civic discourse, accelerate cultural change and contribute to cultural intelligence among the great diversity of city dwellers, visitors, policy makers and leaders.... Museums present beautiful, accessible and meaningful spaces in which communities and individuals can meet, exchange ideas and solve problems.”

In 2015, Dexter Lord and Blankenberg noted in *Museum* magazine that “...the rise of cities and the role of civil society—are pushing museums from the margins toward the center of soft power.” Museums are using their soft power in many creative, unexpected ways to provide wisdom rather than mere information. They are using the “beginner’s eye and mind,” bolstering communities and elevating the arts and humanities to their rightful places of importance in society.

The Smithsonian is working hard to be a place where the community—on a local, national and global scale—can take advantage of all that museums offer.

We value creativity; we encourage our staff and volunteers to approach problems and see issues through a variety of lenses and in new and novel ways. We exhibit and focus on art, science, culture and history in ways that teach and inspire, but,

at times, challenge commonly held notions. We recognize our responsibility to lead and encourage civil dialogue on important and transitional issues facing the nation and the world. As America’s largest museum and research organization, we are obligated to produce creative and thoughtful exhibitions, programming and research with themes, content and approaches that may be provocative and controversial. And a career in higher education and medicine has taught me that creativity—whether in the sciences, arts or humanities—fosters controversy. We neither seek nor avoid controversy—we anticipate it and welcome the opportunity to explain the creative choices we make. We must take risks. We must be involved in vital issues facing the world.

## Addressing World Issues

Take the realm of cultural diplomacy. The British Museum loaned the Cyrus Cylinder, sometimes referred to as the first “bill of human rights,” to Iran in 2010 and to the United States in 2013, where it travelled to several museums across the country, including the Smithsonian’s Arthur M. Sackler Gallery. This 6th-century BC clay cylinder covered with ancient Babylonian cuneiform continues to shape political debate and cultural rhetoric 2,600 years after its creation.

A large portion of the Smithsonian’s cultural diplomacy efforts are now focused on cultural preservation. By working with international partners, we have launched recovery efforts following events such as the March 2015 attack on the Bardo National Museum in Tunisia, the April 2015 earthquake in Nepal and the ongoing destruction of cultural heritage in Syria and Iraq.

Museums can be agents of social change. For instance, consider the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture: When it opens on the National Mall this September, it will tell the simple, complex, powerful and poignant stories of the African American experience that are a foundational part of the American story. But before the building has even opened, the



museum has been convening people to discuss the issues of race that still permeate society—from the Black Lives Matter movement to voting rights.

During this election year here in the US, our National Museum of American History opened the exhibition “Hooray for Politics!” with memorabilia from this year’s presidential campaign, which will be updated as the year goes on. Coupled with our ongoing exhibitions “The American Presidency” and “The First Ladies,” visitors can debate which was our most important presidential election: 1860 or 1932? 1960 or 2008? Next year, we will open “American Democracy: A Great Leap of Faith,” a cornerstone exhibition focusing on our country’s founding principles.

At the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s newly renovated Renwick Gallery, we are hosting record crowds for “Wonder,” an innovative exhibition showcasing nine contemporary artists, each of whom was given one gallery to create a unique installation. “Wonder” is different in concept, design, execution and scope than anything we have done before.

A new Smithsonian Libraries exhibition at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and National Portrait Gallery, “Come Together: American Artists Respond to Al-Mutanabbi Street,” displays American artists’ books and prints that were created to show support for the booksellers, writers and readers in the wake of the March 5, 2007, car bomb that killed or wounded more than 130 people in Baghdad’s historic center of bookselling. An exhibition like this shows how the arts and humanities can not only enrich our lives with joy and beauty but can also heal with their unique insights into the human condition.

## The Wonder of Discovery

A billion light-years away, the power of two black holes colliding created ripples in the fabric of space-time, which radiated outward throughout the universe as gravitational waves. Albert Einstein predicted the phenomenon a century ago. Recently, those gravitational waves were detected with a



highly sensitive instrument expressly built 22 years ago to detect them, the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO). Rich Isaacson, an early proponent of LIGO, said that it seemed like a fool’s errand at the time. He said: “It never should have been built. It was a couple of maniacs running around...using materials that hadn’t been invented yet.”

That ability to think creatively, to dream about the possibilities and to come up with innovative solutions, is what modern institutions can not only preserve but inspire: the wonder of discovery, whether in culture or art or science or technology or history. Museums all need to work to impart our wisdom in creating new worlds and opening new vistas for visitors online and in person.

The museum community, individually and collectively through organizations like AAM, has much to offer. I am proud that the Smithsonian is hosting the annual AAM meeting and I look forward to learning more about the valuable contributions your museums are making to your communities and the nation. <<

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# TOWARDS AN ANTI-OPPRESSION MUSEUM MANIFESTO



# Capture the Flag: the Struggle Over Representation and Identity

Exploring the social justice role of museums in the preservation and presentation of history and culture.

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*“Take down the flag. Take it down now. Put it in a museum.  
Inscribe beneath it the years 1861–2015.”*

— Ta-Nehisi Coates, American writer, journalist and educator.

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The past year has been marked by protests across the globe as communities grapple with issues of race, identity, culture, history and symbolism. People are climbing out of the boxes long used to define and control society—male/female; straight/gay; white/black/yellow—demanding control over their identities and how these identities are represented. These issues have dogged the US since the nation’s founding, but now activists are using the power of social media to ensure they are heard. Objects—powerful symbols of individuals, groups, history and society as a whole—have become explosive points of contention. And museums, as public stewards of our collective history, find themselves enmeshed in the struggle over representation, identity and material culture.



Western society is beginning to acknowledge the complexities of human identity—including race, sexual orientation and gender. Government notoriously lags behind social change, with the US Census perpetually playing catch-up, changing how it collects data to support the way people categorize (or resist categorizing) themselves. The Census Bureau first allowed people to identify as more than one race in the year 2000. In the following decade, the number of people choosing this option doubled, reaching 1.8 million by 2010. New parents are more likely to identify their babies as belonging to more than one race, and grown children are more likely to change the identity assigned to them and self-identify as multiracial.

We are also beginning to accept, once we stop forcing people into binary categories, that sexual orientation and gender are both continuums. Sixteen percent of Americans identify themselves as neither fully hetero- nor homosexual, but somewhere in between. And some people are able to recognize that their gender doesn't synch with their genes or morphology as early as age three. Our social and legal systems, as well as our built environment, are slowly adapting to reflect these complexities. (In 2014, Facebook presented new ways for users to identify themselves, including 58 gender options as well as three pronouns.) While many universities struggle with how to accommodate students who transition in college (particularly at single-sex universities), the University of Vermont has officially recognized a third gender: neutral.

But accepting fluid boundaries can heighten concerns over representation and control. Are there limits to the right to claim one's own identity? Rachel Dolezal, former president of a chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was pilloried in social media and the press for self-identifying as black when her parents and peers experienced her originally as white. Dolezal has repeatedly expressed that she acted on a deeply felt sense of internal identity. But

critics accuse her—and other whites presenting themselves as black—of dabbling in an identity they can abandon if it becomes inconvenient.

The landscape is no less fraught when it comes to groups rather than individuals. Who has standing to speak on behalf of a community? While supporters of the "Change the Mascot" campaign pressure the National Football League team based in Washington, DC to stop using a racial slur ("Redskins") as its name, some Native Americans rallied in support of the team's moniker. Further complicating matters, culture isn't just a matter of parentage; it is also a matter of heritage. Does an individual have to be raised in a culture in order to represent it? The Navajo Nation recently wrestled with whether to allow a tribal member not fluent in Navajo to hold public office, and eventually decided to amend the election requirements.

Issues of identity and representation not only play out on the individual and corporate levels, but also in the public sphere, as we grapple with tangible reminders of a painful past. In the US, calls to #TakeDownTheFlag led to the removal of the Confederate battle flag, first from the grounds of the South Carolina Courthouse, and then in a cascade from Capitol Hill in Montgomery, Alabama, to the University of Mississippi and even St. Paul's Episcopal Church (known as the "Cathedral of the Confederacy") in Richmond, Virginia. South Africa is confronting similar issues in response to calls that statues of (former Prime Minister Cecil) #RhodesMustFall, and former Soviet bloc countries wrestle with the choice of saving or destroying statues of Lenin.

Now the question becomes not whether to take down a flag or a statue, but where to draw boundaries. Do public monuments perpetuate oppression or remind us of the history we need to redress? The person or people who defaced the monument to John C. Calhoun in Charleston, South Carolina were drawing a line—geographically and intellectually—from his racist views (Calhoun was a strong

# Are there limits to the right to claim one's own identity? Who has standing to speak on behalf of a community?

advocate of slavery and a supporter of the South's succession from the Union) across Marion Square, to the recent murders of nine worshipers at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. But as many commentators are pointing out, if we erase tangible reminders of our past, how will we understand how we got where we are today?

## What This Means for Society

If our communities proactively address social justice issues, we may negotiate cultural/social transformation in productive and equitable ways. Conversely, if society resists change until an explosive tipping point is reached, the resulting violence often ends up damaging the very neighborhoods that seek legitimate redress. For example, research suggests that cities damaged by riots following Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination witnessed a nearly 10 percent decrease in the income of black families and higher unemployment among young men.

As a society, we need to create an environment (physical and regulatory) that treats people with respect, which includes not presuming they fit into neat categories. As with the civil rights and disability rights movements, restrooms are once again on the front line of social change. While many cities and schools negotiate the reinvention of the restroom (how many, who gets to use them, signage), opponents of Houston's Equal Rights Ordinance (which would have banned discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity) sank the initiative in fall 2015 by inflaming fears of sexual predators lurking in the public loo. By contrast, cities at the forefront of equal access have passed ordinances requiring all-gender restrooms.

## What This Means for Museums

Whether they seek an active role or not, museums are being called on to act as cultural hazmat teams. In story after story about taking down Confederate battle flags or removing statues and commemorative plaques, the writer or speaker concludes with a call to "put it in a museum." What does this signify? Do people want museums to serve as explosion-proof vaults for volatile social issues? Or do they want museums to bury offensive objects in collections storage, out of sight and out of mind? Or (optimistically), do people trust museums to foster productive debate, dialogue and reconciliation?

With regard to a museum's own collections, what does "cultural appropriation" mean (beyond the legal issues of cultural patrimony)? When is it wise, necessary or desirable to tell the backstory of colonialism and oppression that lies behind so many collections (whether fine art, decorative art, historic artifacts or natural history specimens), and when is it okay to have a less-fraught point of access?

Are there subjects that can only be appropriately addressed by people or groups that represent, genetically and historically, the topic in question? In December 2015, John Cummings opened the Whitney Plantation in Wallace, Louisiana as what he characterizes as America's first museum dedicated to telling the story of slavery. Cummings is white, and some (even before the opening of the museum) slammed the project as "an example of continued profiteering off the suffering of black people," while others hailed him as a modern-day John Brown—a white man battling racism and oppression.

In recent decades, museums have tried to compensate for the overall lack of racial and cultural



Rebecca Cohen's interpretation of activist Bree Newsome capturing the Confederate flag last summer on the South Carolina statehouse grounds, in an act of civil disobedience that triggered the flag's permanent removal.

diversity among their own staff through the use of advisors and advisory boards. Given the contested nature of identity, it may be increasingly challenging to choose groups and individuals to “represent” the interests of whole cultures, races, etc. Can any individual or group speak for the whole? What validates the approval such groups offer the museum, and who has standing to challenge their input?

### Museums Might Want to...

- Take a fresh look at our own built environment and the overt and subtle signals we send about the categories we impose on our visitors, signaling who is welcome and not welcome. Adopting the philosophy that “everyone deserves to pee in peace” may be as simple as altering signage, or it may require modifying, adapting or renovating available facilities—and not just the restrooms.

- Create productive ways to navigate controversy within the museum’s own sphere—anticipating and welcoming hard conversations—before the need arises. Recognize that no group is homogeneous and no one person or set of people inoculates the museum against criticism. There will probably be a diversity of opinion within any given group, and all it takes is a Twitter hashtag to launch a small protest into the national news.
- Realize that people will experience the museum in the context of their own identity and concerns. Guided by its mission, a museum may focus on the aesthetic or scientific meaning of an object—but others may view these collections through the lens of culture and history. How can museums validate and acknowledge these perspectives?
- Decide whether and how to play a role in decommissioning or relocating culturally explosive icons in their states/cities/communities. This may include confronting offensive symbols in a museum’s own historic properties and sites, and memorials recognizing a museum’s founder or donors. In some communities, it may mean wading into issues that have the potential to alienate segments of the museum’s visitors and supporters.
- Consider the opportunity (many consider it an obligation) to play a role in community dialogue: defusing, healing, rebuilding. This might take the form of the museum’s usual core activities: collecting and exhibiting artifacts and oral histories that document conflict and calls for social change. It may extend to being intermediaries, bringing together people of goodwill to find common ground on contentious issues.

### Museum Examples

In 2014, the **Minnesota Historical Society** (MNHS) created a Department of Inclusion and Community Engagement (DICE) to “guide internal and external strategies across all historic sites and museums to

embed inclusive practices in our work to ensure the diversity of the state is reflected in all MNHS activities, including collections, programs, staffing, volunteers, historic preservation and governance.” As Chris Taylor, director, inclusion and community engagement, explained in a series of posts on the Inluseum blog, one of the goals of the department is to “recognize the expertise within our various diverse communities and use our resources to amplify voices of diverse communities through collaboration and co-creation.” While the society had a long history of reaching out to diverse constituencies, it created DICE to integrate and elevate these efforts.

As it prepared to move to lower Manhattan, the **Whitney Museum of American Art** hosted a discussion about what it means for a museum to be a “safe and welcoming space,” including the provision of gender-neutral restrooms. Signage in the new building now reads “All Gender Restroom.” The American Folk Art Museum in New York and the Utah Museum of Fine Arts in Salt Lake City, provide all-gender (or gender-neutral) restrooms for visitors as well.

### Additional Resources

Museum Hue ([www.facebook.com/museumhue](http://www.facebook.com/museumhue), @museumhue) is a community dedicated to “tackling issues at the intersection of identity, culture, art and community” and “champions equity, agency, diversity and inclusion within cultural institutions.”

The Inluseum (<http://inluseum.com>) is dedicated to the vision that “inclusion become an integral priority for all museums and flourish through supportive community relationships.” Its resources include an essay by nikhil trivedi, web developer,

composer and activist, on defining oppression in museums. Another resource from trivedi is a presentation from Museum Computer Network 2015—“Towards an Anti-Oppression Museum”—in which he offers some suggestions for beginning hard conversations.

*This article is an adaptation from one chapter of TrendsWatch 2016, the Alliance’s annual deep dive into the future via the Center for the Future of Museums. The report explores five trends of significance to museums and their communities. It is available as a free PDF from the Alliance website and in print from the AAM Bookstore. <<*



As debates about Confederate symbols continue, the status of Jefferson Davis’s statue in Kentucky’s capitol rotunda remains unclear.

*TrendsWatch 2016* is made possible with the generous support of Aon, Blackbaud, Huntington T. Block Insurance Agency, PGAV Destinations and Schultz & Williams.

# Taking Washington by Storm

Highlights from Museums Advocacy Day 2016.

**T**he buzz in the room was palpable as 252 advocates gathered for AAM's 2016 Museums Advocacy Day, February 22–23, in Washington, DC. About half of the delegates were first-time attendees.

The event kicked off with an evening reception hosted by the George Washington University Museum during which two dozen attendees were presented with Star Advocate awards, recognizing their five-time (or more) participation in Museums Advocacy Day. The evening also included a master class on leadership featuring esteemed museum director Michael Shapiro, author of the recent book *Eleven Museums, Eleven Directors: Conversations on Art and Leadership*.

On Monday, Alliance President and CEO Laura L. Lott thanked participants

for their commitment to advocating on behalf of the field and for their help in challenging the misperceptions about museums, and issued a call to action on advocacy. "At AAM, we see it as a museum professional's responsibility to advocate for our field," said Lott.

## Washington, DC VIPs Have Their Say

Advocates heard from several special guests, including National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Chairman **William Adams**; **Kathryn (Kit) Matthew**, director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS); **Wendy Clark**, director of museums, visual arts and indemnity for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA); **Andrew Watt**, Association of Fundraising Professionals president



and chief executive officer; and **Anne Wallestad**, president and chief executive officer of BoardSource.

**Don Wildman**, host of the popular Travel Channel program *Mysteries at the Museum*, helped advocates hone their storytelling skills, and attendees were entertained by clips from some of Wildman's recent episodes. "It's so important what you have come here to do," he said. "Nothing has made me feel as patriotic as participation in Museums Advocacy Day."

## Networking Opportunities Abound

Nearly 80 percent of advocates cited Museums Advocacy Day as "a great opportunity for networking," and several sessions were designed with this purpose in mind. Throughout the day Monday, attendees met with colleagues from their states to coordinate messages prior to their Capitol Hill visits.

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Travel Channel's Don Wildman shares stories with participants.







Rep. Paul Tonko (D-NY) congratulates Karla and Kai Bailey-Smith on their selection as Great American Museum Advocates.

### Legislative Issue Briefing

AAM Director of Government Relations Ben Kershaw led a public policy briefing on the key legislative issues, including IMLS reauthorization, charitable giving incentives and reauthorization of IMLS. Subsequent breakout sessions focused on key policy issues facing museums, including how Congress is investing in STEM education, funding for NEA and NEH and an update on the federal education landscape.

### Ready...Set...Go

Before going to the Hill, Lott reminded delegates of a proverb: “If you want to

go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” Armed with that sentiment and the message that museums are indeed changing lives, museum advocates fanned out across Capitol Hill to visit an impressive 368 congressional offices.

### Honoring Museum Champions

The event concluded with a reception in the historic Kennedy Caucus Room in the Russell Senate Office Building. We were proud to recognize our 2016 Congressional Honorees, Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Tim Murphy (R-PA), for their steadfast support of

museums. Perennial museum champions Rep. Paul Tonko (D-NY) and Rep. Jim McDermott (D-WA) also addressed the group about the power of museums.

Nine-year-old museum advocate Kai Bailey-Smith and his mother, Karla, were recognized as the 2016 Great American Museum Advocates for testifying in support of their local museum. (See their story on page 28).

### Couldn't Attend This Year?

If you were unable to attend this year's event, you can download the materials from the Alliance's advocacy webpage ([aam-us.org/advocacy](http://aam-us.org/advocacy)). There you will find information about key legislative issues and resources for advocating at the state and local level, including templates for creating economic impact statements and inviting elected officials to visit your museum.

It is incumbent upon all of us to make the case for the value of museums in our local communities. Gail Ravnitzky Silberglied, Alliance vice president of government relations and communications, summed up the value of advocacy this way: “The best defense is a good offense. Telling our story and making our case ensures that museums will not be taken for granted. Remember, if we are not *at* the table, museums could be *on* the table.” ‹‹

Left: Author Michael Shapiro signs books after his session on leadership. Center: Pennsylvania delegates strategize before their Hill visits. Right: A lively Q&A discussion took place on Monday.



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## And to our advocates who made the case for museums



Sen. Jon Tester's (D-MT) office welcomes advocates.



Museum Education Program master's students at the George Washington University represented their respective states with enthusiasm.



Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-WA) meets with constituents.



New England advocates met with Rep. Joe Courtney's (D-CT) staff.



Ted Bartlett (right) presented his congressman, Rep. Tim Murphy (R-PA), the 2016 Congressional Award.



Ohio advocates visited the office of Sen. Sherrod Brown.

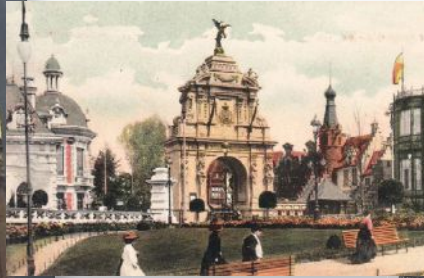
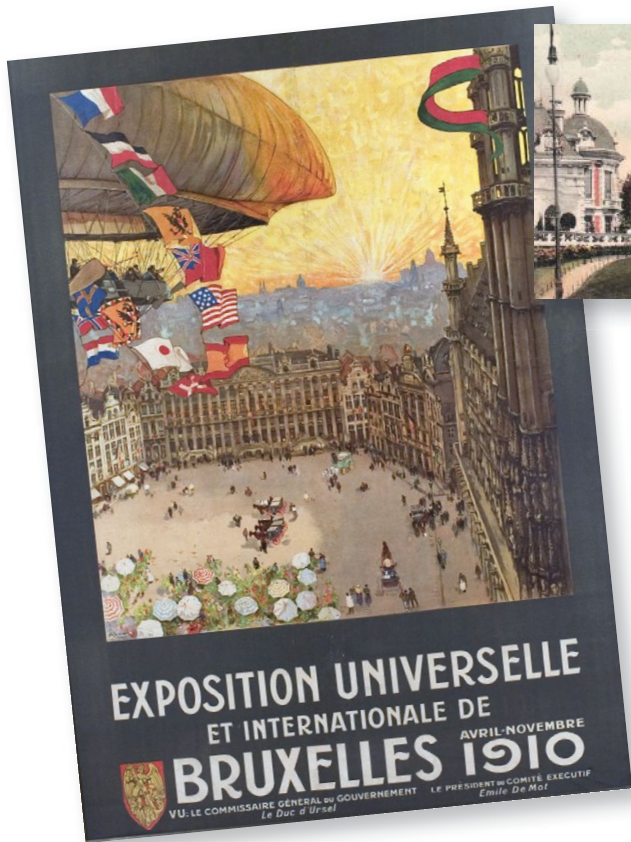


Advocates from New Jersey hone their messages prior to Hill visits.



Monta Lee Dakin meets with a member of Sen. Pat Roberts's (R-KS) staff.

## Exhibits With a Different Perspective



Poster and actual images of Universal and International Exposition in Brussels, 1910.

The one thing so many museums have in common, to some degree, is the amount of space dedicated to subjects that few people find of interest. Similar works get shuttled from museum to museum, each proclaiming the arrival of an amazing collection. Then a few days later, the exhibition halls switch, so a different exhibit is now lively while the other halls go back to sleep. Why do some exhibits generate so much interest and others lose interest so fast? To address this, museums need to focus more on making exhibits intellectually challenging to the audience.

Exhibits that Challenge the Mind, Inc. creates exhibits that generate strong emotional and visual reactions in the way the item is presented in context with the times. For example, the Belle Époque was the culmination of European industrialization and imperialism, where little Belgium had the highest

per capita income in the world by tearing the heart out of the Congo. Europe patted itself on the back by holding trade fairs and artistic exhibitions showing off to their European neighbors their spoils such as the use of rubber from Indonesia, coal from Indochina, tea from India, and minerals from Africa to build the bridges needed to retrieve these far flung assets for their European conquerors. We present this concept by using original vintage posters, photographs and maps of the time, and bringing in interesting facts such as the coordination of the Simplon tunnel that allowed for massive exchanges of good and people between southern Europe and the industrial north. The light bulb, camera, movies, trains and cars were all products of the Belle Époque, or what was called the Gilded Age in America.

Styles changed during the Belle Époque. Art Nouveau, entertainment, household appliances and motor vehicles are all in our collections, so large that it can be presented in any number of themes. You, the curator, choose. We have various themed exhibits already prepared or an exhibit can be customized for your specific concept.

Similarly, *War & Propaganda, from Port Arthur to the Berlin Wall* is another large-scale collection that can be divided into such sub-sections as Japan's quest for territory and the invasion of

Manchukuo and Korea, all supported with extensive propaganda extolling Japanese citizens to move to China and Korea and the negative depictions of the local populace. Or *The Home Front* compares propaganda warning their citizens of spies, showing them how to build a bomb shelter, giving money to the war effort, reports from the front to edify the population on how successful their military is, growing food at home, saving metal and food stuffs, and working to produce munitions, each from the point of view of different belligerents: Austria, Britain, Indonesia, Netherlands, Germany, United States, Japan, from the bold American style to subtle posters of Austria.

It is fascinating to compare the artistic differences between the belligerents. While Russia appealed to a largely illiterate audience using cartoons depicting the goal of the poster and with limited text, the Hapsburgs – with educated citizens of the Austro-Hungarian empire a history of art appreciation – produced beautiful posters, often with gold metallic dyes and a multitude of ink colors. With our original posters are examples of the actual war bonds advertised in the poster. We include a text sheet directing the viewer to understand the context of where he will be going as he walks the exhibit, with additional information plaques directing the viewer to whatever might be of specific interest. For example, there is a German poster extolling the viewer to donate to the war effort. The poster depicts a single man carrying an unbelievably large artillery shell on his back. With that is an actual photograph of a Krupp's munition factory showing shells exactly like the one being carried in the poster.

*100 Years of Effective Posters* includes advertising art from 1900 to 2000 that excel at what they are supposed to do – create an interest in the reader to buy the product pictured. Unlike an artist who



has unlimited physical resources to create a work of art in any media he chooses and in a size of his choosing, the posterist has a defined goal that must be accomplished in a specific size using specific colors and a specific subject. He also has a budget and must limit himself in the number of colors used. He must know how different inks change when placed on top of each other, in which order of printing will produce a certain tone, and how dry the previous ink needs to be before you make your second run and create even a third blended color. These are fascinating posters presented in a thoughtful manner that no visitor can resist.

Please visit [ECM2.org](http://ECM2.org) to view our other exhibits in depth and those that are in development such as *Communism*, *The Mexican Revolution*, *Monumental Posters from the Belle Époque*, as well as *Not for Sale: A collection of paintings, prints, sculpture and photographs that make you think* and many others.



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Inside View  
 continued from page 27

## Grand Opening

The museum took years to come to fruition. It opened on September 26, 2015, in a renovated turn-of-the-century bank building in Winsted—Nader's hometown. The museum currently has 5,000 square feet of exhibit space.

"I am particularly glad that the museum is located in my hometown," said Nader. "All too often small towns are overlooked, as though only major cities are the obvious locations for museums."

In the first three months after it opened, the museum had more than 2,000 visitors. Post-tour interviews and solicitation of comments have demonstrated that the audience responded well to the completed exhibition and their experience and reactions are consistent with the exhibition's intended goals and impacts.

## Looking Ahead

The museum is already planning to grow and has a stage-two expansion plan with three components:

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- **An Expanded Complex in Connecticut.** The new complex will contain: a repository of collections of the great tort trials and cases; a full-size courtroom with web and media facilities; national outreach programs, such as videotaped trial re-enactments and media and leadership symposia; a center for school and other educational programs and a training ground for law school interns.
- **An Expanded Website.** A comprehensive website that will feature online access to exhibits and information on museum programs and events is under development.
- **Traveling Exhibits.** Traveling exhibits featuring multimedia displays and artifacts will tour the country.

Commenting on the finished museum, Nader said: “[The law] must stand strong against the sustained assault on its overall access to justice for the powerless, the wronged and the harmed. The museum will serve to organize factual information, display and promote knowledge of tort law and its constitutional foundations, its landmark judicial decisions and its consequential societal functions.” ‹‹

*Rick Newman is executive director of the American Museum of Tort Law. He can be reached at [info@tortmuseum.org](mailto:info@tortmuseum.org).*

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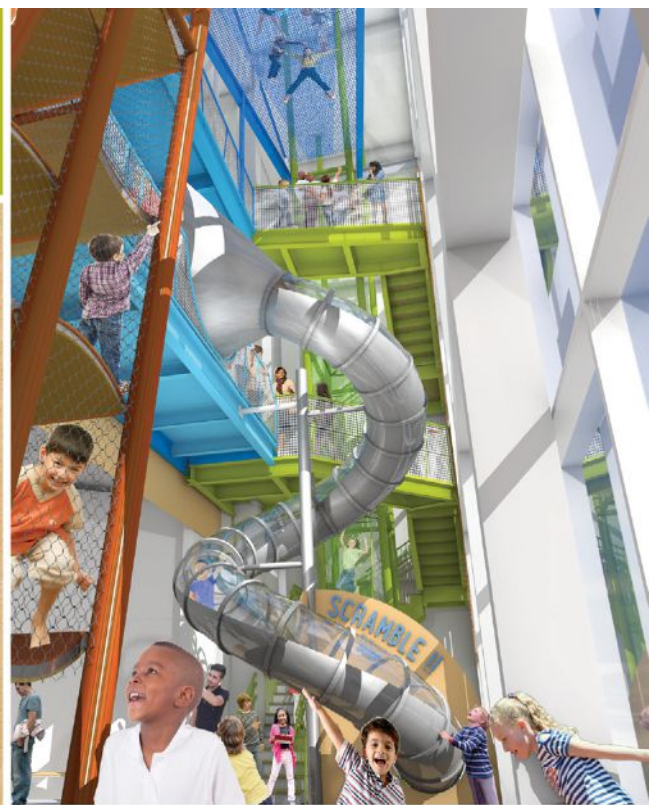
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**THE SCRAMBLE**, Opening Spring 2017 at Minnesota Children's Museum

## MuseumExpo Product Preview Guide

More than 250 exhibitors will showcase the latest innovative products and services in Washington, DC, May 26–29, during the 2016 AAM Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo. Several exhibitors are listed on the following pages. Be sure to stop by to see them.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, you can still learn about these products by visiting the AAM Annual Meeting website and clicking on MuseumExpo. [annualmeeting.aam-us.org/museum-expo](http://annualmeeting.aam-us.org/museum-expo)



Edouard Manet, *Boating*, 1874. Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY

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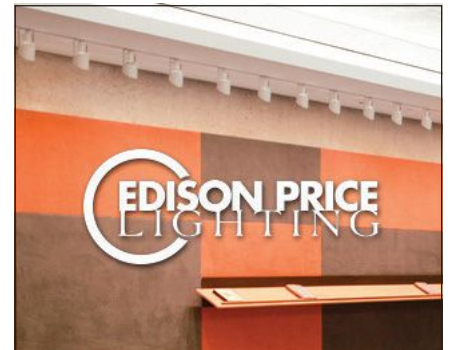
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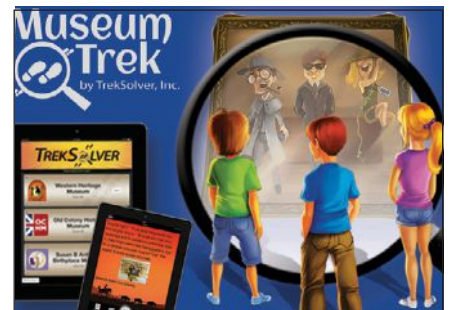
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For more information on the 2016 AAM Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo, visit [annualmeeting.aam-us.org](http://annualmeeting.aam-us.org)

# Welcome New AAM Board Members

We are pleased to introduce our new and returning board members, whose terms will begin following the AAM Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo in Washington, DC.

The new board members are: **James Pepper Henry**, executive director, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa; **Chevy Humphrey**, president and CEO, Arizona Science Center, Phoenix; and **Kelly McKinley**, director, OMCA Lab, Oakland Museum of California.

Three board members have completed their terms and will rotate off the board: **Meme Omogbai**, chair, Board of Trustees, New Jersey Historic Trust, Trenton; **David Ellis**, independent professional, Boston; and **Silvia Singer**, CEO, directora general, Museo Interactivo de Economía (MIDE), Mexico City, Mexico. We thank them for their service to the Alliance and the museum community.



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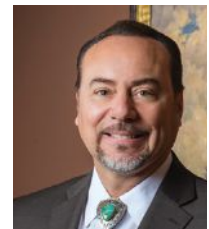
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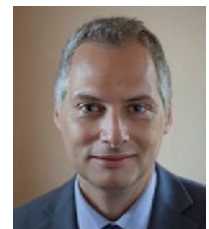
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AAM congratulates the three museums accredited and ten museums re-accredited in February. They are among the first to have completed the new streamlined version of the accreditation process launched in 2014. Of the nation's estimated 35,000 museums, 1,049 are currently accredited.

Through a rigorous process of self-assessment and review by their peers, these museums are core educational entities that have demonstrated they meet National Standards and Best Practices.

## Congratulations, Newly Accredited Museums

The following museums were awarded accreditation. First-time awards are indicated with an asterisk:

**Gadsden Arts Center**, Quincy, FL\*

**Georgia O'Keeffe Museum**, Santa Fe, NM

**Hearst San Simeon State Historical Monument**, San Simeon, CA

**Herrett Center for Arts and Science and Faulkner Planetarium**, Twin Falls, ID

**James A. Michener Art Museum**, Doylestown, PA

**MIT List Visual Arts Center**, Cambridge, MA

**Museum of Natural & Cultural History**, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR\*

**Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology**, Cambridge, MA

**Princeton University Art Museum**, Princeton, NJ

**San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts**, San Angelo, TX

**University of Michigan Museum of Art**, Ann Arbor, MI

**Walter Anderson Museum of Art**, Ocean Springs, MS

**Yellowstone Art Museum**, Billings, MT\*

The AAM Accreditation Program, celebrating its 45th anniversary, is part of the Continuum of Excellence. To learn more and start your museum's path toward accreditation, visit [aam-us.org/resources/assessment-programs](http://aam-us.org/resources/assessment-programs).

## Guidance on "Direct Care of Collections"

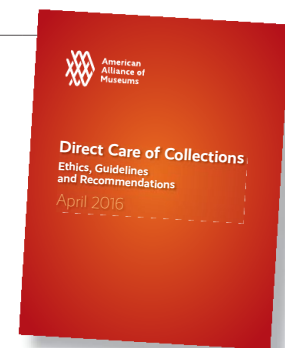
Almost weekly, the Alliance receives inquiries about the use of proceeds realized from the sale of items deaccessioned from a museum's permanent collections. The AAM "Code of Ethics for Museums" states that "in no event shall they be used for anything other than acquisition or direct care of collections." But this simple answer becomes less clear when one considers the range of museum disciplines with their different responsibilities, practices and terminology. The answer has also been clouded because the phrase "direct care of collections" has never been defined.

A new white paper, "Direct Care of Collections: Ethics, Guidelines and Recommendations," provides clarity

on the issue and offers guidance for museum staff and governing authorities in their decision-making.

At the request of the Alliance Accreditation Commission, a multi-disciplinary Direct Care Task Force was formed in 2014. After 18 months of work by the task force, including sorting through input from 1,200 museum professionals, the Alliance issued its white paper.

"I am truly grateful for the work of the task force members representing many different viewpoints on this issue within our field," said Alliance President and CEO Laura L. Lott. "This serves as a model for how AAM can lead discussions across disciplines



to address issues of field-wide importance."

To help the field understand the recommendations and guidelines, a number of sessions will be held at conferences throughout the year, including during the 2016 Annual Meeting and MuseumExpo.

To download a copy of the white paper, visit the Alliance website. Look for more information in the next issue of *Museum*.

# WHAT'S HOT

In Museum Publications?



## CALL FOR ENTRIES

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### Museum Publications Design Competition

Museums can submit printed publications produced between January 1 and December 31, 2015. Entries must be postmarked by June 17, 2016. Application forms are available online at [aam-us.org/pubcomp](http://aam-us.org/pubcomp)



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Museums

## Faces from the Field

Over the past year, President and CEO Laura L. Lott has visited Alliance members and stakeholders and heard their stories. This outreach has led to a new initiative—Faces from the Field—to showcase the professionals keeping museums and communities growing and thriving across the United States.

“Connecting with and serving our talented and passionate museum community is a real privilege,” said Lott. “Faces from the Field helps us bring to light more of the people, practices and impacts that make museums such vital resources in their communities.”

To date, she has had the privilege of visiting:

- **Naper Settlement** in Naperville, IL, to observe the outdoor and living history operations with President and CEO Rena Tamayo-Calabrese.
- **Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum** in Washington, DC, to witness the installation of the “Above & Beyond” exhibit with Executive Producer Anne Kinsey of Evergreen Exhibitions.
- **Tampa Bay History Center** in Tampa, FL, to get feedback from Executive Director C.J. Roberts and Associate Director of Institutional Advancement Andrea Nalls on their experience completing the reinvented Accreditation program and



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the benefits of participation.

- **National Building Museum** in Washington, DC, to help remerchandise the museum store for the holiday season with retail staff and Museum Shop Manager Michael Higdon.
- **San Diego Zoo Global** to get an introduction to the breadth and diversity of zoo operations with Director of Zoo Operations Erika Kohler.

The challenges and insights learned during these visits will help to shape priorities throughout the Alliance.

If you or someone you know would like to be considered for Faces from the Field, contact Travis Kirspel at [tkirspel@aam-us.org](mailto:tkirspel@aam-us.org).

## AAM Selects Rowman & Littlefield as its Copublisher

The Alliance has long had a strong book publishing program, featuring textbooks and publications on professional practice and profession-wide standards, including *National Standards & Best Practices for US Museums*.

A new copublishing partnership with Rowman & Littlefield will combine AAM’s expertise and authoritative imprint with a commercial publisher already well-established in the museum studies field and with a global marketing and distribution network.

“AAM’s publications have long delivered value for people inside and outside the museum field,” said Alliance President and CEO Laura L. Lott. “By

combining our museum expertise with an expert publishing organization, this partnership gives us the opportunity to make our book publishing program even greater.”

Rowman & Littlefield’s Executive Editor Charles Harmon will spearhead R&L’s role. Harmon said, “We are delighted and honored to have the chance to work with AAM’s member-authors and to be copublishing with such a respected association. Combining our own books and AAM’s enables us to offer museum professionals one-stop browsability and shopping for a wide and diverse line of professional resources.”



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## Invite Congress to Visit Your Museum Week 2016



August is an ideal time to connect with members of Congress because they spend much of the month in their local communities meeting with constituents. Take part in Invite

Congress to Visit Your Museum Week—August 6 through 13—and use this opportunity to show off your collections, describe your community outreach and perhaps even show them one of your programs in action.

Engaging legislators during their August district work periods is a powerful way to create an ongoing dialog

with your local, state and federal elected officials, and the Alliance makes it easy to participate. Visit [aam-us.org/advocacy/resources/invite-congress](http://aam-us.org/advocacy/resources/invite-congress) for a step-by-step “How To” Guide and other resources, such as how to identify your elected officials, contact information and a template invitation letter.

You will also find a template to create an Economic and Education Impact Statement for your museum, using your own data. Be sure to use #InviteCongress to share and follow visits on Twitter.

## Rare coins — a valuable asset

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**Auctions:** Stack's Bowers Galleries provides complete auction services, including unparalleled expertise, award-winning catalogs, unmatched marketing, financial security, and personal service.

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## Your RoadMAP to Excellence

If your museum is looking for ways to strengthen overall operations, collections stewardship and community engagement, the AAM Museum Assessment Program (MAP) is the solution. MAP is a low-to-no cost consultative process targeted at small and medium-sized museums.

MAP offers three different assessment options to help you align activities, mission and resources; analyze strengths, weaknesses and opportunities; and be better positioned to create a strategic plan. More than 4,500 museums have leveraged their MAP results to:

- successfully apply for grants
- improve collections care
- build staff capacity
- strengthen community engagement
- educate board members
- prepare for core documents verification and accreditation

After a one-year process of self-study, activities and a site visit from an expert peer reviewer, your museum receives a recommendation-filled report to help improve operations, plan for the future and meet standards and best practices. MAP participants also receive a set of selected AAM

publications and free access to numerous AAM webinars and resources.

A recent participant had this to say: “The MAP and accreditation programs are among the finest museum development tools in the country.”

Submit your application by July 1 to be considered for the next MAP class. Learn more at [aam-us.org/map](http://aam-us.org/map).

MAP is supported through a cooperative agreement between AAM and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and is part of the Continuum of Excellence.



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NEW JOBS

Arizona



**Rebecca Senf** to chief curator, Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Tucson.



**Alexis Peregoy** to associate archivist, Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Tucson.



**Emily Weirich** to associate librarian/archivist, Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Tucson.

California



**Linda Cano** to executive director, Sonoma Valley Museum of Art.

Connecticut



**VivianLea Solek** to archivist, Knights of Columbus Museum, New Haven.

District of Columbia



**Christiane Bauer** to curator, Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington.



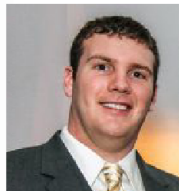
**Myriam Springuel** to director, Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

Illinois



**Jean Franczyk** to president and CEO, Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe.

Indiana



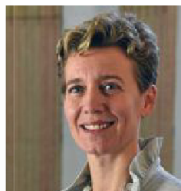
**Patrick Slebonick** to executive director, Studebaker Museum, South Bend.

Maryland

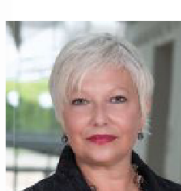


**William Roulette** to education director, Fire Museum of Maryland, Lutherville.

Massachusetts



**Nathalie Apchin** to chief financial officer, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem.



**Martha Tedeschi** to Elizabeth and John Moors Cabot Director, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge.

Minnesota



**Alison Rempel Brown** to president and CEO, Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul.

Missouri



**Cheptoo Kositany-Buckner** to director, American Jazz Museum, Kansas City.

New Mexico



**Caroline Jean Fernald** to executive director, Millicent Rogers Museum of Art, Taos.

New York



**Whitney Donhauser** to president and Ronay Menschel Director, Museum of the City of New York.

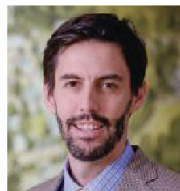


**Lacy Schutz** to executive director, Shaker Museum Mount Lebanon, New Lebanon.



**Christopher Wise** to executive vice president, museum collections and exhibitions, UOVO, Long Island City.

North Carolina



**Phil Archer** to Betsy Main Babcock Director of Program and Interpretation, Reynolda House Museum of American Art, Winston-Salem.

Texas



**Nicole R. Myers** to the Lillian and James H. Clark Curator of Painting and Sculpture, Dallas Museum of Art.



**Kathleen Brady Stimpert** to communications coordinator, School of Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin.

Virginia



**James Templin** to farm site supervisor, Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, Williamsburg.

Washington



**Jessica Luke** to museology program director, University of Washington, Seattle.

Wisconsin



**Carrie Ronnander** to director, Chippewa Valley Museum, Eau Claire.

KUDOS



AAM member **Paula Gangopadhyay** has been

appointed deputy director for museum services at the Institute of Museum and Library Services. She is a respected thought-leader on innovation in education and has been the recipient of several state and national awards and recognitions. Gangopadhyay has held a variety of positions including, serving as the chief learning officer at The Henry Ford museums; executive director of the Plymouth Community Arts Council; curator of education, public programs, visitor services and volunteers at the Public Museum of Grand Rapids; and executive director of the Commission for Lansing Schools Success (CLASS). She also served as a key collaborator to AAM's Center for the Future of Museums on its 2013 convening on the future of education.

## RETIRING



**Rebecca Bonham**, is retiring as executive director, Studebaker Museum, South Bend, Indiana. Current Board of Trustees President Michael Kendzicky said: "Becky has taken the Studebaker National Museum to heights we never dreamed were possible. Through her vision and leadership, the museum has expanded its mission and reach, becoming the world-class facility that it is today—one of the top ten automobile museums and one of only three accredited automobile museums in the country." Bonham plans to spend more time with her family,

travel and focus on music, a lifetime passion of hers.



**Greg Koos**, executive director for the past 39 years of the McLean County Museum of History in Bloomington, Illinois, will retire March 31. His vision and guidance helped the museum become a nationally accredited community asset. Koos's vision and leadership is a story of how a small town local history museum helped hold the line for local preservation, enhanced free programs, boosted local humanities and is now helping with the area's economic development.

## IN MEMORIAM



**Claudine K. Brown**, assistant secretary for education and access for the Smithsonian Institution, passed away March 17 after a long battle with cancer. Brown was responsible for defining the Smithsonian's overall education program, and developed initiatives and resources to benefit learners of all ages. She also oversaw the Science Education Center, Center for Digital Learning and Access, SITES, Affiliations and Associates.

Previously, Brown also directed the National African American Museum Project, where she developed a final study and program plan for

the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, due to open September 2016. In 1991, she became the Smithsonian's deputy assistant secretary for the Arts and Humanities.

She had also been director of the arts and culture program at the Nathan Cummings Foundation in New York. While there, Brown positioned the foundation as a leading arts grant maker and she worked to strengthen community-based arts education programming.

Brown joined AAM in 1986, and served on the AAM Board of Directors from 1991–1994. She was a member of the National Program Committee for the Annual Meeting and the EdCom, CARE and Media & Technology Professional Networks.

She is survived by two sons, four grandchildren and a large extended family.

# STORIES IN SCULPTURE

Selections from the Walker Art Center Collection

APRIL 29 – OCTOBER 2, 2016

### ARTISTS

Saul Baizerman  
Deborah Butterfield  
Barry Flanagan  
Georg Kolbe  
Giacomo Manzù  
Marino Marini  
Henry Moore  
Reuben Nakian  
Louise Nevelson  
Isamu Noguchi  
George Segal  
Judith Shea  
Jonathan Silver



*Stories in Sculpture: Selections from the Walker Art Center Collection* is organized by the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Image credits (left to right): Judith Shea, *Without Words*, 1988, bronze, marble, limestone. Collection Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Gift of Jeanne and Richard Levitt, 1988; Barry Flanagan, *Hare on Bell on Portland Stone Piers*, 1983, bronze, limestone. Collection Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Gift of Anne Larsen Simonson and Glen and Marilyn Nelson, 1987; Henry Moore, *Standing Figure: Knife Edge*, 1961, bronze. Collection Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Gift of Dayton's, 1987.



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Three decades after it last came to town, the Morris Miniature Circus is setting up its big top—well, little top—once again. As its name suggests, the circus, built by W.J. “Windy” Morris (1904–1978) of Amarillo, Texas, is a 3/8-inch scale model of a 1920s railroad circus. Thousands of pieces make up this diminutive spectacle, the majority of which Morris made by hand over the course of 40 years. As a tribute to his fond memories of old-school circuses, with their horse-drawn wagons and parades of performers, Morris’s assemblage is small in stature but big in heart. It’s on view at Santa Fe’s Museum of International Folk Art until Dec. 31, 2016.

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of LeanIn.Org**

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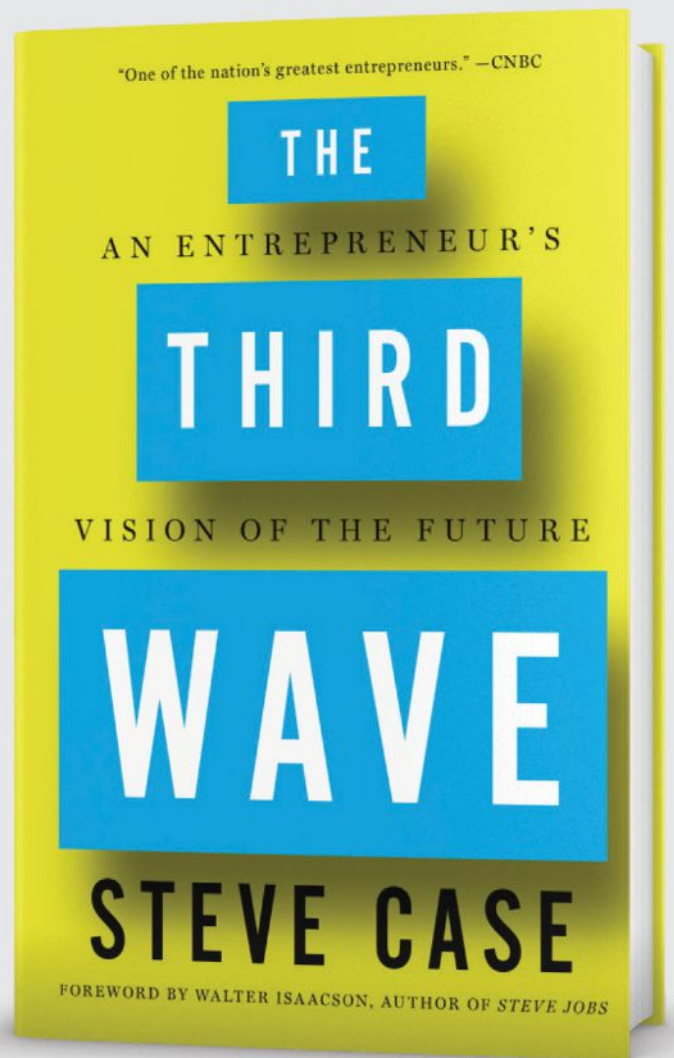
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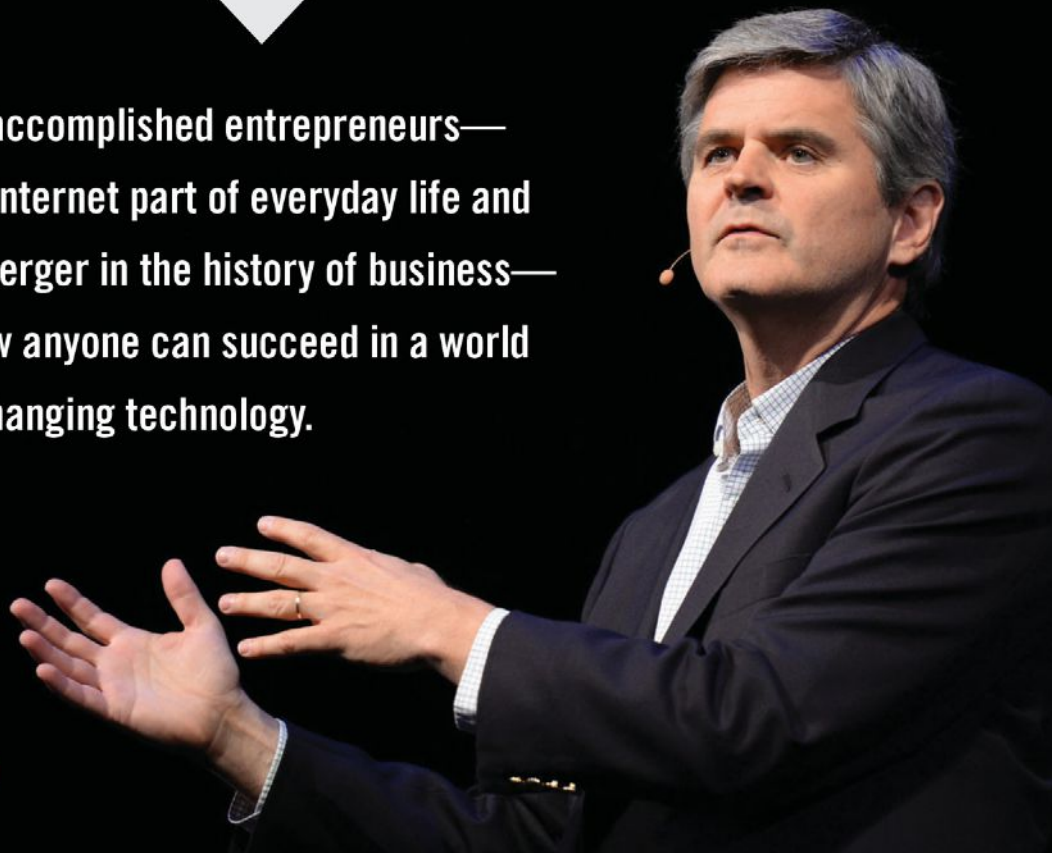
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