

NASHER MUSEUM OF ART AT DUKE UNIVERSITY

2017–2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

Transforming the Arts, Transforming Duke



Letter from the Director

All museums in the second half of the 21st century will face the same challenges: remaining relevant to the diverse communities they serve and finding the financial resources to meet the escalating costs of acquiring works of art and organizing and hosting exhibitions. The university art museum must also develop innovative ways to serve its primary community: undergraduate, graduate and professional students; faculty; administration; alumni; and the wider university staff in a rapidly changing world. As the Duke University 2017 Strategic Plan points out, the University's most significant educational function has shifted in a time when access to information is instantaneous and ubiquitous. Art museums connected to universities must therefore keep pace with this shift and with the newly emerging modes of educating students.

Furthermore, as university art museums are often the gateway for the university to connect with local residents, they must also extend their reach to children and adults living in the surrounding cities and towns, competing with the plentitude of other cultural and entertainment offerings.

To cope with the rising costs of acquisitions, museums will need to acquire wisely and

carefully. To create strong exhibitions, even museums with generous endowments must increasingly rely on government and private foundation grants, supplemented by corporate and individual support, making fundraising a major and constant requirement.

As we created this five-year strategic plan in partnership with key stakeholders, we asked ourselves the following questions: How does an art museum maintain relevance when its audiences are bombarded with more images than ever before in history? How will museums continue to promote the humanities and art programs on campus and partner with initiatives in science, technology, engineering and math? How can we become a laboratory for new discoveries? How will we be a place of welcome, accessible to all?

In planning for its future, the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University seeks to answer these questions and embrace current challenges, turning them into opportunities for innovation and growth.

Sarah Schroth

Mary D.B.T. and James H. Semans Director Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University

Executive Summary

Just as Duke University has distinguished itself as a leader in interdisciplinary work, collaborations, and global reach, the Nasher Museum has become known for its innovative, risk-taking exhibitions. It is one of the few university art museums in the country that has successfully traveled original exhibitions to major national and international museums. In exhibiting and collecting, the Nasher has consistently broken the status quo by focusing on global artists of color.

Since its opening in 2005, the Nasher Museum of Art has become the milestone for Duke's recent Arts Initiative. The museum's outstanding success has generated excitement that has attracted donors among alumni and the local community, who have not only supported the museum's many programs, but also fueled a university- wide arts focus. Students now have many more opportunities to experience the arts at Duke than ever before.

In the next five years, the Nasher must continue to play a pivotal role in the arts at Duke, and maintain its distinctive position in the world. It must contribute in meaningful ways to the growth and empowerment of our communities by generating new knowledge and enhancing dialogue. It must push forward its teaching mission as an integral part of the intellectual life of the university across disciplines. The Nasher must leverage its proximity to the Rubenstein Arts Center and be an active partner in its future programs. At the same time, the museum must reach beyond its walls to transform the arts on campus even further by creating a bold plan for a sculpture park along the arts corridor.

As Duke's gateway into the community, the Nasher must become an even more significant factor in the educational and cultural experiences of the citizens of Durham. At this stage in the history of the institution, it is also important to prioritize the stewardship of the collection, improve its operations, and expand its technology. Finally, the Nasher needs to sustain and grow the resources necessary to maintain its ambitious trajectory.

From the Past to the Future

The Nasher Museum: A Catalyst for the Arts at Duke

The Duke University Museum of Art opened in 1969 with the acquisition of 200 medieval works from the Ernest Brummer Collection. For 35 years, the museum occupied a small re-purposed space in an academic building on East campus and slowly acquired new works. In 2005, the museum opened a stunning and airy showcase at the center of Duke's campus, a new 65,000-square-foot building designed by Rafael Viñoly. The museum was renamed the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, in honor of the late Raymond D. Nasher, Duke alumnus, collector and benefactor.

Thanks to the outstanding leadership of its founding director, Kimerly Rorschach, the Nasher Museum achieved an unexpected degree of success in its first seven years. University support, the breathtaking architectural design by Viñoly, steady growth in endowment and annual fund giving, engaged and generous board members, and a highly creative, hard-working staff contributed to making the Nasher Museum

of Art one of the top university art museums in the country, and one with a distinctive profile. Under Rorschach's leadership, curators and staff produced nationally and internationally traveled exhibitions with award-winning catalogues. The size of the staff increased by half and all museum operations and policies were professionalized, resulting in the museum's reaccreditation by the American Alliance of Museums. Rorschach oversaw the acquisition of approximately 1000 new works of art; initiated the tradition of bold and innovative exhibitions; and attracted a robust audience of students, faculty, and the broader community, accompanied by a dramatic rise in membership. Rorschach played a key role in linking the museum to many schools, departments, units and administrators at Duke. Under her leadership, the museum galvanized the arts on campus.

In 2012, Rorschach accepted the directorship of the Seattle Art Museum. As her replacement, Duke appointed Sarah Schroth, the Nancy

Hanks Senior Curator at the Nasher since 2004. Schroth announced a range of visionary new initiatives: a program for visitors with Alzheimer's and dementia and their caregivers; a program for teenagers; a comprehensive and dynamic reinstallation of the museum's permanent collection; a shift in emphasis to devote 70 percent of gallery space to the permanent collection; a substantial contribution to Duke's undergraduate curriculum in the form of a new Concentration in Museum Theory and Practice taught by museum staff in conjunction with the department of Art, Art History and Visual Studies; a new gallery space - the Incubator - for thematic installations and faculty- and studentcurated projects; and regular invitations to local artists to take part in exhibitions and programs. These ambitious and wide-reaching plans were enacted by 2017.

Duke's Arts Initiative in the Duke Forward
Campaign culminated in the newly constructed
Rubenstein Arts Center across the street
from the Nasher, more student art programs,
cross-disciplinary artist residencies, and the
renovation of Smith Warehouse as the new
home for the Department of Art, Art History and
Visual Studies. The dramatic increase in student

applicants submitting art portfolios is a direct result of the efforts to transform the arts at Duke. The success of the Nasher jump-started this new chapter in Duke's history.

The Nasher Museum completed its first strategic plan in 2011, during its fifth year of operation under Rorschach's leadership. In 2011, the five-year strategic plan indicated that the Nasher needed to consolidate its operations, place itself on firmer financial footing including building its endowment, secure additional resources to further develop its collection, grow the staff, and plan for expansion. These goals were met and surpassed by 2017.



What is the Nasher Museum Experience?

EXHIBITIONS

In the galleries, visitors find rotating installations from the Nasher's permanent collection, featuring selections of contemporary art, Outsider art, classical antiquities, European medieval art, European and American paintings, African art, and ancient American (Pre-Columbian) art. They encounter bold and innovative exhibitions designed by the Nasher's curatorial staff. Particularly noteworthy are Archibald Motley: Jazz Age Modernist and Southern Accent: Seeking the American South in Contemporary Art. The Nasher hosts distinctive traveling exhibitions, such as Miro: The Experience of Seeing or Alexander Calder and Contemporary Art: Form, Balance, Joy.

LABORATORY FOR NEW DISCOVERIES

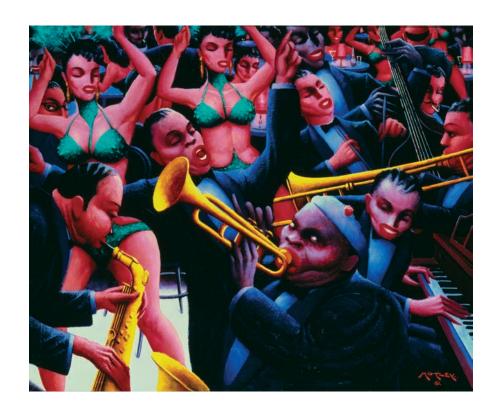
Duke students visit the museum with classes, learning about curatorial practice in the galleries and exploring object-based learning in the designated "Study Storage" on-site. Demand exceeds capacity for the Nasher's classes in the new Concentration in Museum Theory and Practice, which expose future museum directors, curators, registrars and educators to the

history of museums and to the field of Museology. Semester-long internship courses offer undergraduates an introduction and immersion into all facets of what it takes to run a museum.

The Nasher Teen Council brings a diverse group of Durham high-school students together each month to discuss works of art and contemporary social issues related to the Nasher Museum's collection. By connecting students with artists and museum professionals, and providing opportunities to work on collaborative projects with each other and the Durham community, the program provides high-school students with a unique combination of realworld opportunities and exposure to the museum field. Beyond the Council group, broader Nasher Teens programs are available to all Durham-area teens. Programs include art-making activities with local artists, curator-guided tours of the exhibitions, and interdisciplinary events that bring music, poetry, and movement into the galleries.

Reflections, the Nasher Museum Alzheimer's Program, provides engaging and interactive museum tours to visitors who live with memory





loss and their care partners. Tours include guided gallery discussions, as well as musical performances and hands-on art experiences. Started in 2014 and expanded in the summer of 2015, these special tours offer the opportunity to enjoy art in the moment, through multiple senses. The Reflections program also engages medical students as well as research and clinical partners from the Duke University Medical Center.

The Nasher is an important gateway to the community for Duke. Thousands of K-12 students and their families have engaged with the museum through various programs.

AMBASSADOR TO THE ART WORLD

Faculty not only move through the museum with their students; they also act as guest curators. Professor Richard J. Powell's *Archibald Motley: Jazz Age Modernist* traveled to four other venues and drew over 590,000 viewers. It also may well have inspired the largest gift to date to the Nasher: Motley's *Hot Rhythm*, gifted in late 2016 by two of the artist's heirs, Dr. Mara Motley and Valerie Gerrard Browne, in honor of Powell. The Nasher's curators have been recognized as leaders in the international art world, and have put Duke on the map once again.

Momentum

The Nasher raised more than \$38.4 million in cash, pledges, and planned gifts during the Duke Forward Campaign. This staggering figure does not include the value of gifts-in-kind received, which totals well over \$2 million. The Nasher far exceeded the University's expectations of what this young institution could raise and galvanized a successful Arts Initiative in the campaign.

Embarking on its second decade, the Nasher has welcomed more than 1 million visitors, acquired more than 1,200 works of art, and digitized one third of its collection. But there is still much to be done. The Nasher needs to maintain its momentum and ambition while creating a compelling vision for the future. The 2017-2022 Strategic Plan identifies areas of focus and maps out a transformative plan for the Nasher's next five years.



2017-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

Vision

The Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University is a beacon of art, culture, and learning for the university and the broader community, drawing on Duke's interdisciplinary and global assets.

Mission

The Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University promotes engagement with the visual arts for the Duke and Durham communities. The museum is dedicated to presenting innovative and accessible collections, exhibitions, publications and programs that stimulate intellectual discourse, enrich individual lives and generate new knowledge. Drawing on the resources of a leading research university, the museum serves as a laboratory for interdisciplinary approaches.

Priorities and Objectives

In its most recent five-year strategic plan, Duke University affirmed that its "overarching imperative for the next decade is to grow, connect, and empower communities to enhance the creation, delivery and translation of knowledge." As Duke's art museum, the Nasher will play a pivotal role in achieving these goals to connect and empower our communities, and to produce and share new knowledge.

Over the next five years, the Nasher intends to maintain the ambitious trajectory established in its first decade and to forge a bold plan for the future by transforming Duke's campus through art, art that is accessible to everyone.

TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION, WE HAVE FIVE PRIORITIES:

- Connect and transform two campuses: design a museum without walls
- 2 Generate new knowledge and enhance dialogue
- 3 Increase access to collections and resident experts
- 4 Strengthen institutional infrastructure
- 5 Sustain and grow financial support



Connect and Transform Two Campuses: Design a Museum Without Walls

Create a Sculpture Park on Duke's campus that – beginning at the Arts plaza and extending outward to create an Arts Corridor – connects the two campuses and catalyzes meaningful encounters with the arts for all

OBJECTIVES

- Continue the Nasher's catalytic role with the Arts at Duke by showcasing public art which is accessible and visible to the Duke and Durham communities
- Commission new works of art for installation in Sculpture Park
- Transform the Duke experience by connecting East and West Campuses, creating another sacred space on Duke's campus

One strategic key to the Nasher's success has been its scale – the size of the museum's exhibitions galleries, staff, and budget is perfect for Duke's campus. To build an extension on the current building would be a strategic misstep, upsetting architectural intent and the balance of scope and scale. Rather, this bold, long-term vision for the future will inject new energy and excitement into the institution and its constituents by expanding beyond the museum's walls. We propose a plan that will embrace and go beyond Raymond Nasher's original vision of a museum on the hill surrounded by modern and contemporary sculpture.

PRIORITY 1 CONTINUED

Connect and Transform Two

Campuses: Design a Museum Without Walls

The placement of the Rubenstein Arts Center directly across Campus Drive provides an opportunity to plan for a programmatic and spatial connection between the two buildings, already linked by architectural design. For this, we envision a grand plaza with space for installations of outdoor works by emerging as well as established artists, forming an exciting gallery without walls.

Moreover, the Nasher is positioned to launch a transformative project that will seamlessly connect Duke's East and West campus for the first time by forming a 144-acre Sculpture Park. A landscape design with bridges, boardwalks, and bicycle paths will transform the currently unused landscape into a park with sculpture at key vistas, allowing students, faculty and the community to enjoy the gorgeous natural setting thoughtfully designed by Olmstead in the 1920s. We imagine places to convene throughout the park, where visitors can share ideas, enjoy peaceful contemplation, and gather for performances of dance, music, or spoken word. The Sculpture Park at Duke is poised to become another sacred space on campus, positioning Duke to be a leader among its peer institutions as a place of beauty and welcome.



Generate New Knowledge and Enhance Dialogue

Encourage new discoveries across disciplines by using the Nasher's exhibitions and collections as a laboratory for intellectual discourse and growth

OBJECTIVES

- Organize groundbreaking exhibitions (that often travel) with accompanying scholarly catalogues that present original research with special attention to areas of global interest. Collaborate with Duke faculty as guest-curators
- Leverage the Concentration in Museum Theory and Practice to continue to build a pipeline of museum professionals, enrich the Duke student experience, and solidify the Nasher's role in equipping students to integrate academic and applied learning

- Develop meaningful interdisciplinary collaborations within the curriculum and via special university initiatives, such as Bass Connections, in order to use the Nasher as a laboratory for discovery
- Generate creative expression by commissioning new works of art and acquiring works by emerging global artists of color

The Nasher Museum engages Duke students and faculty broadly across disciplines, and provides critical support for the university's educational mission by creating and delivering object-based learning, promoting and Generate New Knowledge and Enhance Dialogue

PRIORITY 2 CONTINUED

facilitating the use of the museum's collections and exhibitions in the curriculum, and offering curatorial experiences for students and faculty. These efforts have had a profound impact on teaching and learning at Duke, especially in the humanities but reaching into the STEM fields as well. Duke University's culture is one of experimentation and cross-fertilization across disciplines, and faculty and students are eager to embrace new ways of thinking to prepare themselves to meet the broad challenges of the twenty-first century. The museum has played a vital role in Duke's broader learning culture, and we plan to sustain and expand the museum's activities as academic disciplines and pedagogies continue to evolve. The Nasher will continue to serve as a laboratory, encouraging critical dialogue and inspiring imagination.



Increase Access to Collections and Resident Experts

Provide pathways for visitors from diverse backgrounds to encounter the Nasher's collection and to learn from faculty and staff

OBJECTIVES

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere and exceptional visitor experience
- Engage more Duke students, regardless of major, through class visits, student programs, and internships
- Rotate exhibitions of works from all areas of the permanent collection and designate more exhibition space for the collection
- Increase online accessibility to the collection and digital assets

Encourage museum access through special programs for children, teenagers, and underserved adult populations (especially those with dementia or Alzheimer's)

Access to the Nasher's collection allows faculty, students and the public the unique learning opportunity of placing a given object within its social, historical and political context. A lively discussion in front of a work of art can generate new questions and innovative approaches to the acquisition of knowledge and a better understanding of cultures and identities different from one's own. It is our goal to increase access both to the collection and to the people who organize, care for, display, study, and interpret those works.

PRIORITY 3 CONTINUED

Increase Access to Collections and Resident Experts

Duke students have been and will remain a priority for our outreach efforts. The Nasher's Academic Programs team connects Duke faculty and students to the museum's holdings and exhibitions and hosts more than 200 annual visits to the museum's exhibitions and collections, including visits to the museum's study storage facilities. The Nasher trains an average of 15 interns each year, both through curricular internship courses and paid summer internships. We will strive to make the Nasher Museum a core part of the intellectual and social life of Duke University students, faculty and staffthrough academic experiences and a robust and creative calendar of extracurricular student programming.

Over the next five years, we will focus intensely on creating a welcoming and inclusive space for all visitors, weaving hospitality into all of our plans and programs in order to inspire, engage, and teach a diverse audience. We will invest more deeply in our programs for teens and for visitors with dementia, paying special attention to innovation around accessibility.



Strengthen Institutional Infrastructure

Prepare for the next five years and beyond by stewarding the collection, empowering staff, streamlining operations, and leveraging technology

OBJECTIVES

- Steward the collection by establishing a long-range collections development plan with special attention to inventory assessment, conservation, and storage solutions
- Build a diverse, engaged, and empowered staff to foster an inclusive environment through increased training and professional development
- Streamline operations to support an increasingly complex institution by creating a long-range plan for facilities, assessing on-going

- contracts and procurement practices, and formalizing professional feedback mechanisms for staff development
- Establish a Technology Task Force to develop strategic plans to address technology in several areas: museum archives, visitor experience and accessibility (both in-person and online), gallery interactives (visitor response, hands-on learning), works of art (sound art, video art), and ticketing and membership

The Nasher has built a significant collection of contemporary art during its first decade. We plan to build on existing strengths by continuing to focus on contemporary art and works by artists of African descent, significantly expanding the burgeoning photography collection, and at times

Strengthen Institutional Infrastructure

PRIORITY 4 CONTINUED

adding appropriate historic works when the opportunity arises. Renovation of the Works on Paper storage will increase capacity and access to a growing area of the collection. We will perform a registrarial inventory of paintings, prioritize conservation of major works, and pursue the possibility of additional or improved storage facilities.

One strategic key to the Nasher's institutional strength is its nimble and creative staff. We plan to leverage this strength by investing further in building a diverse and engaged team at all levels, from security to gallery guides to management. We will establish robust goal-setting and professional development tools that will coordinate individual goals across the museum and inspire new levels of excellence.

The museum has evolved with the advance of digital technology, but not fast enough. The Nasher's first technology strategy, led by a new task force, will leverage the museum's in-house talent to plan for expansion and innovation. Accessibility for all visitors will be a communications/technology focus for the next five years, to complement improvements for accessibility in the building and surrounding grounds. The next chapter will bring a consistent, museum-wide approach to digital initiatives, with all departments working together to implement technology in thoughtful, progressive and cost-effective ways.



2017-2022 Nasher Museum Strategic Plan

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Sustain and Grow Financial Support

Achieve long-term financial stability to ensure that the Nasher can pursue its mission with excellence and agility

OBJECTIVES

- Continue to raise the level of the Nasher's endowment and annual giving
- Collaborate with University Development and Duke Alumni Association to cultivate new relationships with alumni and parents and to build a pipeline for future support
- Strengthen and diversify revenue streams with special focus on corporate and foundation support, federal and state grants, and a fee structure of admissions, tickets, and museum rentals that reflects market competitiveness

Coinciding with the Duke Forward Campaign, the Nasher raised more than \$38.4 million in cash, pledges, and planned gifts and reached a new level of stability and success in its fundraising efforts. While the team raised over \$16.55 million in endowed funds over the course of the Duke Forward Campaign, continual growth of both restricted and unrestricted endowment funding will be essential to sustaining the success of current programming and initiatives. Specific areas of opportunity include exhibitions, academic programs, acquisitions, and public education. In 2016, the Nasher Annual Fund surpassed \$1 million in one year for the first time and will seek to maintain this new level of annual operating support.

The next five years offer new challenges and opportunities. The Nasher must continue to grow its pipeline of donors, strategically

Sustain and Grow Financial Support

working with campus partners to reach new Duke alumni and parents who support the arts. The museum will focus on bringing in new donors, and through a variety of cultivation and stewardship strategies, upgrading their giving to the major gift level. In addition to maintaining momentum with on-going fundraising priorities, the museum will lay the groundwork for a capital campaign to support the development of a sculpture park on campus.

