The Colby College Museum of Art plays a central role in Colby’s strategic vision by aligning the liberal arts mission of the College with the Museum’s outstanding collections and exhibitions, connections to local and global audiences, and the scholarly and creative opportunities afforded by the Lunder Institute for American Art.
DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

Under the leadership of President David A. Greene, Colby College is poised to become one of the country’s preeminent liberal arts colleges. Through an ambitious plan of strategic investment, the College is already seeing significant success in achieving key objectives, including attracting and supporting a diverse and inclusive community, enhancing universal and global student experiences, strengthening a commitment to the arts, creativity, and innovation, and contributing to the revitalization of Waterville. The Colby College Museum of Art plays a central role in Colby’s strategic vision by aligning the liberal arts mission of the College with the Museum’s outstanding collections and exhibitions, connections to local and global audiences, and the scholarly and creative opportunities afforded by the Lunder Institute for American Art.

In the plan that follows, the Museum seeks to advance our mission and continue to innovate with the pursuit of four principal strategic goals: to lead as a preeminent academic art museum; to establish the Museum as a destination for the collection, study, and exhibition of American art; to expand access, engagement, and opportunities for Maine and global audiences; and to ensure strategic advancement through sustainable resources and infrastructure.

Founded in 1959, the Colby College Museum of Art has seen tremendous growth over the past decade, with rapid expansion achieved during the Museum’s most recent strategic plan (2013-2017). During this period, the number of objects in the collection more than doubled to now include more than 10,000 works of art. Included in this figure are the more than 1,500 objects that make up the Lunder Collection, given to the College in two installments in 2013 and 2017. The Lunder Collection greatly enhances the Museum’s stature in the field of American art, a distinction made more prominent in 2017 with the establishment of the Lunder Institute for American Art. Bringing scholars and artists together in a liberal arts context, the Lunder Institute expands the dialogue of American art and practice to include global connections and multi-disciplinary perspectives.

The Colby Museum’s facilities, staff, endowments, and programs have also seen significant growth during this period. The Alfond-Lunder Family Pavilion opened in 2013 with newly expanded spaces for exhibitions and programs. The addition brought a total increase of 26,000 square feet, including 10,000 square feet of additional gallery space, making its exhibition space the largest in the state of Maine with 38,000 square feet in galleries and 64,000 square feet total. In addition, the expansion provided the Mirken Education Classroom for K-12 visitors and related programs, the Landay Teaching Gallery for Colby class visits and collection study, the Stradley Sculpture Terrace, an expanded lobby in the William D. Adams Gallery, and a new café. At the same time, the staff has grown from 6 to 24 members, with 15 of these positions supported by Museum endowment funds. The Museum’s dedicated endowments have more than doubled from approximately $23,000,000 in FY 2007 to $51,000,000 in FY 2018.

During the previous strategic plan, the Museum reinforced its mission as a teaching and research institution and substantially expanded its role on campus as a center for cross-disciplinary object-based learning. A grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
in 2013 to expand and deepen curricular engagement with the Museum’s collection was instrumental in advancing work with students and faculty. Artworks in the collection by artists from Albrecht Dürer to Julie Mehretu reinforce the Museum’s mission to offer Colby students new perspectives on their classroom studies and expand their understanding of many subjects through art.

The Colby Museum is deeply committed to strengthening diversity, inclusion, and equity across all strategic and programmatic areas of the museum, actively building a multiplicity of perspectives and backgrounds represented on our staff and Board of Governors, outreach to diverse audiences, inclusive exhibitions and programs, and a broad-based, expansive collection. In 2016 we formed a working group on diversity and inclusion made up of staff, board members, faculty, current students, alumni/ae, and community members. Charged with creating a diversity and inclusion plan for the Museum and aligned with the Taskforce on Diversity and Inclusion at the College, we identified five primary goals: 1) strengthen the diversity of the collection, 2) expand staff and board diversity, 3) execute a diverse and inclusive program of exhibitions and education initiatives, 4) serve diverse audiences, and 5) encourage and contribute to these commitments in the museum field. Subsequently, our efforts to address issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity related to all aspects of our operations and are woven deeply into the fabric of this strategic plan.

The objectives that follow in this plan include strategic collection growth to better reflect broadening definitions of American art, strengthen the diversity of artists and subjects represented, and expand the narratives we are able to tell in our galleries. In an increasingly global landscape marked by the permeability of national borders, student populations are growing more diverse, and museums, historically the keepers of cultural objects, are faced with the challenge of using these objects to engage with changing audiences. As
Central to the strategic objectives outlined in this plan is the integration of the Lunder Institute for American Art into the academic mission of the College and the Museum’s programs. The Lunder Institute is a research center dedicated to American art practice, exploration, and access. The Institute creates a unique space for innovative scholarship, creative works, dialogue, and mentorship among visiting scholars and artists, Colby faculty and students, and local and global communities; facilitates institutional exchange in the United States and internationally; and trains future leaders in the field of American art through the Colby Museum and partner institutions around the world. A major mission of the Lunder Institute is to explore American art from a global perspective, inspiring an interchange of ideas between places and cultures, and opening up new models for scholarly and creative engagement and production. The Institute is also committed to multidisciplinary, multigenre exchange, allowing artists and scholars from a broad range of backgrounds and areas of expertise to engage in shared inquiry and expression.

The Lunder Institute is dedicated to fostering cross-cultural and transnational dialogue. It embraces an expansive definition of American Art: one that encompasses art not only in and from the United States but throughout the Americas, and one that includes indigenous and diasporic art in both historical context and contemporary practice.

What sets the Lunder Institute apart is the way it centers contemporary artists and makers in all aspects
of the Institute’s mission, allowing for more capacious and inclusive definitions of research and scholarship. Because this type of research center typically exists as part of a large university or as a stand-alone institution, the Lunder Institute’s embedded position within a liberal arts college campus makes it unique among institutional peers. The integration of the Institute’s work, its artists, and its scholars into a liberal arts curriculum that fosters interdisciplinary inquiry as a path to both learning and action in the world allows for particularly rich, creative, and groundbreaking explorations of American art and its impact.

With more than 100 class visits annually, from courses ranging from biology to philosophy, the Museum is deeply embedded in the liberal arts curriculum at Colby.

A pillar of this plan is the Museum’s goal to lead as an academic museum. The Museum’s long-standing relationship with the Art Department remains a critical partnership in our shared goals to create distinctive curricular and co-curricular student experiences in the visual arts. Simultaneously, the current plan advances our outreach and engagement with faculty and students across the College through a sustained program of interdisciplinary initiatives.

As the College leads in efforts to revitalize the city of Waterville, the Museum presents unique opportunities to further extend its commitment to local schools, engage local audiences, and establish Waterville as an arts and cultural destination.

The current plan also advances actions dedicated to strengthening the Museum’s local and global connections. The recent gift by Paul J. Schupf to establish a contemporary art gallery in downtown Waterville will enable a reorientation of our front door...
and new opportunities to engage local audiences. Furthermore, the recent partnership with the Wyeth family foundation Up East Inc. will build on the strong interdisciplinary program established by the College on Allen Island. At the same time, the Museum will strengthen its international profile through a robust exhibition program that serves our education and engagement goals, attracts a diverse range of visitors, and establishes global partnerships. We will also deepen our connections to global and local communities as we expand our digital footprint, building digital collections and advancing collaborative digital initiatives that offer access to collections, exhibitions, and scholarly and creative work to audiences beyond the museum’s walls.

Ensuring sustainable resources and infrastructure will enable the realization of these strategic goals. As the College embarks upon the Dare Northward campaign, the single largest campaign at a liberal arts college, the Museum will play a significant role in achieving broad and deep philanthropic support. With leadership by Karen Linde Packman, Chair, and Hilary Barnes Hoopes, Vice Chair, the Museum’s Board of Governors will be a critical partner in achieving our programmatic and advancement goals. The ambitions outlined for the next five years in this plan will be supported by the advice and advocacy of the Board of Governors.
STRATEGIC GOAL
Lead as a preeminent academic art museum
STRATEGY I

Collaborative Academic Engagement

Engage with the expertise of Colby faculty and visiting Lunder Institute artists and scholars to make the Museum integral to the Colby liberal arts experience through multidisciplinary student engagement with collections and exhibitions.

ACTIONS

1. Launch a sustained program of interdisciplinary initiatives centered around curricular engagement, installations, exhibitions, and public events.

2. Develop models and resources for faculty partnerships and collaborations with scholars and artists affiliated with the Lunder Institute for American Art.

3. Partner with faculty in the Art Department and across campus to create distinctive curricular and co-curricular experiences in the visual arts.

4. Enhance links between the Museum's collections, exhibitions, and programs, and staff and the curriculum.

5. Create and consistently implement quantitative and qualitative evaluations to assess the impact of academic programs, in alignment with campus priorities for assessment and outcomes.
**STRATEGY II**

**Integrated Arts at Colby and in Waterville**

Establish the visual arts as a distinctive aspect of the Colby student experience and of daily life in Waterville by developing with campus and community partners an innovative program of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities that transform Colby and Waterville into an arts and culture destination.

**ACTIONS**

1. Make the Museum a central part of the co-curricular and extra-curricular experience of Colby students

2. Partner with the Center for Arts and Humanities, Goldfarb Center, and initiatives in Arts and Innovation, Environmental Humanities, Civic Engagement, and student organizations to establish the arts as a centerpiece of a Colby College experience.

3. Create new opportunities to engage Waterville residents and national audiences and to advance Colby’s revitalization efforts downtown, through the planned Downtown Arts Center and Paul J. Schupf Gallery and collaboration with Waterville Creates! and other community partners.
STRATEGY III
Transformative Professional Experiences and Mentorship

Offer students professional development and mentorship opportunities at Colby and with a regional, national, and global network of institutional partners.

ACTIONS

1. Create an active and innovative mentorship program for Colby students interested in careers in the arts.

2. Partner with the Museum’s Student Advisory Board to reach a broad group of students interested in professional experiences with cultural organizations.

3. Collaborate with campus partners, including DavisConnects and Global Studies, to strengthen and publicize external arts and museum-related internship opportunities for Colby students and enhance opportunities for underrepresented groups.
STRATEGIC GOAL
Establish the Colby College Museum of Art as an international destination for the collection, study, and exhibition of American Art
STRATEGY I
Strategic Collection Growth and Enhanced Access and Stewardship
Build one of the preeminent collections of American art, expand its diversity, strengthen access and visibility, and increase capacity with the highest standards of maintenance and care

ACTIONS
1. Develop a collection plan that aligns the Museum’s collecting goals and priorities with our commitment to capitalizing on our strengths, engaging our diverse and expanding audiences, and addressing absent narratives
2. Diversify presentation of the collection to better reflect the broadening definitions of American art and highlight the transnational and transcultural dialogues that have shaped the art of the United States
3. Enable strategic collection growth through enhanced collection stewardship and assessment

STRATEGY II
Advance the Lunder Institute for American Art
Advance the work of the Lunder Institute as a unique and innovative space for scholarship, creative works, dialogue, and mentorship among Lunder Institute visiting scholars and artists, Colby faculty and students, and the central Maine community

ACTIONS
1. Create new opportunities for faculty and students to engage with the Lunder Institute through the curriculum and through co-curricular programs
2. Engage visiting artists and scholars to contribute to the Museum’s commitment to education and community engagement
3. Collaborate with artists to realize critical and creative projects related to the collection and to the shared mission of Museum and the Lunder Institute, including new commissions of artwork, exhibitions of emerging and established artists, support of innovative and creative research, and new print and digital platforms
STRATEGY III

Establish the Museum as a global center for American art studies and creation

Create opportunities through the Museum and the Lunder Institute for art leaders to engage with and study Museum collections and exhibitions with global perspectives, contribute to multidisciplinary teaching and learning, and facilitate international institutional partnerships.

ACTIONS

1. Create a dialogue for American art in a global context with the Museum’s collections and within the liberal arts curriculum at Colby with the Provost, Dean of Global Engagement, and other global initiatives across campus.

2. Facilitate international institutional partnerships and digital collaboration to extend the global reach of Museum and Lunder Institute initiatives.
STRATEGY IV

World-Class Exhibitions

Organize internationally recognized and locally relevant exhibitions that serve the Museum’s education and engagement goals, attract visitors to Colby and Waterville, and raise the profile of the Colby Museum through global partnerships.

ACTIONS

1. Establish a five-year exhibition plan that incorporates goals for diversity and inclusion and balances objectives for national-profile exhibitions, teaching goals, collection presentation, and scholarship and innovation in the field.

2. Improve cross-departmental collaboration to strengthen capacity for strategic long-term exhibition planning and integrated programming.

3. Build an innovative print and digital publication program that represents a diversity of voices and connects them in new ways.

4. Facilitate strategic planning of future exhibitions through quantitative and qualitative evaluations to measure impact.
STRATEGIC GOAL
Expand access, engagement, and opportunities for Maine and global audiences
STRATEGY I
Contribute to diversity in the field

Diversify the museum field through staff recruitment as well as internship and fellowship programs that encourage careers in the arts and support professional pathways for traditionally underrepresented groups

ACTIONS

1. Work with DavisConnects to promote current professional opportunities and establish new ones for traditionally underrepresented groups

2. Create a formal program for fellowships, internships, and mentorship at the Museum and with partner institutions

3. Participate in national strategic initiatives with peer institutions to build networks and resources that support diversity, inclusion, and equity among emerging museum professionals
STRATEGY II

Digital access and innovation

Expand access to and visibility of the Museum’s collections and programs and enhance academic and public engagement through the development of robust digital media and resources

ACTIONS

1. Extend visibility and reach of Museum collections through digital preservation, open access, and collaboration with institutional and consortial partners

2. Create new digital opportunities for academic and public engagement with Museum and Lunder Institute programs and exhibitions
**STRATEGY III**

**Community engagement and expanded audiences**

Connect and partner with our communities, including through downtown arts institutions, to expand audiences locally and beyond through inclusive, diverse, and equitable programs.

**ACTIONS**

1. Strategically employ results of 2017-18 audience survey to expand and better serve Museum audiences.

2. Offer schoolchildren from across Maine, with emphasis on Waterville and local schools, the opportunity for deep engagement with the Museum and its collections through an innovative and collaborative school visit program.

3. Offer professional development opportunities for Maine educators, particularly those in Waterville and adjacent communities.

4. Create a welcoming, accessible, and inclusive environment and ensure that diverse audiences are comfortable visiting the Museum.

5. Enhance Museum communications capacities, strategies, and networks to maximize institutional reach and visibility.
STRATEGIC GOAL
Ensure sustainable resources and infrastructure

STRATEGY I
Staff and Facilities Growth
Ensure the appropriate organizational structure, staffing, facilities, and resources to achieve institutional priorities

ACTIONS
1. Conduct an organizational review and identify opportunities to strengthen staff workflows, enhance staff support and collaboration, foster inclusivity, continue professional development, and shape future growth

2. Review facility workspaces to assess and accommodate staff growth and Lunder Institute program needs

3. Assess current and long-term needs and priorities for Museum facilities access, enhancement, and growth
STRATEGY II

Advancement

Create a culture of philanthropy that encourages broad and deep philanthropic support that ensures the sustained and strategic growth of the Museum’s mission and strategic initiatives

ACTIONS

1. Build a pipeline of multi-faceted support in collaboration with the Dare Northward campaign to provide permanent funding through endowments, operational support for targeted initiatives, gifts of art, and unrestricted funding for creativity and growth

2. Provide multiple entry points for philanthropy by expanding the Museum’s Friends of Art program and Summer Luncheon

3. Create unique travel and event opportunities for the Museum Board of Governors, alumni, parents, and friends to increase awareness and engagement with the Museum’s mission

4. More formally establish a network of alumni, parents, and friends that can partner with the Museum to expand professional pathways into the Museum profession, working with the Advancement Office

STRATEGY III

Board of Governors

Further strengthen the Board of Governors through engaged committee work and continued growth of the membership that brings strategic experience and expanded diversity

ACTIONS

1. Review governance structure to ensure board effectiveness and identify and nominate new members for the Board of Governors

2. Elevate the national and international profile of the board through engagement and dialogue with peer institutions to raise the profile and impact of the Museum in a global context
MUSEUM STAFF

Jordia Benjamin, Mirken Senior Coordinator of Programs and Audience Engagement
Charles Butkosk, Digital Projects Developer
Megan Carey, Barbara Alfond Manager of Exhibitions and Publications
Elizabeth Carpenter, Manager of Registration and Collections
Sharon Corwin, Carolyn Muzzy Director and Chief Curator
Lorraine DeLaney, Registrar for Exhibitions and Loans
Paige Doore, Registrar for Collections
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Elizabeth Finch, Lunder Curator of American Art
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Julianne Gilland, Deputy Director
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Karen Wickman, Executive Assistant to the Director
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Qianni Zhu, Mirken Family Postbaccalaureate Fellow in Museum Practice

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Theaster Gates, Distinguished Visiting Artist and Director of Artist Initiatives
Lee Glazer, Director
Tanya Sheehan, Distinguished Scholar and Director of Research
Mareisa Weil, Administrative Coordinator

Museum Security and Custodial Staff
Michael Benecke, Security Manager
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Joe Ramsdell
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an open door to art