

Fall 2020 Newsletter

**Syracuse
University
Art
Museum**



Letter From the Director



Welcome to the Fall 2020 edition of the Syracuse University Art Museum's newsletter. This is the first digital-only newsletter by the Museum and the first with our official new name! Our name change accompanies many other recent evolutions, including a [rebranding of the Museum's design elements online](#) and in the physical space, including our exterior signage, and new entrance wall by artist Taro Takizawa. As you may have already noticed over the spring and summer, our initiative to build out our virtual offerings have been enhanced by launching [#SUArtFromHome](#), a series of programs and activities that include [virtual exhibitions](#), [artist interviews](#), [gallery talks](#), and an array of interactive [activities](#) accessible to all on our website. Much of this virtual initiative was propelled by the need to adapt in order to continue to serve our audiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The hardships and challenges brought on by this virus are still with us today, but we at the Museum believe in the power of the arts to help us through difficult times and remain committed to continuing to provide our audiences with access.

In addition to the current global public health crisis, our country is also facing an internal crisis that has roots dating back centuries. The devastating events and long held beliefs that not all people, voices, and lives are equal have led to ongoing protests here at our own university, as well as nationally in the Black Lives Matter movement. These horrendous acts of injustice and beliefs that not all lives are valued are a grim comment on our society today, and in response the Museum will do our part to support the movement in our collection, activities, and outreach. One of our recent priorities is to critically examine our collection holdings, acknowledging that we have large gaps in representation of all members of our community. As a result, we have initiated a collecting plan moving forward to actively pursue and identify both historical and emerging underrepresented artists. This is an objective we took to heart as we recently acquired new artworks that you can read more about in this newsletter. We have also joined the university's prestigious Hill Society and plan to use the support we receive from these donations to continue to fund art purchases that improve representation in our permanent collection. The Museum is excited to announce it has partnered with Carrie Mae Weems's *Resist COVID Take 6!* campaign. Syracuse



University's first-ever artist-in-residence, Weems' is an internationally acclaimed artist whose project increases public awareness about the impact the virus has had and continues to have on communities of color. As you will read about in the newsletter, the Museum will be sponsoring bus signage, stickers, posters, and other material to spread awareness through the campaign of the disproportionate impact of this virus on communities of color and encourage dialogue on social equity and social distancing.

The Museum will continue to act as an important teaching resource across campus, providing access to the art collection to students and faculty through in-person class visits, tours, and virtual alternatives. Furthermore, the Museum is actively working to expand its reach across campus by organizing a virtual workshop for faculty and graduate students seeking to learn how to teach with art across disciplines, an initiative that will continue into the spring semester. Our events page in the newsletter features this workshop, alongside many other virtual programs that will allow you to de-stress with art, connect with artists across the globe, and continue to engage with the permanent collection through varied interdisciplinary lenses including mental health and environmentalism. In addition, this summer we worked hard on migrating our collections data on some 45,000 artworks to a robust new database software system that will provide our online visitors with a more advanced search engine to better explore and research the collection online. In addition to improved searches, this software will better support our virtual initiative by providing a platform for collections displays for classes and virtual exhibitions available to all on our website.

This fall we debut the new show [Being Human: Portraits from the Collection](#). This physical exhibition will have an online counterpart that mirrors and supplements the in-person experience, including images of each artwork, installation photos, and insightful object labels. We also have several additional virtual exhibitions in the works, including *One World: Diverse Landscapes* and *Mithila Art in the Time of COVID*. We hope that you will enjoy these new virtual resources and that they will have a broad reach on campus and in our community, bringing us together and using art to inspire discussion and uplift us during this difficult time. I wish you all a happy and healthy fall semester!

Supporting the Art Museum Fund



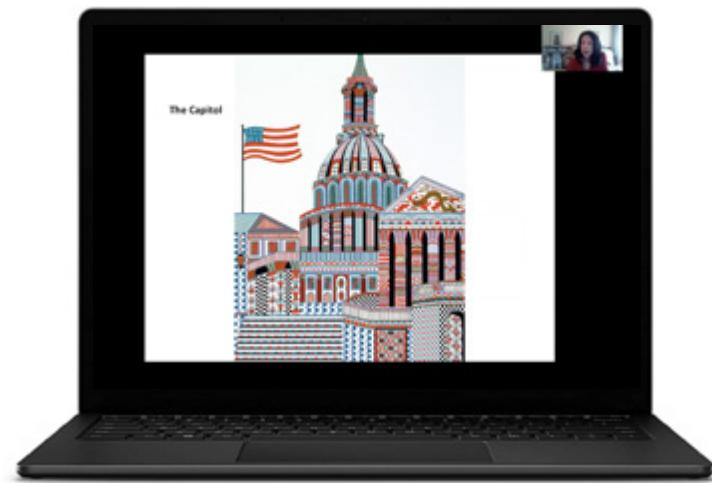
We are delighted to announce that as of this academic year the Museum is now part of The Fund for Syracuse! For the first time ever, on October 1st, the Syracuse University Art Museum Fund will be part of **Boost the 'Cuse: Syracuse University's Day of Giving**. In addition, we are now also one of the eligible funds for **The Hill Society**, which recognizes alumni, parents, and other friends who support the University's highest priorities through unrestricted annual gifts at a leadership level.

When you support the Museum, you promote the arts on campus and help strengthen interdisciplinary research, creative thinking, and increased mindfulness. As the campus art museum, we serve as a forum for a broad range of discussions that bring students across campus together with faculty and the wider community. The Museum presents up to 20 exhibitions annually, scores of public programs, and has an active schedule of teaching through class visits that encourage close study and cross-disciplinary engagement with its permanent collection of 45,000 artworks, including important holdings from many areas of the world.



A contribution to the Museum will help support teaching with the art collection, fund exhibitions, enable acquisitions of artwork by underrepresented artists, and provide an array of educational programs and opportunities. Your gift to the Museum helps Syracuse University students and our community gain access to the arts that enrich lives and foster creative thinking and dialogue. Please consider giving to the SU Art Museum Fund through Boosting the 'Cuse on October 1st, joining The Hill Society, or by making a gift of any amount, at any time, on **our website**.

Our Teaching Museum in the time of COVID-19



The Museum staff is proud of our mission as a teaching museum committed to assisting faculty with their pedagogical goals across campus, using our collections and galleries as places of discovery, research and discussion for students and faculty here at Syracuse University. This past March, we had to suddenly shift our teaching—as so many did—from in-person to virtual. While a challenge, it was one we wholeheartedly embraced. As a united staff, we collectively worked to create content for the spring and summer that included the launch of virtual exhibitions, recorded talks on artists and objects in the collection, and guided activities utilizing the collection as a base.

We recognize the importance of continuing to provide both online and physical access to the permanent collection this fall semester, and this includes providing research materials and high resolution images to utilize in course assignments and lectures, as well as—when possible—class visits to the museum for guided tours, virtual live tours for classes led by museum staff members or faculty, or facilitated Zoom visits with our museum staff, supplemented with quality



images of the artwork for close examination and detailed study. Over the summer, we have worked closely with the university's Office of Campus Planning, Design, and Construction to create a safe, healthy, socially distant and positive space where classes will be able to still visit for in-person visits based on both faculty and student comfort levels, at the same time as working to mirror that content so that students who are remote can also receive the same benefits from the visit as in-person students have. We look forward to continuing to be a vital part of learning and teaching across campus this fall.

Partnering with Carrie Mae Weems on her “Resist COVID Take 6!” Campaign



The Syracuse University Art Museum is pleased to announce its partnership with Carrie Mae Weems on her *Resist COVID Take 6!* campaign. Weems is a world-renowned artist who is currently Syracuse University’s first-ever artist-in-residence. In the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic, Weems created the campaign to increase public awareness about the disproportionate impact the virus has had, and continues to have, on communities of color. Helping to shed light on the need of social, equity, safety, and preventative measures for those disproportionately affected, the campaign focuses on promoting the need to continue the dialogue around the importance of social distancing by keeping 6 feet apart, wearing masks, and dispelling misinformation while supporting and encouraging frontline and essential workers. The museum has teamed up with her to spread this important message, installing large campaign posters in the foyer, sponsoring signage on 6 Syracuse city public buses through the Fall semester, lawn signs, and distributing stickers to students at the university and in our community’s public school system. We hope through this initiative we can help create positive change in stopping the spread of this virus and highlighting the social inequity made even more apparent by this pandemic.



Being Human

Portraits from the Permanent Collection

Open August 25th



Through portraiture, this exhibition brings art together from vastly different time periods and cultures, including many works that have never been on view and a number that are recent museum purchases of art by contemporary artists. In place of a traditional display organizing these works chronologically or geographically, artwork is juxtaposed to disrupt traditional interpretations and encourage new dialogues. **Being Human** draws out the nuances of portraiture throughout time and place, showing its role in reinforcing or critiquing power, exploring or crafting identity, and expressing the influence of one's community. It also challenges our accepted expectation of what form a portrait takes by including documentary photographs, abstract art, and utilitarian objects. Through this approach, the exhibition aims to foster new interpretations of the permanent collection, expanding discussions about portraiture and its attempts to capture the essence of what it means to be human. This show is open to in-person visits from Syracuse University students, faculty, and staff. A virtual version of this exhibition with supplementary text is available to all on our [website](#).



Virtual Exhibitions

One World: Diverse Landscapes

Premiering
October 2020



One World: Diverse Landscapes examines a select group of objects including paintings, drawing, photographs, and sculpture from the Museum's expansive permanent collection. Focusing on depictions of rural and urban environments that create distinct senses of place, artists have continually tried in the past, and continue today, to visually represent how people react and interact to their surroundings and with each other. This exhibition presents the uniting theme that despite differences in geography, period, style or technique, rural and urban landscapes are universal subjects, uniting artists from around the world.

Mithila Art in the Time of COVID-19

Premiering
November 2020



In rural Bihar, India, Mithila artists are using their distinctive style of painting to depict the new world in which they now live, with new rules and regulations such as masking and home confinement in the wake of a lockdown mandated by the Indian government. While this art reflects the radical changes in their world since March, it is also a call for help. As folk artists who have to depend on tourist markets both foreign and domestic, they are now left without a current outlet for their work. This virtual exhibition builds on the Museum's long history of engagement with Mithila artists, including two recent major exhibitions based on the Museum's collection of some 100 paintings from the 1970s through the early 2000s. This exhibition is curated by Professor Emerita Susan Wadley (Anthropology) whose has worked closely with Mithila artists for over a decade.

New Acquisitions

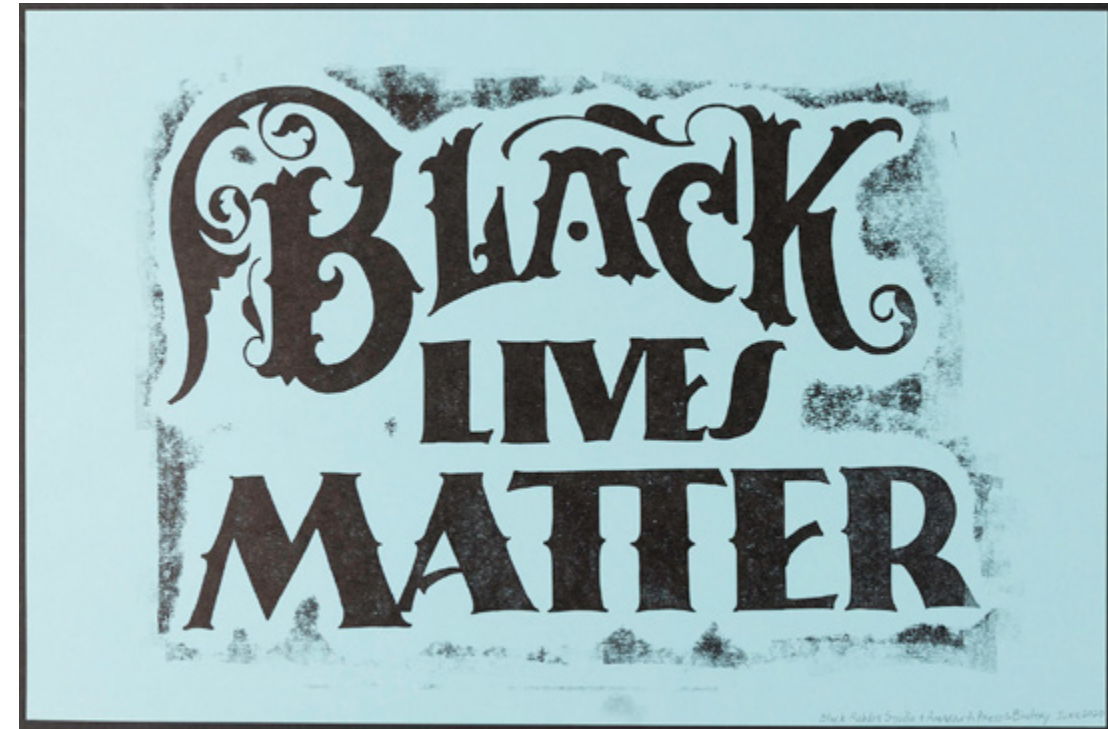
Expanding the Permanent Collection

By Kate Hill, M.A. '21



Our Museum took this summer to critically assess our collections and exhibitions to evaluate whether we were actively representing our Syracuse community. Based on our assessments, we had holes in our collection and our representations. We committed to change this. We looked to scholars, activists, and leaders across our community and nation from all walks of life as we refocused our mission and commitments into action.

As a University-based organization, we see the value in partnering with and supporting contemporary artists who push new forms of media and activate change through art. Colonial structures have historically denied or overlooked large groups of people from being represented and included in galleries and museums. The Museum has created a new collecting plan that prioritizes acquisitions by underrepresented artists. We recently acquired two works by the talented interdisciplinary artist Ivan Forde, who implements photo-based and print-making processes in his art to retell stories from



epic poetry in which he casts himself as all the characters. Forde explains: “I create richly layered images that are informed by epic poetry to reflect on migration, homeland, and memory situated within what poet Jay Wright defines as an ‘enlarged realm of the experience.’ My visual art practice deeply engages oral and written stories that contemplate speculative sources of human origin and culture.”

We plan to use donations made to the Museum to fund new acquisitions of artwork for the permanent collection. A gift in any amount makes a difference and can be made [directly on our website](#). This is just one step in our initiative to grow representation at the Museum and works added to our permanent collection will be used for teaching, exhibitions, and public programs. We hope to add more works this year by partnering with local artists, organizations, donors, and students to make sure all are heard, welcomed, and embraced in the Syracuse University Art Museum

eMuseum

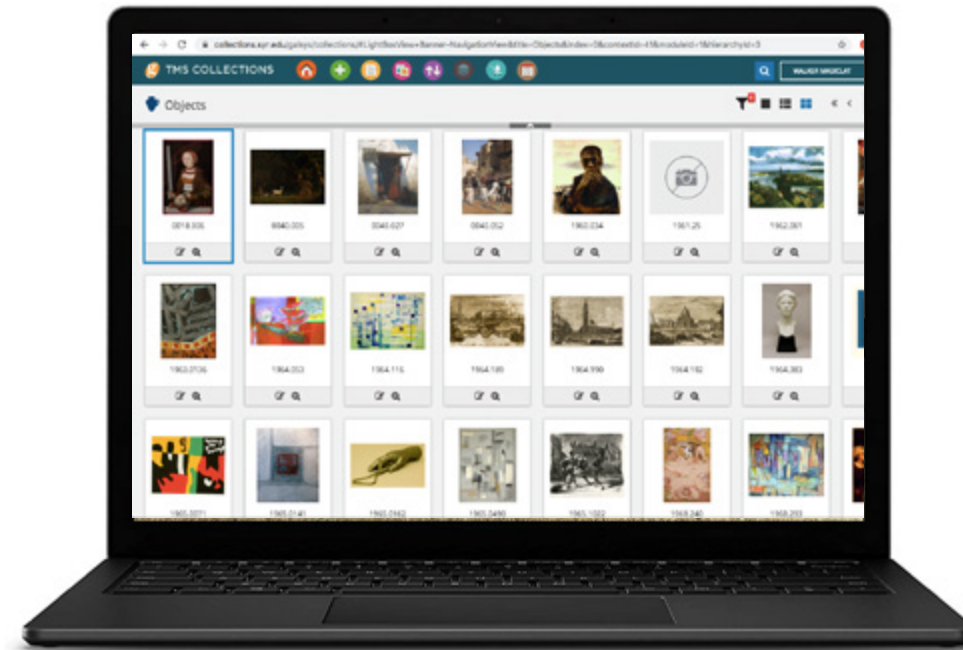
Creating a new digital platform for the Museum's permanent collection

By Laura J. Wellner, Registrar



This past January, our Museum launched into a new terrain, migrating to an entirely new and more robust collections management database system TMS Collections by Gallery Systems. This new system will better document all details related to our permanent collection of over 45,000 artworks, as well as link past and future exhibition, course displays, and collaborations with other museums. This ambitious upgrade required a great deal of tedious work to clean up the existing data, calling upon the entire Museum staff to pitch in to work on various parts of the database for ease of searching and input for our daily work, as well as prepare the data to be published in its public debut online via eMuseum, our new online searchable database which will be available to all on our website this semester.

Since the lockdown in March, our student staff, including work studies and graduate students, have stepped up to assist with cleaning our data, including adding date ranges, researching artist



biographical information, and creating descriptive titles for untitled works. Additionally, they have been populating the Keyword data field, which allows visitors to plug-in specific terms, helping our online visitors to browse for the artworks that interest them and their research. Sometimes it is the simplest words that users type in to bring together a collection of works they may have never known existed! It is not a small task to do all of this, and once we go live with the new online database it will constantly evolve as we go, as one of the greatest assets to eMuseum is that changes made to the main database will go live 24 hours later for our online database. We are excited about this new venture, as it will provide a strong digital platform for the Museum making our entire collection available for viewing and research online as well as providing the Museum with an exciting new platform for virtual exhibitions and collection groupings. We look forward to launching this fall and are very excited to see this come to fruition.

Events & Programming

Visiting Artist Lecture Series

Thursday nights starting SEPT 3 at 6:30 P.M.

The Visiting Artist Lecture Series (CVPA) and In Plain Sight will present a series featuring 13 of the In Plain Sight collaborators and socially conscious artists working across disciplines and media at the intersection of art and activism.

Live Streamed on SUAM YouTube Channel



Ivan Forde & Evan Sterling Performance/Artist Talk

Saturday, OCT 17 3-5 P.M.

Bane or Benefit? COVID-19 and the Environment

Tuesday, OCT 6, 4 P.M.

Join David Prince, curator of the SU Art Museum with faculty guest Dr. Susan Parks, Associate Professor, Biology, as they discuss COVID-19's impact on the marine environment. Prince will approach the subject using art from the permanent collection while Parks will explore commercial shipping and near shore recreational boating's sonic effect on undersea life.

Mithila Art in the Time of COVID-19

Wednesday, NOV 18, 9:30 A.M.

Join Susan Wadley, Professor Emerita of Anthropology and three contemporary Mithila artists in a panel discussion centering on their art practice in the time of the COVID pandemic.

All Events & Programming Are Virtual This Year!

Using Art for Transformative Teaching

Friday, NOV 6, 10:00 A.M.-Noon

Fall Workshop: Future Pathways to Teaching Across Disciplines Donna Gustafson (Rutgers University – Zimmerli Art Museum) joins Syracuse University Art Museum director Vanja Malloy to lead a virtual workshop on teaching with art and how non-verbal, non-narrative communication can be harnessed for cross-disciplinary discussions in the art museum.

This event is part of Syracuse Symposium's year-long series on "Futures."

Wellness at the Museum: A Virtual Visit and Art Making Experience

Tuesday, NOV 17, 12:15 P.M.

Join us for a live event with director of the new Creative Arts Therapy Department Jennifer DeLucia and SU Art Museum director Vanja Malloy. Connect with a sense of hope, joy, and beauty through exploration of selected art works and participate in an art making experience focused on wellness and self-care. Registration by email to suart@syr.edu is required by November 1 for supplies to be mailed free to participants. Spaces are limited.



Orange Central Events:

Make your Home a Museum: Framing and Installation Demo

Thursday, OCT 29, Noon

Do you have artwork in your home but don't know how to frame or install it? Take some tips from the pros, and join us for a demonstration on how to frame and install artwork in your home!

Creepy Crawlies in the Museum

Friday, OCT 30, Noon

Join the curatorial staff of the museum for a special pop-up exhibition and discussion of artwork from the permanent collection inspired by Halloween weekend. Explore imagery that includes fantastical animals, unnerving images, insects, ghosts, ghouls, and other playful subjects!

Check Our Social Media & Website for More Upcoming Events!