

YEAR IN REVIEW

FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2020



MAG MEETS THE CHALLENGE

Staff, Board and Supporters Step Up

Fiscal year 2019-20 was nearing the end of the third quarter when MAG, along with other museums across the country, closed its doors in response to the growing global pandemic.

The shutdown, on March 14, would last more than three months, and the financial and creative challenges would be immediate. All galleries were closed, as well as THE STORE @ MAG, Creative Workshop, rental spaces and restaurant. MAG staff adjusted to working from home, with only essential staff on site to maintain the collection and the facilities. Budget challenges were addressed through salary cuts, rolling furloughs, layoffs, and a hiring freeze. Special events and fundraisers were cancelled, postponed, or whenever possible moved online; and staff moved quickly to implement virtual programming, events and classes.



MAG also found ways to give back to the community in a time of need. All MAG memberships that were current as of March 2020, as well as new and renewing memberships, were extended the length of the museum closure. And to help address the national PPE shortage, staff donated to local healthcare organizations more than 6,000 pairs of latex gloves (used for art handling), as well as safety glasses, Tyvek suits, and cleaning supplies.

Through it all, morale remained high, as director Jonathan Binstock acknowledged in an all staff email: “The teamwork, focus, planning, and dedication to our well-being, and to MAG’s well-being, has been and continues to be nothing short of impressive and, quite frankly, moving. Thank you again for all that you do.”



The Board of Managers also stepped up, spearheading a highly successful *Protect the Arts* campaign to help offset a projected budget shortfall and leading the way by matching every \$1 gift with \$2. Director Binstock did his part, gamely responding to “votes” from donors by getting a haircut on the steps of the 1913 building. PICTURED: Binstock got to see himself as George Condo’s *The Clown* before deciding to go with a buzz cut.

By the end of June, the campaign had raised \$476,510.

This total included a \$100,000 gift from Nancy Highbarger and Bob Sproull, children of Dr. Robert Sproull, seventh president of the University of Rochester, and his wife, Mary Sproull. With their gift from the Robert and Mary Sproull Charitable Fund, Nancy and Bob continued their late parents’ philanthropic legacy in Rochester and at MAG.

Also included were proceeds from an annual spring fundraiser that supports K-12 arts programs. Reimagined as a virtual event, An Artists’ Affair raised \$75,414—far surpassing its goal of \$50,000.



By mid June, MAG got the green light to reopen under New York State low impact arts guidelines; these included restrictions on the number of staff in the building and strict limits to the number of visitors. New safety protocols, outlined in a detailed reopening plan, were in place as the first visitors—MAG members—were allowed inside on June 27.

EXHIBITIONS



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In fall 2019, MAG hosted the traveling exhibition *Alphonse Mucha: Master of Art Nouveau*. The work of Mucha, who was best known for his elegant portraits of the French actress Sarah Bernhardt, was extremely well received, attracting 18,405 museumgoers and more than 3,000 schoolchildren and adults enjoying docent-led tours. It was the latest in a series of popular exhibitions featuring iconic artists. As Rebecca Rafferty wrote in *City* newspaper, *Mucha* “beautifully contextualized the artist’s work, drawing the viewer deeper into the experience of understanding the work and, valuably, that art—even pretty art—isn’t made in a vacuum.” ABOVE (A): the entrance to the exhibition. RIGHT: As part of its exhibition outreach, MAG partnered with Rochester artist #Dellarious, who created wheatpaste ads at a number of city sites including the Rochester Public Market.



Every other exhibition of the fiscal year was organized by MAG or was the result of MAG scholarship. Foremost among these was *The Path to Paradise*, the first retrospective of the work of contemporary glass artist Judith Schaechter. This major traveling show was organized by curator in charge/curator of American art Jessica Marten, who also wrote the catalog; the opening day featured a lecture by the artist and the premiere of specially commissioned music by Rochester quintet fivebyfive. “Schaechter emerges as a powerful feminist voice as she teases out the female figure in art history and re-presents her as radically complex,” wrote *Hyperallergic* magazine in a long appreciation of the show. “Hers is a compelling world, and one nearly impossible to comprehend in full or look away from.” Originally scheduled to close in May, the exhibition remained in place during the COVID shutdown and was extended through mid September before traveling to the Toledo Museum of Art and the Des Moines Art Center. LEFT: The artist. ABOVE (B): *The Battle of Carnival and Lent* (detail), 2010-11, is in the MAG collection.

In celebration of the centennial of the 19th Amendment giving many women the right to vote, all shows at the start of 2020 focused on the work of women artists. In addition to *The Path to Paradise*, *The Season of Women* included two Lockhart Gallery shows—*Rochester Americana: The Watercolors of Karal Ann Marling* and *Chitra Ganesh: Sultana’s Dream*—as well as *Ja’Tovia Gary: Nègresse Impériale* in the Media Arts Watch gallery (see COLLECTIONS, page 3). An installation in the Cameros Gallery also featured work related to the 19th Amendment. ABOVE (C): Chitra Ganesh, *The Condition of Womanhood* (2018). RIGHT: *Suffragette Madonna*, from an installation of vintage postcards on the topic of suffrage.



Over the winter, MAG mounted an exhibition marking the 30th anniversary of a movement of Deaf artists who began explicitly to explore Deaf experiences in their art. *De’VIA: Deaf View/Image Art* was curated by Patti Durr, a professor at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, and Tabitha Jacques, director of NTID’s Dyer Arts Center, which lent most of the work. It was the occasion for tours, programs and a conference exploring the Deaf experience, and visitor enjoyment of the exhibition was enhanced through an app created by NTID’s Center of Access Technology. ABOVE (D): Nancy Rourke, *Dandelion* (2011). Also in conjunction with the show, the Creative Workshop began offering classes designed for individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, as well as those seeking a new perspective; classes were taught in spoken English and American Sign Language.

COLLECTIONS



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This fiscal year signaled a continued emphasis on strengthening modern and contemporary holdings, extending historical and aesthetic narratives in the collection, and enhancing the representation of women and minority artists. Notable acquisitions included two videos recently screened in the Media Arts Watch gallery—(A) *Giverny I (Négresse Impériale)*, by Ja'Tovia Gary, and (B) *Conversations wit de Churen V: As da Art World Might Turn*, by Kalup Linzy; (C) *The Gardener (Melissa with Bob Marley Shirt)*, sculpture by John Ahearn and Rigoberto Torres; and (D) *The Triumph of Time over Fame*, a rare and enigmatic glass roundel from the Renaissance. MAG also acquired a print series by Chitra Ganesh (EXHIBITIONS, page 2) and two works by Peter Jemison.

One major acquisition, *Cloud Prototype No. 2* (E) by the Chicago-based artist Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle, entered the collection in a dramatic way on March 16, only two days after the COVID shutdown. Miraculously, the art handlers already secured by MAG were able to truck the work from Connecticut, oversee its installation in the Vanden Brul Pavilion, and return back east. *Cloud Prototype No. 2* is the gift of MAG patrons Bob Goergen, former Chairman of the UR Board of Trustees, and his wife, Pamela.



E

Other donated works included two 16th-century French works in stained glass, from Mark Chaplin and John Strawway; and Rashid Johnson's *Untitled Anxious Red Drawing* (2020), from Abby and Doug Bennett.

In other news, the curatorial department received \$96,300 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This award allowed the department to renovate the Small Object storage room, install a custom compact mobile shelving system, and comprehensively and systematically rehouse all 2,500+ objects stored in the space. The project is phase two of a long-term, museum-wide initiative to renovate and improve collection storage and preservation.

FACILITIES

In summer 2019, MAG embarked on a major renovation of the Vanden Brul Pavilion (E), which opened in 1987. Over the years, rainwater had penetrated the original three-bay, 2,500-square-foot skylight. The replacement—an energy-efficient single unit—was installed by The Pike Company. When the Pavilion reopened in October, it was a win-win—a larger, brighter exhibition space that would also significantly reduce energy costs. The project also included repair or replacement of water-damaged architectural elements, and, by the end of the fiscal year, an upgraded lighting system.

SCHOOLS & COLLEGES



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During fiscal year 2020, MAG provided docent-led tours for 5,095 students and educators in 31 school districts and 81 public/private/pre-K schools and homeschool groups. As in previous years, each student received a free pass for a return family visit. MAG also hosted a District Family Night for elementary school students in the Greece Central School District and continued to offer Archaeology Alive!, a school visitation program that served 414 students in grades 6–12, led by MAG educator Sydney Greaves. ABOVE (A): Docent Bonnie Nolen leads a school tour. RIGHT: Students at Rush-Henrietta's Vollmer Elementary School experience Archaeology Alive!



The Expanded Learning Collaboration (ELC), a partnership with the Rochester City School District (RCSD), began its seventh year with weekly in-museum experiences for students at elementary schools #23 and #29. Fiscal year 2020 presented new challenges. School #45 was unable to participate because of funding issues, and the entire spring module had to be cancelled because of the COVID shutdown. As the school year ended, MAG and RCSD had already begun working together to restart the program, which was popular with teachers and students alike.

Teachers were once again well served through Especially for Educators, art-based professional development workshops, as well as through materials available in the Teacher Resource Center in MAG's Charlotte Whitney Allen Library. ABOVE (B): Kaitlyn Roney of the Arts Center of Rochester led a sold-out workshop on Teaching Art to Children with Special Needs, one of four programs held this year on different topics. Following the COVID shutdown, staff also quickly accommodated requests for virtual class visits, as well as launched a new Remote Learning & Homeschooling webpage.

Area colleges figured prominently in innovative programming, as MAG served 2,721 students from the University of Rochester and other area institutions. MAG collaborated with UR River Campus on a curriculum-focused, museum-visit program for 280 first-year students in the Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program. And the Eastman School of Music Freshman Colloquium, led by ESM faculty and MAG curator Nancy Norwood, was an opportunity for 188 students to explore connections between visual art and music. ABOVE (C): The Eastman School of Music continued its popular Third Thursday Concerts showcasing MAG's Baroque organ.

Several programs focused on art, wellness and accessibility. Art and Observation, launched in fiscal year 2003, was designed by MAG and UR's Division of Medical Humanities to help future physicians use the visual arts to develop skills of observation; this year, the program served 436 students from UR's School of Medicine and Dentistry and School of Nursing, Nazareth College, Rochester Institute of Technology, and St. John Fisher College. ABOVE (D): Nursing students explore the collection with educator Susan Daiss, who holds a joint appointment at MAG and URMC. In July, MAG welcomed 25 individuals in town for the July conference of the American Council of the Blind.



The participants, most of whom were blind or partially sighted, enjoyed touch tours led by MAG docents and learned about art through the Verbal Description Method (LEFT). Visitors with memory issues and their care partners visited through Meet Me at MAG, an ongoing partnership with the Alzheimer's Association. And MAG collaborated with Eastman Performing Arts Medicine to create Digital Care Packages, a series of videos and slideshows designed as a brief respite from the workplace for UR Medical Center staff.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



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As in recent years, MAG relied increasingly on social media—mainly Facebook Events and Instagram—to connect with new audiences and expand programs for area GenXers and Millennials. More than 2,000 visitors attended MAGsocial programs including DeTOURS and Cocktails with Creatives (below); \$5 Fridays; and Passion Projects, which marked the return of a popular series highlighting innovative creators from the community. Perhaps most popular of all was an annual crowd favorite—the sold out, late night Museum of the Dead Halloween party. ABOVE (A): At Museum of the Dead, director Jonathan Binstock, back row center, poses with revelers. RIGHT: One partygoer did a take on George Condo’s *The Clown*.



DeTOURS, a monthly series of Museum Hack-style experiences, remained popular. In fiscal year 2020, themes included Things Not to Discuss During Dinner; Women (and Witches) Who Read; MAG Heartthrobs; and Death, Decay and Discovery in the Ancient World. ABOVE (B): In March 2020, RPO music director Ward Stare led a sold out DeTOUR in which he discussed his most—and least—favorite pieces in the collection.



At two Cocktails with Creatives events, guests mingled with museum staff and local influencers—MAG “RocStars”—who helped get the word out to their followers on social media. In spring 2020, artists Christy Roushey (LEFT), John Bertolone and Quajay Donnell brought their unique perspectives to the February event.

MAG continued to reach out to underserved audiences and engage visitors from diverse backgrounds. A series of free events, for visitors of all ages, celebrated African American culture, Hispanic culture, and Pride Month; a fourth event, celebrating Asian Pacific American heritage, had to be cancelled during the COVID shutdown. MAG also hosted a community Kwanzaa Celebration in December. ABOVE (C): This year’s African American Heritage Celebration attracted 1,336 visitors, the most in recent memory. RIGHT: The 1,265 visitors for this year’s Hispanic Heritage Celebration set an attendance record for the event.



During fiscal year 2020, MAG continued offering touch tours for visitors who are blind or partially sighted, and ASL tours for members of the Deaf community. In addition, MAG introduced a number of programs and Creative Workshop classes in conjunction with *De’VIA: Deaf View/Image Art* (EXHIBITIONS, page 2), which was organized by MAG in partnership with RIT’s National Technical Institute for the Deaf.

MAG continued to offer free museum admission for up to four people presenting a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card. And MAGconnect, introduced in 2016, continued to offer free transportation, complimentary admission, an engaging tour, and a one-year MAG membership to community residents of limited financial means.

In June 2020, MAG helped spread awareness that Art is Resistance and Black Lives Matter through two street banners designed and created in collaboration with local arts organization Project A.I.R.

VOLUNTEERS

MAG's corps of 1,175 volunteers represented one of the highest levels of participation of any museum in the country. Included in this number are members of the Board of Managers (page 1), MAG docents (page 4) and Gallery Council.



Since its founding in 1940, the Council has supplied countless volunteer hours and raised \$4 million and counting for MAG programs and exhibitions; included in this figure is \$75,650 contributed in fiscal year 2020. The group supported the season's two biggest exhibitions, as a lead sponsor of *The Path to Paradise: Judith Schaechter's Stained-Glass Art* and an associate sponsor of *Alphonse Mucha: Master of Art Nouveau*. The Council also continued its sponsorship of the Celebration Series community days (page 4) and supported MAG's Creative Workshop.

Council volunteers were active supporters of MAG's mission, particularly at THE STORE @ MAG (ABOVE), where 50 volunteers provided expert sales assistance, customer service, and merchandising support; and at the 19th annual Fine Craft Show and Sale, held in November 2019, which highlighted the work of 41 award-winning artists from 11 states. Sadly, the Council's biggest fundraiser, the Art and Treasures Sale, had to be cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic. RIGHT: At this year's Fine Craft Show, ceramist Hideaki Miyamura was awarded Best in Show by MAG director Jonathan Binstock and juror Loretta Fritsch.



DONORS AND SPONSORS



Without the support of its members, supporters and community organizations, MAG could not continue offering a wide range of programs and exhibitions. Their investment in the arts was especially critical in the months following the unexpected shutdown due to COVID. While all gifts, large and small, are deserving of our gratitude, in this publication we recognize the following organizations and individuals who donated \$25,000 or more in fiscal year 2020.

- Organizations: Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation, the William and Sheila Konar Foundation, the Henry Luce Foundation, Inc., M&T Bank, Partners + Napier Rochester, the Sands Family Foundation, and Louis S. and Molly B. Wolk Foundation. ABOVE: For the 26th consecutive year, M&T Bank served as presenting sponsor of the Clothesline Festival, MAG's largest and longest-running fundraiser. In 2019 the event attracted more than 19,000 visitors and surpassed its goal by raising \$188,000 for MAG's operating budget.
- Individuals and bequests: estate of Alva H. Angle, Douglas S. Bennett and Abigail J. Bennett, estate of William L. Bristow, Margaret M. and David J. Burns, estate of Ernestine M. Chandler, Mark H. Chaplin and John Strawway, Estate of Nancy Curnutt, Mr. and Mrs. Irwin Engelman, Joan L. Feinbloom, Robert B. and Pamela M. Goergen, Howard and Wilma Kaye, estate of Dr. James E. Koller, estate of Marianne T. Koller, Dr. Dawn F. Lipson, Dr. William Maniscalco and Patricia A. Fishman, Sharon Napier and Robert A. Napier, Paul Mark and Pamela Miller Ness, the Robert and Mary Sproull Charitable Fund, estate of Rosamond A. Tota, estate of Daan M. Zwick, and an anonymous donor.

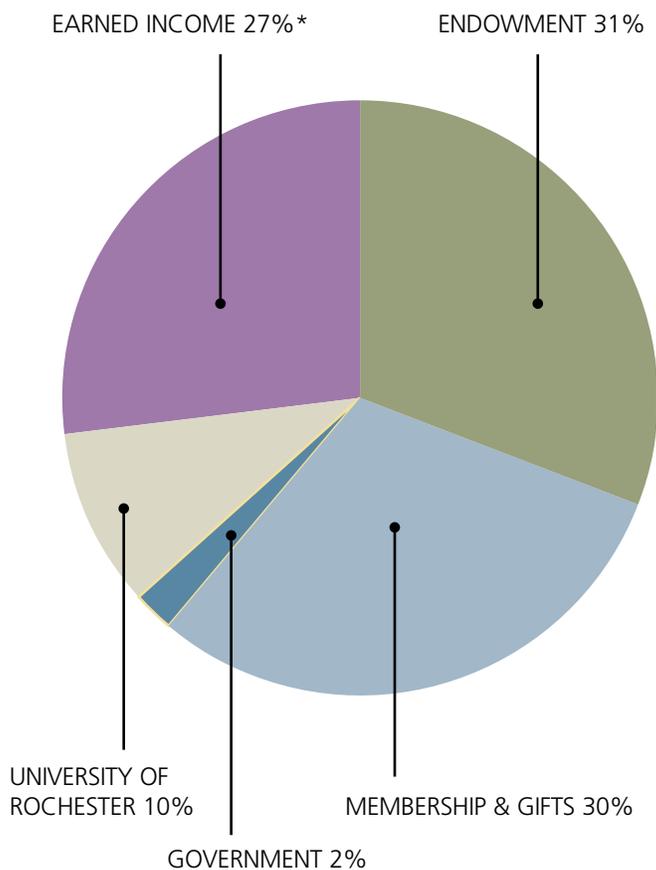
Many of these gifts recognized longstanding connections to MAG. One such gift honors Patricia A. Fishman, a longtime art consultant for the Shoestring Gallery and MAG docent who traced her love of art back to childhood visits to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. After Fishman was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease at a tragically young age, the docents continued to reach out to her, and in December 2019, her husband, Dr. William Maniscalco, established an endowed fund in her honor supporting educational endeavors at MAG. RIGHT: The couple at a reception in their honor hosted in February 2020 by the docents, just a few months before she passed away.



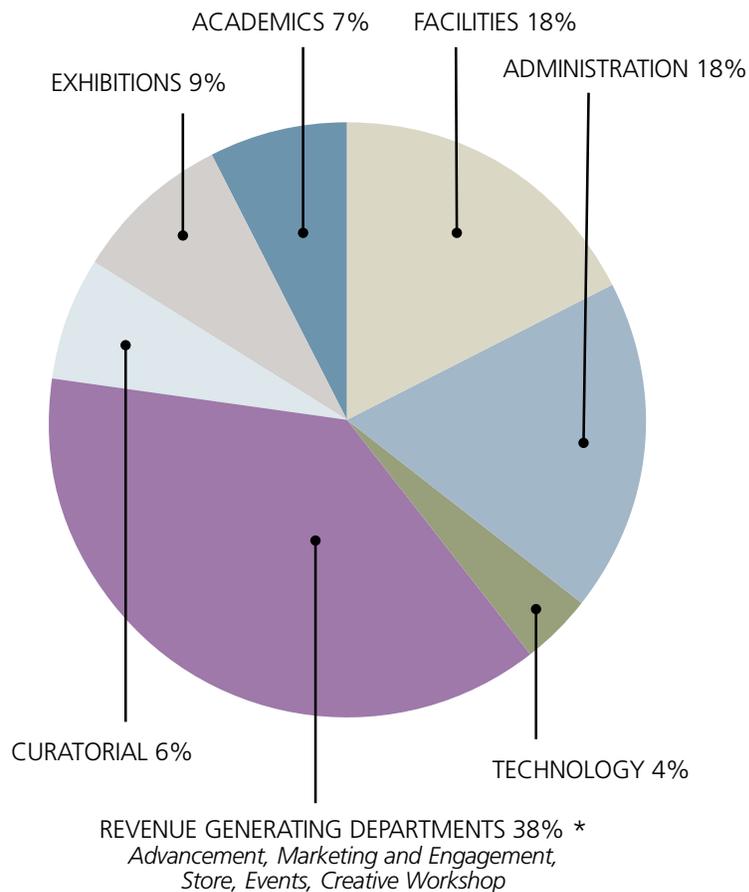
MEMORIAL ART GALLERY *of the University of Rochester*

FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2020

REVENUES \$7,831,285



EXPENSES \$7,831,388



THE YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

179,878 visitors came to MAG
6,629 schoolchildren & adults
 enjoyed docent-led tours
4,501 member households supported MAG
1,175 individuals volunteered **27,018** hours

For more information about this financial summary contact Sheryl Burgstrom, director of finance, sburg@mag.rochester.edu (585.276.8909)

* combined total



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