



MEMORIAL ART GALLERY
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | STRATEGIC PLAN 2020

Founded over 100 years ago, the Memorial Art Gallery (MAG) is considered one of the finest regional art museums in the United States. The permanent collection of more than 12,000 works, approximately 6,000 on paper, spans 5,000 years of art history and positions it as a unique educational center committed to broadening understanding of world cultures, art, and history. Under the last Strategic Plan, MAG continued to expand its collection and completed the first phase of a stunning new sculpture park—the Centennial Sculpture Park—that demonstrates the museum’s redoubled effort to warmly welcome the broadest possible audience.

MAG is fortunate to have a strong base of loyal and dedicated donors, members, Board of Managers, volunteers, and staff, including a new director, Jonathan Binstock, who replaced Grant Holcomb in 2014. Membership as of the end of FY15 was 4,521, a solid number for a community the size of Rochester. Annual non-unique visits to MAG average 226,500, 79% of which are for social events and 21% for art exhibitions. Despite the fact that MAG is located in a

challenging economic area, there are numerous reasons for optimism, including the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Council, the selection of Rochester by the federal government as the site for a national Institute for Manufacturing Innovation, and many successful organizations of all sizes. The University of Rochester (UR), which holds MAG in trust for the community of Rochester, is a robust and growing institution and upstate New York’s largest private employer.

The museum world and the art market are undergoing significant, disruptive changes, many of which create opportunities for MAG. For example, digital technologies can enable MAG to raise the profile of and access to its collections and exhibitions for a wider audience. MAG can embrace technology in innovative ways to broaden and engage its audience, much as other museums are doing as shown in the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) publication “Next Practices in Digital and Technology.” A museum of MAG’s quality is well positioned to continue to flourish by taking advantage of changing market dynamics.

MAG’s current demographics are similar to those of many other museums, although preliminary analysis suggests that MAG and other regional museums have lower-than-average engagement across all segments. This Plan reconsiders target demographics in light of US population trends and the ongoing decline in the percentage of US adults who visit museums. NEA data show declining visits to art museums and craft fairs over the last 10 years across all races and ethnicities and all age groups except those over 75. However, the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) indicates that there are approximately 850 million visits each year to US museums, more than attendance for all major league sporting events and theme parks combined.

MAG has excellent longstanding partnerships with local schools. During FY14 and FY15, MAG hosted over 1,400 college and university students and almost 9,500 K-12 students, including 240 students from Rochester City School District (RCSD) School #23 for ten weekly visits of approximately two hours each. This model elementary school academic program was expanded in September 2015 to include Schools #29 and #45, bringing the total number of unique public elementary student visits in this specialized, repeat-visit program to approximately 400 for FY16. MAG’s partnership programs with RCSD



support the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative, particularly the solution area “break the cycle: guarantee our children’s future.”

With MAG’s many strengths there are also weaknesses and threats to keep in mind, some of which present excellent opportunities for growth and improvement. Strengths include the museum’s high-quality collection, affiliation with UR, beautiful, unique facilities and grounds, an abundance of communal event space, and dedicated Board, staff, donors, and volunteers. MAG’s most pressing weaknesses are its financial challenges, insufficient technological resources, and the lack of ethnic, cultural, and generational diversity among its audience, staff, and Board. Clear and immediate opportunities for growth include increasing regional and national awareness of the quality of its collections and programming, communicating MAG’s offerings more widely, and engaging broader segments of the community, including UR. Embracing technology will support and enable MAG’s effort to increase revenue. Threats that present extraordinary challenges include the low number of local art collectors and regional economic issues.



OUR STORY THE BACKGROUND OF THE MAG

MAG embarked on a strategic planning process in January 2015, beginning with a one-page strategy map based on the Balanced Scorecard methodology (BSC). The planning process generated inspiring new mission and vision statements, and defined the MAG's values and strategy.

MISSION

MAG enhances people's lives by cultivating relationships and building community through the direct experience of art and creativity.

VISION

By 2020, MAG will be at the center of the conversation on creativity and a leading example of how an art museum can enrich its community.

VALUES

- We are a force for creativity
- We believe the direct experience of art is relevant to the human experience
- We play a unique role as a trusted steward of knowledge, culture, and authenticity
- We build and promote relationships that enrich our community

STRATEGY

MAG cares for, interprets, and shares art from Ancient times to the present to encourage thinking about creativity and aesthetics.

MAG will build on its distinguished history, strengths, and accomplishments to advance its mission and work towards realizing its new, ambitious, and exciting vision. MAG will continue to grow, preserve and balance its permanent collection, present more high-profile and homegrown exhibitions, and leverage this activity to elevate the museum's local, regional, and national profile.

MAG will further develop its role as an organization that builds community through the direct experience of art by expanding its academic partnerships and further cultivating conversations about art and creativity among a diverse public. MAG will also focus on improving financial sustainability in accordance with UR expectations.

In recent years, MAG has focused on and successfully engaged the Baby Boomer (born 1946-64) and Pre-War (born before 1946) segments of the local population. MAG will continue to grow and rely on strong relations with these demographics. In addition, MAG will reach out aggressively to two new segments: Millennials (born 1981-97) and Generation X (born 1965-80). It is critical to do so during the planning period, as the younger generations increasingly outnumber their predecessors.

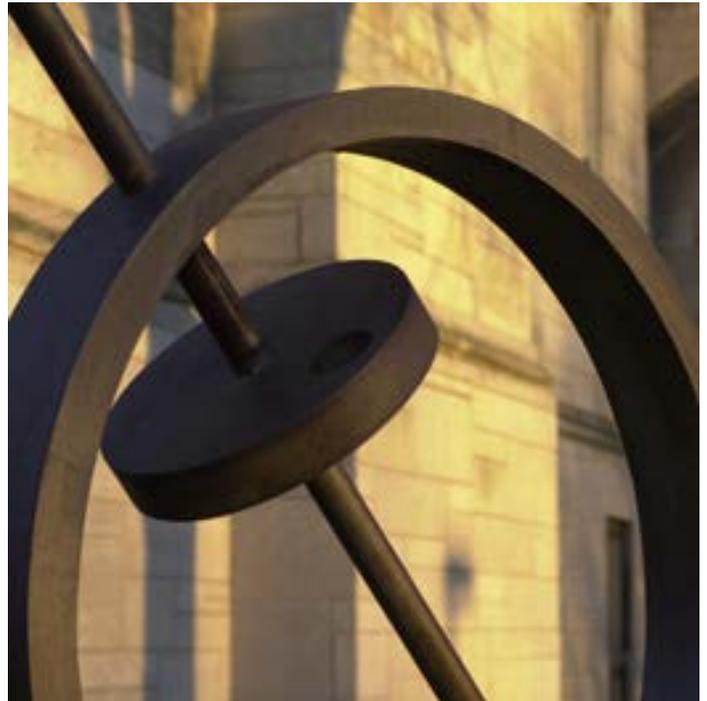
The Rochester area has a sizable combined population of 455,000 Millennials and Generation X representatives, as compared to 314,000 Baby Boomers. Market research confirms that the younger segments are ripe for cultural engagement. MAG's ability to successfully engage Millennials is demonstrated by its Halloween event, "Museum of the Dead," which attracted approximately 900 costumed, paying guests in 2015, a high percentage of whom participated in docent-led tours of the art collection.

In order to engage the new segments effectively, art programming, social programming, and marketing will be customized to attract them. In addition, MAG will develop and execute a technology strategy to meet the expectations of those segments and to take advantage of opportunities reflected by global museum trends.

Executing the Plan demands that MAG increase efforts to take care of its staff by providing more training and improving communication. As MAG broadens and increases its audience,

its facilities will need upgrades and expansion. As always, leadership by the Board of Managers is crucial for MAG to advance its mission, make progress towards its vision, and to meet or exceed its objectives. Additional considerations for the Board during the execution phase of the Plan include evolving Board membership to provide a diverse range of relevant attributes, skills, and experience, and growing Board giving capacity.

During the strategic planning process, three high-priority Objectives and three key Enablers emerged, as well as associated Strategic Initiatives. The Plan details each Objective, Enabler, and Strategic Initiative, including goals, specific steps, initiative owners, measures, and timeframes for completion. During the execution phase of the Plan, the Strategic Initiatives will be further developed by the respective initiative owners and progress reported to the Board at key milestones.



OUR PLAN

ENGAGE A BROADER AUDIENCE WITH BOTH ART AND SOCIAL OFFERINGS

- Build and balance MAG collection, organize exhibitions to elevate MAG's profile
- Enhance our storage and stewardship capabilities to accommodate the growth of the collection in both traditional and new/digital media
- Develop and execute programs to engage 15% of the local Gen X and Millennial segments and generate net revenue of \$135,000 annually (\$2/head) by 2020.

DEEPEN THE RELATIONSHIPS WITH UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER AND ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Build on and broaden current efforts to engage the University of Rochester community, leveraging University of Rochester's expertise and high profile
- Continue to grow the Rochester City School District elementary repeat-visit programs. We believe that this is our area of maximum impact for under-served youth in Rochester.

IMPROVE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Investigate opportunities to reduce and eliminate the operating deficit
- Generate additional net revenue of \$50,000 per year by 2020
- Manage MAG endowment income draw towards the UR target of 5.5% from current rate of 6.25%
- Launch a new café/restaurant pilot, generating net revenue of \$15,000 per year by 2020

3 OBJECTIVES

EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY

- Establish a Technology Committee, develop a technology strategy, and appoint a Director of Technology to execute the strategy
- Implement a Customer Relationship Management System to manage all customer and prospective customer interaction

TAKE CARE OF MAG RESOURCES, BOTH HUMAN AND PHYSICAL

- Review and update MAG compensation policies and practices; provide training and professional development to staff
- Develop a Facilities Master Plan that addresses the needs of the broader audience that will be engaged during the planning period

INCREASE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY

- Engage selectively in process improvement projects that expand capacity to execute the Plan

3 ENABLERS



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