

YEAR IN REVIEW

FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2019



MAG
MEMORIAL ART GALLERY
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

LEADERSHIP



In June 2019, University of Rochester President Richard Feldman announced the reappointment of Jonathan Binstock to a second five-year term as MAG's Mary W. and Donald R. Clark Director. "His commitment to the museum as a community asset and his dedication to artistic innovation have expanded MAG's collection and enhanced its work with the rest of the University," said Feldman.

Since becoming director in September 2014, Binstock has led successful efforts to achieve the goals outlined in the 2016 Strategic Plan. These include elevating MAG's profile locally, nationally, and internationally; increasing its audience; strengthening its operations and financial sustainability; and carefully stewarding the institution's human resources, collections, and physical plant.

During his tenure, MAG's annual budget has increased 50% from \$5.8 million in fiscal year 2015 to \$8.7 million budgeted for fiscal year 2020. Membership has increased to 5,206 in fiscal year 2019, the first time in a decade to break 5,000. Non-unique annual visitors were up 24% from 225,919 in fiscal year 2015 to 279,431 in fiscal year 2019; and MAG directly engaged about 25% of the University of Rochester's River Campus undergraduate students through a partnership with the first-year Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program, as well as other initiatives. Features and mentions of MAG's exhibitions, programs, and the scholarly work of its staff have earned national and international press coverage, including in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Guardian* (London), *The Art Newspaper*, *Artforum*, *ARTnews*, *Hyperallergic*, NPR, and *Aperture*.

Above: In May 2019, Director Binstock welcomed guests at An Artists' Affair. Among them were Board of Managers President Todd Green (in blue suit) with, to his right, his daughter Olivia. *Photo by John Schlia.*

COLLECTIONS



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C



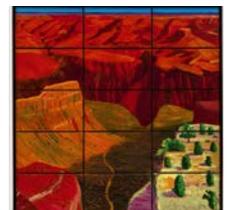
D



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In recent years MAG has initiated a focused program to strengthen modern and contemporary holdings, extend historical and aesthetic narratives in the collection, and enhance the representation of women and minority artists. For fiscal year 2019, new acquisitions included four contemporary works—two draped paintings by Sam Gilliam (A) and *Wandering Weevil* by William Stewart (E), both gifts of the artists; *Bakelite Robot* by Nam June Paik (B); and *Safi* by Sarah Rutherford (C)—as well as *Christ Before Pilate* by 16th-century French artist Nicholas Cordonnoier (D). Isaac Julien's *Lessons of the Hour* (following page) will be permanently installed at MAG at a future date.

David Hockney's spectacular *15 Canvas Study of the Grand Canyon* (right) remains on loan from the Art Bridges Foundation through early December 2019. In May 2019, MAG launched a digital interactive, also supported by Art Bridges, that allows visitors to engage with the work and explore surprising connections. The project was designed and developed by Eboni Jones, Curator of Interpretive Resources, with assistance from Kamilah Robison, UR senior and Andrew W. Mellon Humanities for Life intern.



EXHIBITIONS



A



B



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D

A major goal of the 2016 Strategic Plan was to raise MAG's profile by organizing and presenting exhibitions with new content and scholarship. To this end, every major exhibition during fiscal year 2019 was curated by MAG staff.

A *Monet's Waterloo Bridge: Vision and Process* reunited one of the museum's most iconic works with seven other paintings from the same series now in collections around the country. Organized by MAG, the exhibition attracted nearly 33,000 visitors—double the museum's average—and drove MAG membership to its highest point in a decade. It included interactive installations that shed new light on Monet's creative process as a result of new imaging and materials analysis conducted at Buffalo State University. It also featured a catalog edited by MAG Curator of European Art Nancy Norwood, a tour to two prestigious Northeast museums, and a companion show, *Seeing in Color and Black-and-White*. Photo above and on the cover by Jon Liebherr.

B With *The Surreal Visions of Josephine Tota*, MAG forged new territory by introducing an unlikely, largely self-taught visionary artist whose conventional life in Rochester's Italian immigrant community belied her intense, often tortured interior world. Late in life Tota created harrowing images in egg tempera reminiscent of medieval manuscripts, Renaissance panel paintings, and the work of such Surrealist icons as Frida Kahlo and Salvador Dali. The show was curated by MAG Curator in Charge/Curator of American Art Jessica Marten (pictured), who also authored the catalog.

C With *Isaac Julien: Lessons of the Hour*, MAG saw its three-year media art initiative draw to a close. This final work of the "Reflections on Place" series, which commissioned new art informed by the history, culture, and politics of Rochester, was a multi-screen, multimedia meditation inspired by the life and words of Frederick Douglass, the freed slave and abolitionist who lived and worked in Rochester for 25 years. Of Julien, Consulting Senior Curator of Media Art John G. Hanhardt writes that "there is no artist working today who makes such compelling and powerful statements about global forces shaping history and our world." *Lessons of the Hour* was commissioned and acquired by MAG in partnership with the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, where the exhibition will travel in 2020.

D Other exhibitions that opened during the fiscal year were the *66th Rochester-Finger Lakes Exhibition* and Nancy Jurs's *My Life Has Gotten So Busy that It Now Takes Up All of My Time*, in the Docent Gallery; *Fabric of Survival: The Art of Esther Nisenthal Krinitz* (photo next page), *1969 Turns 50*, and *Modern Czech Photography: A Portfolio*, in the Lockhart Gallery; and Peter Fischli and David Weiss's *The Way Things Go* and Bruce Nauman's *No, No, New Museum*, in the Media Arts Watch gallery. In the Hurlbut Gallery, Sarah Rutherford's room-sized mural, *Her Voice Carries*, was on view through most of the report period. The subject—five exceptional women living and working in different quadrants of the City of Rochester—tied into street murals at five locations. In May 2019, it gave way to another long-term, immersive commission, by Rochester graffiti collective FJA Krew. Pictured: In June 2019, Director Binstock posed with *Rochester-Finger Lakes* award winners.

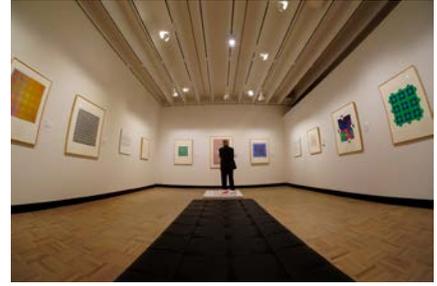
SCHOOLS & COLLEGES



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B



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During fiscal year 2019, MAG provided tours for 11,848 schoolchildren, college students and adults. Of this number, 7,049 were students and educators from more than 36 school districts and 102 public/private/pre-K schools. Each student also received a free pass for a return family visit. Integral to these efforts was MAG's dedicated corps of volunteer docents, which by the end of the report period numbered 95. Of these, 32 were members of the first new docent class (**A**) since 2012; their graduation in June 2019 marked the end of an intensive, year-long training program. Right: Longtime docent Pattie Brody introduces schoolchildren to the collection.



MAG also continued to grow longstanding academic partnerships in response to the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative. These included the Expanded Learning Collaboration (ELC), a partnership with Rochester City School District (RCSD). In its sixth year, ELC offered 511 students from three elementary schools (#s 23, 29, and 45) eight weekly in-museum experiences. Inspired by this success, in January 2019 the program structure was adopted by the George Eastman Museum and Writers and Books to engage sixth graders at School #23.

B The powerful works in *Fabric of Survival: The Art of Esther Nisenthal Krinitz* offered an opportunity for community dialogues. The artist, age 12 when the Nazis came to her Polish village, preserved her memories in a series of fabric collages. In fall 2018, students from Rochester International Academy, a magnet school for refugee populations, responded by creating an interactive map and shared their own stories of upheaval and resilience. Pictured: *Passover Matzos* (detail), 1998.

Lessons of the Hour offered such occasions for community programming as a talk by artist Isaac Julien; a teacher inservice where staff from UR's Department of Rare Books and Special Collections shared rare Frederick Douglass memorabilia; two open houses for students and families from the traditionally underserved Greece Central School District; and a special program for members of the Deaf community (next page).

Area colleges figured prominently in innovative exhibition programming. In all, MAG served 2,549 students from the University of Rochester (including River Campus, Eastman School of Music, the School of Medicine & Dentistry, and the School of Nursing) and other area colleges. In conjunction with *Monet's Waterloo Bridge*, MAG and UR collaborated on a series of programs that explored how science and technology have brought new insights into the artist's creative process. In spring 2018, students in "The 21st Century Art Museum," a UR undergraduate course taught by MAG Assistant Curator of Academic Programs Andrew Cappetta, researched and prepared interpretive



materials for the exhibition *Seeing in Color and Black-and-White* (**C**). The long-running Art & Observation program introduced its innovative Five-Question Protocol to more than 500 students at UR's School of Medicine & Dentistry and School of Nursing, Nazareth College, Rochester Institute of Technology, and St. John Fisher College. Other collaborations included a college night in October 2018 and Landscape/Soundscape (pictured left), featuring four Eastman School of Music composers whose new works were inspired by landscapes in MAG's collection.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



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B



C

A In recent years, MAG has relied increasingly on social media—mainly Facebook Events and Instagram—to connect with new audiences and expand programs for area GenXers and Millennials. In fiscal year 2019, these audiences flocked to late-night MAGsocial events such as the annual Museum of the Dead Halloween party (pictured) and Bowie Birthday Bash, and a Game of Thrones-themed evening. *Photo by Ria Tafani.*

B Also successful were monthly DeTOURs (Museum Hack-style experiences), whose collaborators this year included the Humane Society of Greater Rochester, The Little Theatre, fivebyfive modern chamber quintet, and Rochester Chapter of The Distinguished Gentleman's Ride. Pictured is the Pride DeTOUR in July 2018.

In another popular series, Cocktails with Creatives, guests mingled with museum staff and local influencers—MAG “RocStars”—who helped get the word out to their followers on social media. At Cocktails with the Krew in June 2019, members of graffiti collective FUA Krew unveiled their new installation at MAG and were recognized by the Mayor’s office, which declared June 13, 2019 FUA Krew Day in the City of Rochester in recognition of the group’s contributions to art, culture, and education.

MAG continued to reach out to underserved audiences and engage visitors from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds. The free events in this year’s Celebration Series offered visitors of all ages the opportunity to explore African American, Hispanic, and Asian Pacific American culture; Jewish Heritage; and Pride Month. Pictured at right: Performers from Grupo Cultural de Rochester at the Hispanic Heritage Celebration in spring 2019). In January 2019, MAG began offering free museum admission for up to four people presenting a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card. Finally, 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. *Photo by Laura Toribio.*



During fiscal year 2019, MAG introduced new programs for visitors who are blind or partially sighted. In partnership with ABVI, MAG created a new community council of blind/partially sighted individuals to help train docents and staff to lead tours of *Monet’s Waterloo Bridge*. In September 2018, MAG hosted a two-day Verbal Description Workshop for MAG staff and docents, UR students, and area museum educators; led by Marie Clapot of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the group learned about access techniques for blind/partially sighted visitors, with particular emphasis on verbal description and tactile experiences. In spring 2019, Assistant Curator Andrew Cappetta and Senior Associate Susan Daiss oversaw a group of UR mechanical engineering students whose senior design project was a device to make 2-D artwork accessible. MAG also continued to offer ASL tours for the Deaf community, as well as an innovative program (pictured above right) where three interpreters brought the multimedia exhibition *Lessons of the Hour* to life for Deaf audiences.



A



B



C



D

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Founded in 1940, the Gallery Council enjoys a long tradition of volunteering and fundraising for MAG. Among this year's highlights, the Council was a lead sponsor of *Monet's Waterloo Bridge: Vision and Process* and the 66th *Rochester-Finger Lakes Exhibition* and provided support for *Fabric of Survival: The Art of Esther Nisenthal Krinitz*. In addition, the Council continued its sponsorship of the Celebration Series of community days, Creative Workshop scholarships, and the Gertrude Herdle Moore/Isabel Herdle Award at the *Rochester-Finger Lakes Exhibition*.

A Council volunteers were active supporters of MAG's mission, particularly at THE STORE @ MAG, where 30 volunteers provided more than 3,000 hours of sales assistance, customer service, and merchandising support; and at the annual Clothesline Festival. As in recent years, the Council's biggest fundraiser was its Art & Treasures next-to-new sale, followed by the Fine Craft Show & Sale, which featured 40 award-winning artists from nine states. Both events exceeded their profit goals. Pictured: items for sale in THE STORE @ MAG during *The Surreal Visions of Josephine Tota*.

B & C Another major fundraiser, spearheaded by the Board of Managers with staff support, was the third annual edition of An Artists' Affair, held in March 2019 to benefit educational partnerships at MAG. The sold-out gala showcased nine area artists—Gigi Baker, Jappie King Black, Christina Brinkman, Carolyn Dilcher-Stutz & Richard Aerni, Scott Grove, Kurt Ketchum, FUA Krew, and Myung Urso. Pictured: Scott Grove showers guests with confetti; Director Emeritus Grant Holcomb recognizes honorary event chair Essie Germanow. *Photos by John Schlia*.

SPONSORSHIP & AWARDS

MAG exhibitions could not happen without the support of major sponsors and members. Individuals and organizations contributing \$20,000+ in fiscal year 2019 included the William & Sheila Konar Foundation (*Fabric of Survival*); M&T Bank and the Gallery Council (presenting sponsors for *Monet's Waterloo Bridge*); Allen C. & Joyce Boucher, Hurlbut Care Communities, Dr. Dawn F. Lipson, McDonald Family, Riedman Foundation, the Robert L. & Mary L. Sproull Fund, and Woods Oviatt Gilman, LLP (additional support for *Monet's Waterloo Bridge*); the Zell Family and Deborah Ronnen & Sherman Levey (*Lessons of the Hour*); and Mark Falcone & Ellen Bruss, Ford Foundation, VIA Art Fund, and Lori Van Dusen (additional support for *Lessons of the Hour*).

Government support came from the National Endowment for the Arts and Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities (*Monet's Waterloo Bridge*). In November 2018, MAG received two significant grants in support of the upcoming exhibition *Path to Paradise: Judith Schaechter's Stained-Glass Art*—\$200,000 from the Henry Luce Foundation and \$20,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts.

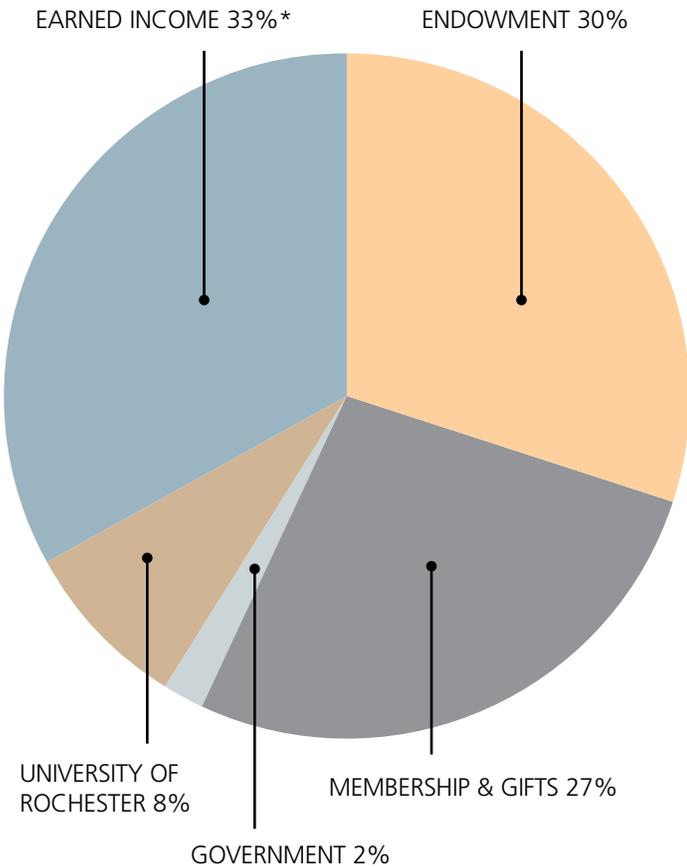
Another grant, announced in September 2018, directly benefited the permanent collection—\$38,500 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to support the conservation of 24 works on paper by Rochester artists Harvey Ellis and M. Louise Stowell.

Many individuals made significant contributions. During fiscal year 2019, MAG received \$947,383 from realized planned gifts, evidence that estate planning can make a difference. Community volunteer Mona Kolko was instrumental in bringing the traveling exhibition *Fabric of Survival* to Rochester. And a generous gift from former docent chair Natalie Ciccone, and her husband, Richard, made possible a long-needed renovation of the docent office (**D**).

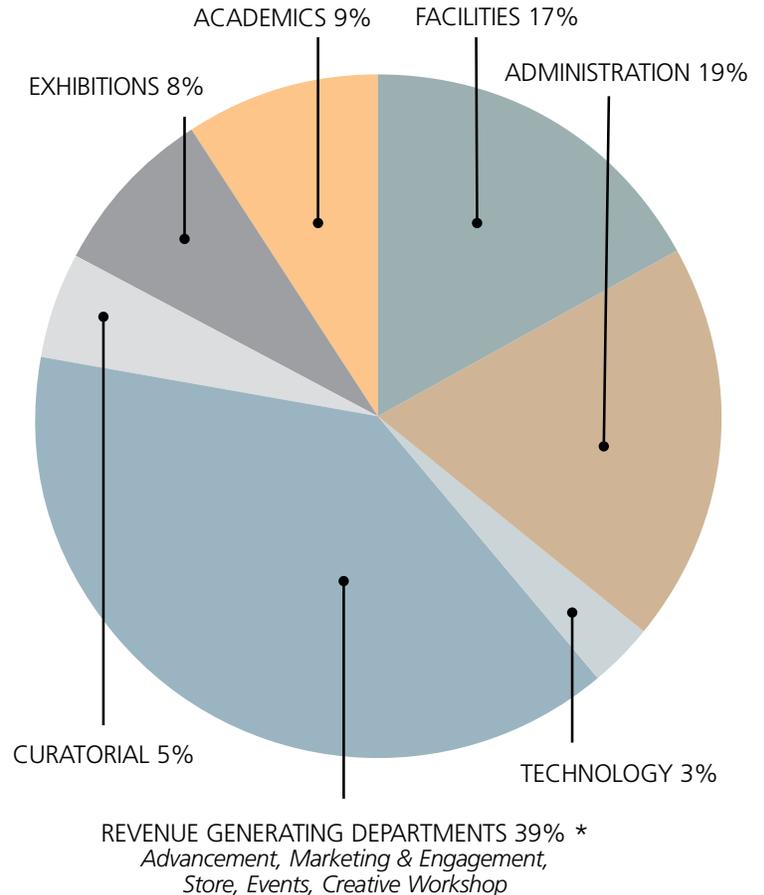
MEMORIAL ART GALLERY *of the University of Rochester*

FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2019

REVENUES \$8,546,886



EXPENSES \$8,536,669



THE YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

279,431 visitors came to MAG
11,848 schoolchildren & adults enjoyed docent-led tours
5,194 individual members supported MAG
1,206 individuals volunteered **44,512** hours



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

*gross