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Let’s get started!
CAPE Origin Story

In the summer of 2014, Mississippi welcomed the return of the courageous souls who volunteered to register voters here fifty years earlier. In partnership with the Freedom Summer Volunteers Reunion Committee, the Mississippi Museum of Art mounted two exhibitions: This Light of Ours: Activist Photography during the Civil Rights Movement; and Murder in Mississippi, Norman Rockwell’s haunting and uncharacteristic painting of the murders of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner outside of Philadelphia, Mississippi, at the beginning of Freedom Summer. The impact of those exhibitions on the Museum cannot be underestimated:

- the reception of the community was thunderous;
- the Museum made new and lasting community partnerships;
- visitors who had previously not felt welcome here became friends, members, and ongoing participants;
- and the families and volunteers involved in Mississippi’s Civil Rights Movement indicated feelings of gratification and healing as a result of the entire community’s outpouring of praise and thankfulness.

Also during that summer, my family and I visited an exhibition, Witness: Art and Civil Rights in the Sixties, at the Brooklyn Museum. The exhibition was a stunning display of art by our country’s most important modern artists who were deeply affected by events happening in our home state during that decade. As I wept in response to the emotional impact of the artwork, I also determined that such exhibitions should not only happen ABOUT Mississippi but also IN Mississippi. Further, I vowed to work so that artists and curators addressing events in, or ideas about, our state should be compelled to spend time in our state to experience the context in which racial politics and unequal economic systems were built and continue to inform daily life.

In my attempts to learn more about the conceptual beginnings of the Witness exhibition, I asked to meet with one of the curators, Terry Carbone, who had recently become the American Art Program Director at the Henry Luce Foundation. In what I have since learned is a typically generous and supportive gesture, Terry encouraged my thinking and invited the Museum to submit a proposal to the Luce Foundation to establish a working partnership with Tougaloo College to share our collections and activate conversations around art and civil rights. That academic partnership confirmed the importance of honest conversations IN Mississippi ABOUT Mississippi. We knew the conversations had to extend from the curatorial offices into the hearts and minds of people who walked into the museum and ultimately include people beyond the museum.

That collaboration between Tougaloo College and the Museum created the Center for Art and Public Exchange (CAPE). The W. K. Kellogg Foundation generously supported a proposal for a three-year launch of a new area of work at the Museum dedicated to exploring ideas about race and equity as inspired by looking closely at works of art. Jed Oppenheim, the helpful Program Director at the Kellogg Foundation, not so subtly suggested that perhaps our professional staff, all expertly trained in art history, education, and administration, would benefit from training about the most responsible ways to elicit and manage difficult conversations in the museum galleries. So, as we peeled back the onion, from outward-facing public programs to inward investigations into our staff capacities and relationships, we moved more intimately into the heart of equity at all levels of the Museum. And that journey will continue and will increase our integrity at each step.

We have been incredibly fortunate with the soulful humans who have produced this work, learned volumes, and taught even more. Our founding CAPE Director, Julian Rankin, has the intellect, heart, and creativity to help build something from scratch in a meaningful and engaging way. His successor Monique Davis was, from my perspective, born to do this work. With the soul of an artist, a teacher’s discipline, and a lifetime committed to racial equity, she has built an organism with structure, flexibility, emotion, and intellect combined. Together we’ve invited national and local advisors who strengthen every part of our
work. We have progressed to the point of adding an Artistic Director, Ryan Dennis, whose life has also been committed to advancing the work of artists of color while placing them deep in the heart of the communities where she works.

The Museum’s staff and trustees inspire me every day. They have not only encouraged the risk-taking incumbent on a new initiative; they have personally engaged in the soul-searching and intimate responsibility that accompany the investigations we’ve launched here. My life has been changed by this journey with my colleagues and museum visitors and partners. I continue to be indebted to Terry Carbone for her brilliant exhibition and for encouraging me continuously to move forward with strength and clarity. She is central to the origin of this story and remains a guide today.

Betsy Bradley
Director
“That’s the nature of representation: every time we represent something, we alter it and slightly change it. And so, with that as my foundation, understanding that it’s always fictional to some degree, I give myself a certain freedom to really explore and ask myself questions. What might not have been understood at that time? What might have been hidden at that time? What narrative in this particular image wasn’t the primary image, but it is really important? That is really interesting to me, and then I try to tease that out as much as I can.”

Titus Kaphar,
visual artist
W.K. Kellogg Grant

CAPE would not exist without the support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and consequently, it is worthwhile to share some details to provide historical context. The Kellogg grant proposal, written by the Executive Director, Betsy Bradley, in July of 2017, requested $1,398,005 to create and sustain the CAPE initiative for three years. The grant’s goal was to use original artworks, exhibitions, programs and engagements with artists to increase understanding and inspire new narratives in contemporary Mississippi. More specifically, the grant funded:

- Art acquisitions
- Staff salaries for the CAPE Team (Managing Director, Executive Director, Director of Interpretation, Curator of the Permanent Collection)
- State and National Artist Residencies
- Project Supplies
- Travel
- Evaluation
- Staff Equity Training

When the grant proceeds were received in October 2017, we were faced with some big questions. For example, how do we distill CAPE’s themes and programmatic initiatives into goals with measurable outcomes, and, philosophically, how will the institution change from what we learn?

Defining Grant Goals

The grant proposal was analyzed by the CAPE Team with Brocade Studio’s support (See evaluation section in this chapter, for more details about Brocade), and each activity, outcome, strategy, evaluation method and data set was noted (See Appendix #2). The team examined the deliverables and initiatives to determine unifying themes and common threads. This process was iterative and took place over a series of weeks. During the discussions, we identified internal and external stakeholders that would be invested in the success of CAPE and realized the importance of helping the larger staff understand the grant and its associated goals. Furthermore, the entire staff would be receptive to experimentation and learning. The goals were as follows:

1. Transform the Museum internally through staff training.
   
   We selected the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation (WWIRR) (https://www.winterinstitute.org/) as the appropriate partner because of their connection to Mississippi and their emphasis on sharing stories to build trust and empathy. WWI has three programming arms:

   WWIRR has three programming arms:
   - Community Building using The Welcome Table™ process to help communities heal and solve problems.
   - Youth Engagement through the Summer Youth Institute, which teaches young people the value of diversity and builds leadership and advocacy skills.
   - Policy and Civic Engagement thru Rethink Mississippi™, a policy and civic engagement platform that focuses leaders and their constituents on the need for a future based in equity.

   The objective of the training was to increase our staff’s capacity to have conversations about race and equity using best practices and centering the visitor’s lived experience. You will see more about this process in Chapter 2. The CAPE team acknowledged that our staff had traditional expertise for museums such as curation, conservation, marketing, education, and donor engagement; however, the skills needed to engage in conversations about race and identity did not exist staff-wide.
The training took place during the three-year grant period, and the Managing Director developed the goals along with WWiRR. The core of the curriculum was The Welcome Table™ process which uses storytelling to build empathy and deepen trust. The initial sessions included the definition of key terms (equity/diversity/inclusion/oppression), historical analysis, and team building activities to ensure that staff had shared understandings.

2. Transform the Museum audience by increasing participation in underrepresented communities in our visitorship and membership.

Transform the Museum audience by increasing participation in underrepresented communities in our visitorship and membership. This metric was the easiest to gather quantitative data for because it is based on zip codes and other demographic data (race/age/ethnicity), collected by our front-line visitor services staff. Our current membership database platform, Altru (a Blackbaud platform), had a specific prompt in the ticketing system that requested zip codes which made this easy and seamless to collect. Alternatively, our process for collecting demographic data was based on visual observation, which is not ideal because it relies on the perceptions of front line staff, which could be inaccurate and affected by implicit bias. We also participated in the annual American Alliance of Museums (AAM) survey, where participants self-identify age, ethnicity, gender, and income levels. Our data from those sources showed that our membership was predominantly White, middle-aged women with a college degree or higher who lived in North Jackson and the surrounding affluent suburbs. Our goal was to have a more accurately representative audience in alignment with the demographics of Mississippi and, more specifically, Jackson, where we are located. The Jackson population is 82% African American, 16% White, and 2% Hispanic, South Asian. The demographics of the state are 57% White 38% Black.

3. Inspire personal transformation and civic action.

Inspire personal transformation and civic action. As the CAPE Team considered this goal, we envisioned increased advocacy for social justice causes, increased interest in participation in the local and state governance processes, increased empathy and understanding. In hindsight, we did not clearly define civic action and did not determine ways to measure and capture that data. Thus this goal was the most aspirational of the four. We did, however, spend significant time and resources determining ways to measure and evaluate personal transformation through the Longitudinal Study and the Online Panel (See Chapter 7). It was also necessary to communicate the importance of collecting qualitative and quantitative data to the entire staff to document the impact of programming and exhibits. The past practice of qualitative data gathering included comment books and annual surveys, which would not be sufficient to substantiate the grant goals.

4. Change the narrative of Mississippi by showcasing the complex and nuanced stories of a state that is grappling with a painful past and creating a more inclusive future by highlighting stories that have not been showcased in other museum settings.

Change the narrative of Mississippi by showcasing the complex and nuanced stories of a state that is grappling with a painful past and creating a more inclusive future by highlighting stories that have not been showcased in other museum settings. “Mississippi’s story is America’s story”– Betsy Bradley. The painful past of Mississippi includes the forced removal of indigenous peoples, the enslavement of Africans, Jim Crow, and state-sanctioned terrorism in the forms of lynchings, and those stories have often been told from the perspective of the dominant White culture. CAPE provided the opportunity to shift the identity of the primary narrator to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) voices that have traditionally been underrepresented in art museums. However, there is also a legacy of resilience, resourcefulness and joy that requires telling by diverse voices and is foundational to creating an inclusive Mississippi.
Items to consider when thinking about goals

1. **Spend the time needed to define and clearly communicate your goals for the project.** Aspirational and achievable goals will motivate and excite your team and be an important touchstone to refer to when the change process becomes challenging.

2. **What documents/resources currently exist that can help clarify the goals for your initiative/program?** Documents that have been adopted by your Trustees and staff provide an entry point for the expansion of previously agreed-upon ideas. However, if those documents are outdated, this could also be an opportunity to invest time and resources into updating and reflecting your current realities.

The items listed below were updated during the implementation of the CAPE grant. They were taken into account during the life cycle of the grant and are detailed in later paragraphs:

- Value Statement
- Mission Statement
- Vision Statement
- Strategic Plan

**Evaluation Strategy**

The Museum contracted with Brocade Studio to create an evaluation framework (Appendix #2) for CAPE based on the four goals stated above. Brocade Studio is the planning division of Madge Bemiss, Architect. Along with Glavé and Holmes Architecture, she designed the landscape (Madge Bemiss Architect) and building (Glavé and Holmes Architecture) for the Mississippi Museum of Art in 2007, formerly located in the Mississippi Art Center. The landscape design included the Art Garden, a performance space and an outdoor park, which were key elements of the Museum design because it created a green space that enhanced the livability of downtown Jackson. Madge’s outdoor design also provided the Museum a platform to fully live into its 2007 mission of being a “museum without walls.” During the design process, Madge became intimately familiar with the Museum’s strategic priorities and mission which were ultimately reflected in her green space design. This relationship, combined with the Brocade Studio’s expertise in design thinking and strategic planning, made Brocade Studio an ideal partner for assisting in developing the CAPE evaluation and new (2019) Strategic Plan.

The primary data sources considered for the evaluation were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Money</th>
<th>Project Time</th>
<th>Staff Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Longitudinal Study</td>
<td>Expensive (over $5K)</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Required significant staff coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Panel</td>
<td>Expensive (over $20k)</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>Minimal, Managing Director coordinated Executed by Susie Wilkening Consulting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Interviews</td>
<td>No cost</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>Majority of the staff involved, interviews were less than an hour and conducted annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience Surveys</td>
<td>No cost</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>Some staff coordination required for the development of questions and documenting results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment Books</td>
<td>No cost</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
<td>Some staff time involved in transcribing and analyzing feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As your institution considers evaluation strategies and methods, ask the following questions:

1. Is there a current practice of evaluation for current programming?
2. Are there other analog ways that visitors currently provide data? Comment books?
3. Involve front-line staff in qualitative data collection. This includes security guards, docents, etc. It can be as simple as a visitor quote of the day.
4. If not, consider communicating the importance of building this new practice and keep the initial attempts simple (limit to 3-5 questions). Sample questions are provided in Chapters 4 and 6.

Consistent documentation and evaluation are critical to determine the success of your initiative and to provide data that can inform decision making. Your development team can also use this data to build funding proposals and communicate to your various audiences. The initial investment in equipment and staff training will pay off in the long term.

**Strategic Plan**

CAPE work was underway while MMA’s Strategic Plan was being updated. This context is relevant because the implementation of CAPE and the development of the Strategic Plan informed each other. The values of CAPE (Truth, Transparency and Equity) were included in the Strategic Plan, which was a new practice for the Museum (Appendix 2). The MMA Strategic Plan shares MMA’s vision for the future, communicates our core values, mission and vision, shares an assessment of where we are now, and a plan to reach MMA’s mission, values, and strategic priorities are listed below:

**Mission**
The Mississippi Museum of Art connects Mississippi to the world and the power of art to the power of community.

**Vision**
Committed to honesty, equity and inclusion, the Mississippi Museum of Art is a leader in engaging art, artists and participants in the critical work of reckoning with the past, each other in the present, and envisioning a future without division.

**Values**

**Honesty + Diversity** – Honoring diverse viewpoints, histories and lived experiences that respect differences in the service of increased understanding and empathy.

**Local Relevance + National Distinction** – The Museum pursues deep investigations into Mississippi’s cultural history and produces programs of high quality and relevance that attract new national partners.

**Artworks + Artists** – Museum programs will honor the primacy of artistic objects as sources of meaning and provide opportunities for encounters with artists.

**Excellence + Equity** – Museum programs, exhibitions and collections will value artistic merit while simultaneously dismantling hierarchies of genre and style.

**Trust + Authority** – The Museum values academic scholarship and trusts the voices of people who have lived experiences that deepen the meaning of its exhibitions.

**Warm Welcome + Inclusion** – The Museum will model open hospitality for all people and demonstrate inclusiveness at all levels of its operations and programs.

**Strategic Priorities**

**Local Relevance**: Building trust and partnerships locally

**National Distinction**: Connecting Mississippi to national artists, curators and thought leaders

**Institutional Growth**: Building innovative and aspirational systems of leadership, infrastructure and funding.

**Programmatic Innovation**: Demonstrating innovation and integrity in exhibitions, collections, and programming.

**Wonder**: Inspiring wonder, sharing stories, and expanding imaginations through the power of art.

**Mississippi**: Connecting Mississippians to our culture, our history, our communities and each other.
CAPE Connection to Strategic Plan

Each priority was further described to include challenges and opportunities, winning aspirations, questions to consider, desired outcomes and focus areas. CAPE was specifically mentioned as a focus area for local relevance, programmatic innovation and Mississippi. The following were the tasks for CAPE:

**Local Relevance**

Continuing bold public programs, continuing to connect artists and artworks to social justice issues (Innovation Lab Chapter 3 and Re:Frame Chapter 6)

Continuing supporting communities and artists throughout Mississippi with place-based residencies that are collaborative and explore issues of race and equity (Artist Residencies Chapter 4)

Empowering the Community Advisory Council to influence the development of exhibitions, collections and programs (Community Advisory Council Chapter 5)

**Programmatic Innovation**

Expanding the Innovation Lab and sharing curatorial and programming authority with the Community Advisory Council when making decisions about topics to pursue, design and program and also equipping our curators and educators to assist the Council’s efforts.

**Mississippi**

Evaluating the success of CAPE and determining whether to sunset in 2023, as the work becomes central to MMA’s value and mission.

Empowering the Community Advisory Council and the National Advisory Council to introduce new voices and platforms for storytelling based on the Museum’s collection.

Publishing symposia proceedings to attract future participation by scholars and artists.

Continuing to demonstrate courage in staging exhibitions and programs that connect to Mississippi and inspire hope.

**Language Use**

Be mindful about language when describing audiences and communities that you want to attract. “Marginalized” or “low-resourced” denote a deficit-based approach. Instead, consider untapped, undervalued, or unreached. The framework of popular education pioneered by Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, centers the life experiences of community members and affirms the dignity of everyone. Freire’s model asserts that the essential quest for humanity recognizes our shared human dignity and that systems of oppression disrupt that recognition. Liberation can only be achieved in an educational system that is developed in continuous conversation with the oppressed. As you develop your strategies to connect to communities that are not currently represented in your visitors or membership, evaluate and be honest about your previous attempts and why they succeeded or failed. How do your mission and values connect to the intention to serve and include communities that you are not serving currently? Is there an opportunity to formalize your desire for equity and inclusion? It is important to acknowledge that this is a reciprocal relationship with mutual benefits to your institution and the community with whom you want to connect. Additionally, as you think about data collection practices, please keep accountability in mind by being transparent about using the data and planning a communication strategy to share the data.

As we created the framework to measure progress, document results and build a culture of ongoing evaluation, we realized that we needed to improve our systems and practices.
What we learned:
As we created the framework to measure progress, document results and build a culture of ongoing evaluation, we realized we needed to improve our systems and practices and increase our ability to communicate impact in a way that evoked emotions instead of sharing static facts.

How we are changing:
Incorporating storytelling in our marketing and digital strategies and trained staff how to tell compelling stories.
Consistently communicating the importance of data to staff (both qualitative and quantitative), and have invested time and resources to integrate this practice at all levels of the Museum by engaging Brocade Studios to help us develop a comprehensive data collection strategy that supports our Strategic Plan.
Extending the responsibility for data collection and documentation to the entire staff, not just Visitor Services, Development and the Managing Director of CAPE.

Final Thoughts
Clearly defined goals are foundational to the building of a sustainable, impactful initiative. Consequently, it is also important to make this a collaborative process that includes colleagues from different departments in the Museum. Allow yourself adequate time to deliberate collaboratively and ideally include external stakeholders such as community members and other institutional partners.

Equity training for the staff and the process used to select the training partners will be discussed in the following chapter.
“We all have a sphere of influence. Each of us needs to find our own sources of courage so that we can begin to speak. There are many problems to address, and we cannot avoid them indefinitely. We cannot continue to be silent. We must begin to speak, knowing that words alone are insufficient. But I have seen that meaningful dialogue can lead to effective action. Change is possible.”

Beverly Daniel Tatum,
“Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?”: A Psychologist Explains the Development of Racial Identity
MMA and the CAPE team recognized that staff training was required to develop the skills needed to facilitate conversations in front of artworks centered on race, equity, and identity. Facilitation skills were not part of the standard curriculum (at the beginning of CAPE in 2017) for museum professionals. Consequently, training was needed to ensure that staff had the capacity to navigate conversations in front of artworks about race and equity issues and could operate from the point of integrity. Training would also provide a shared understanding of vocabulary, history, and tools to handle potentially difficult internal conversations with each other and with visitors. Additionally, to sustain institutional change, we would need to operate from a place of integrity, which for CAPE means operating from a place of authenticity, vulnerability, and enduring curiosity about the lived experiences of others. We intend to model those qualities and inspire our visitors to become curious about different ways of seeing.

At the beginning of the grant cycle (10/1/17), we employed 25 full-time staff and approximately 18 part-time staff, which included gallery guides, front desk workers, and security, and store staff. Sixty percent of our full-time staff was White (40% Black), and our part-time staff was 55% Black/African American and 45% White. The demographic composition of the staff made it extremely important to ensure that the curriculum fully addressed racialized perspectives (people view the world based on key identifiers, including race, ethnicity and gender) that would be present and created an opportunity to define the core principles embedded in the training, which were mutual respect and the willingness to listen and learn. A training partner who had experience building trust and was open to embracing our core principles was a priority. Two trainers were selected to take this journey with us, and each had complementary but unique areas of expertise. The Liz Lerman Critical Response Process℠ focused on a system of observation and inquiry by the visitor, and the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation (WWIRR) focused on creating shared understandings when discussing race and equity issues.

Before discussing the trainers more fully, it is important to note that in 2017, people in the U.S. were having conversations about Confederate monuments, recovering from the trauma in Charlottesville, and the Whitney was dealing with a public outcry in reaction to *Open Casket* by Dana Schutz (a White woman), which depicted Emmett Till, a Black 14 year-old boy who was lynched by two White men in Mississippi in 1955. The resulting controversy was articulated by a mixed-race U.K.-born artist Hannah Black, who stated, “It’s not acceptable for a white person to transmute Black suffering into profit and fun.” Hannah Black also mounted a campaign to remove the painting from the Biennial and have the painting destroyed so that it could not be sold or displayed in other institutions. In this environment, MMA was preparing to commemorate the bicentennial of Mississippi with *Picturing Mississippi: 1817–2017: Land of Plenty, Pain and Promise*, which included 175 works by more than 100 artists. Accompanying that exhibition was a contemporary exhibit, *White Gold*, by Thomas Sayre – an immersive installation that depicted large-scale abstracted images of cotton along with large slabs of earth (*White Gold*).

As the Leadership Team discussed the interpretive plans and marketing strategy and considered the current public relations environment for Museums, they realized that MMA did not have a strategy to deal with potential backlash from its African American patrons. This emerging understanding was crystallized when a Black staff member shared their family’s painful relationship to cotton and land during a staff meeting about the developing interpretive plan. This courageous act of sharing a painful and personal story created a deeper understanding of the potential impact for Black visitors whose histories were touched by cotton. The CAPE Team immediately began meeting with Black Community Leaders about the exhibit and had the artist participate in many of those meetings. As a result, the interpretive plan was expanded to include spaces for reflection and introspection for visitors that the exhibit may have impacted.

(Hear a podcast from Creative Placemaking summit here to listen to a fuller discussion)
The Liz Lerman Critical Response Process℠

We selected the Critical Response Process℠ as the first staff training. It was important that the training take place in the actual installation to teach staff how to engage with visitors with respect and empathy as they experienced the artwork – additionally, the programming and evaluation methods needed to reflect the principles of open-ended inquiry. Thus our first training was with Critical Response Practitioners from the Liz Lerman team. The Critical Response Process℠ (CRP), devised by choreographer and MacArthur “Genius Grant” Fellow Liz Lerman, offered ways to respond to the unique challenges of contemporary art. CRP has engaged staff, volunteers, and the public in fresh ways to encounter works at contemporary art centers, including the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, the Contemporary in Baltimore, the Arizona State University Art Museum in Tempe, the Henry Art Gallery at the University of Washington in Seattle, and the Smithsonian’s Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C.

From the Critical Response Process by Liz Lerman℠

The Critical Response Process enables a group of people to uncover their various aesthetic and performance values and, by being patient, apply them to a creative work in progress in a way that pushes the artist’s thinking forward. The Critical Response Process can be applied to almost any kind of creative product: new works or interpretations of existing works in dance theater and other performing disciplines, not to mention writing, visual art, design, planning, public speaking, curriculum development, teaching processes, almost anything a person makes even dessert.

Step 1. Statements of Meaning
Responders state what was meaningful, evocative, interesting, exciting, or striking in the work they have just witnessed.

Step 2. Artist as Questioner
The artist asks questions about the work. In answering, responders stay on topic with the question and may express opinions in direct response to the artist’s questions.

Step 3. Neutral Questions
Responders ask neutral questions about the work, and the artist responds. Questions are neutral when they do not have an opinion couched in them. This step is one of the most fundamental, challenging, and misunderstood steps of the Critical Response Process℠.

Qualities of a neutral question
• One that invites honest reflection rather than defensiveness
• Open-ended
• Something the questioner does not know the answer to
  For example:
  Non-neutral question
  Why do you travel so much on airplanes if you care about the environment?
  Rephrased neutral question
  How does the environmental impact of airplanes influence your travel decisions?

Step 4. Opinion Time
Responders state opinions, given permission from the artist; the artist has the option to say no. CRP℠ is anchored in deep observation, balanced inquiry, and the power of engaged observation and suspended judgment. It supports the sharing of multiple perspectives and the evolution of each individual’s response to a work of art. That philosophy is similar to MMA’s practice of Close Looking as a tool for teaching in the Galleries.
Close Looking at MMA, in its simplest form, is:

- Visitors looking at an artwork for an extended period of time;
- Visitors discussing initial observations and reflections;
- MMA staff asking open-ended questions to encourage discussion;
- Visitors responding to the open-ended questions posed,
- MMA staff providing facts and context about the artwork and asks additional questions about how visitors connect the information shared to their interpretation of the work.

CRP℠ recognizes that opinions can also be understood as works-in-progress. Therefore, the steps listed were adapted to move the focus from an encounter with the artist as a maker to the visitor’s encounter with the art object and their relationship to the object.

The session was designed to:

1. Teach the staff the CRP℠ process;
2. Develop strategies that highlight observation, inquiry, and suspended judgments as a way for visitors to engage with and respond to contemporary art;
3. Practice the applications of CRP℠’s steps and values relative to programming related to White Gold.

In practical terms, the most valuable lesson for staff based on the feedback received was learning to ask non-judgmental questions when engaging visitors about an artwork. In addition, the role play in the midst of the artwork increased staff’s comfort level with being able to engage with visitors. The role play involved having staff members act as a visitor with challenging questions about the work and another staff person responding to the questions using the CRP℠ process principles and open-ended dialogue.

For example:

Visitor: Why does the Museum have an exhibit about cotton when it has such painful memories for so many?

Staff Member Response: Would you like to say more about why this work might evoke that response?

The William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation (WWIRR)

The William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation (WWIRR) was formally created in 1999 and named in honor of the Honorable William F. Winter, who had been crucial to its founding. WWIRR grew out of One America in the 21st Century, known as the President’s Advisory Board on Race, an initiative created by President Bill Clinton in 1997. Among President Clinton’s seven appointees to his One America advisory board was the Honorable William F. Winter, Mississippi’s 58th governor, from 1980–1984. William Winter was a champion of high-quality public primary education for all Mississippians regardless of color or class and was instrumental in passing the Mississippi Education Reform Act of 1982.

WWIRR’s philosophy and approaches are inspired by organizing methods used during the Civil Rights Movement, specifically drawing inspiration from the Free Southern Theater (FST), started on Tougaloo’s College Campus in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1963-1964. The founding members, Doris Derby, Jon O’Neal (both field secretaries for SNCC), and Gilbert Moses (student leader), took theater productions throughout the Deep South and used the art form as a tool for activism and organizing. A central practice of FST was the Story Circle Process, which was developed to engage audiences after performances and share the importance of participating in the voting process. FST was the cultural organizing arm of SNCC. WWIRR’s connection to Mississippi’s history and grounding in community organizing practices, including storytelling, made WWIRR the ideal second partner for the staff training.
WWIR Training components (excerpted from their training proposal)

1. On-the-Job Training: A combination of observation, explanation and practice, will motivate staff by providing hands-on opportunities to practice, thereby creating a greater level of confidence. MMA will facilitate dialogue sessions with WWIRR staff on hand to observe and provide guidance. The WWIRR team will create scenarios (based on conversations with the staff about typical visitor comments) and have staff members participate in role play with one staffer acting as the visitor and another staffer acting as an MMA employee. The practice sessions will be conducted in the Galleries, in front of artworks, to make the experience as realistic as possible.

2. Presentations: Structured learning sessions conducted by WWIRR staff and partners will include live instruction as well as video presentations. The video presentations will feature scholars, sociologists, and authors that have been working in this discipline, such as Tim Wise (author of nine books, most notably his memoir, White Like Me: Reflections on a Race from a Privileged Son), Robin DiAngelo, Ph.D. (author of White Fragility) and Dr. Joy DeGruy (author of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America’s Legacy of Injury and Healing).

3. Group Discussions: Open discussions about things observed or learned during the sessions. This time will enable individual staff to voice their respective ideas and receive feedback from others. This process will be held in accordance with the Welcome Table™ protocols explained in further detail in the following paragraph.

Training methods

The foundational practice of the WWIRR training is the Welcome Table™ process, which Story Circle process inspired. WWIR’s work began in rural counties of Mississippi when they were called to facilitate discussions in communities impacted by the violence and terrorism of the Civil Rights era, including Neshoba County, the site of the Freedom Summer murders of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner in 1964; McComb, which was known as the “Bombing Capital of the World” in 1964, with a deep history of civil rights organizing and White resistance to it; and, east Tallahatchie County, where Emmett Till’s killers were unjustly acquitted by an all-White jury in 1955. Deeply personal impact stories were shared among Black and White community members as a way to build bridges of empathy and understanding. This early community building—work informed by the Story Circle Process and expanded to facilitate difficult conversations in communities resulted in the Welcome Table™ methodology. The practice is elegantly simple and deeply impactful. At its essence, participants sit in a circle and respond to a prompt. Each person gets the same amount of time to respond.

Welcome Table™ Guideposts are the ground rules developed by WWIRR and are used to hold community meetings and other types of training (Reproduced with permission from WWIRR).

1. Be present and welcoming. Be 100% present. Set aside the usual distractions of things undone from yesterday, things to do tomorrow. Bring all of yourself to the work and practice hospitality. We all learn more effectively in spaces that welcome us. Welcome others to this place and this work, and presume that you are welcomed.

2. Listen deeply to learn. Listen intently to what is said; listen to the feelings beneath the words. Listen to yourself also. Strive to achieve a balance between listening and reflecting, speaking and acting. You will determine the extent to which you want to participate in our discussions and activities.

3. No fixing. Each of us is here to discover our own truths, to listen to our own inner journey. We are not here to help right another’s wrong, to “fix” or “correct” what we perceive as broken or incorrect in another member of the group. Be a community of learners: set aside perfectionism and fear of “messing up.”
4. Suspend judgment and assumptions and seek understanding. Set aside your judgements. By creating a space between judgments and reactions, we can listen to each other and ourselves more fully, and thus our perspectives, decisions and actions are more informed. Our assumptions are usually invisible to us, yet they under-gird our worldview, and therefore, our decisions and actions. By identifying our assumptions, we can then set them aside and open our viewpoints to greater possibilities.

5. Speak your truth and respect the truth of others. Say what is in your heart, trusting that your voice will be heard and your contribution respected. Your truth may be different from, even the opposite of, what another in the circle has said. Speaking your truth is not debating with, or correcting, or interpreting what another has said. Own your truth by speaking only for yourself, using “I” statements.

6. Maintain confidentiality. Create a safe space by respecting the confidential nature and content of discussions held in the circle stays here; what is learned in the circle leaves here. Everyone gets to tell their own story for themselves.

7. Respect silence. Silence is a rare gift in our busy world. After you or someone else has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words. Look inward and listen to yourself in the silence.

8. When things get difficult, turn to wonder. If you find yourself disagreeing with another, becoming judgmental, shutting down in defense, try turning to wonder: “I wonder what brought her to this place?” and “I wonder what my reaction teaches me?” and “I wonder what he’s feeling now?” You do not have to agree with another’s story, but you do have to respect their right to tell their own story.

9. Trust the circle. In the circle, all voices are valued equally. All gifts are welcomed and respected. Within each circle is the genesis of renewal and community well-being. The circle can be the instrument for creating a new community narrative for the sake of our children and grandchildren.

The Welcome Table™ is one of many versions of Community Agreements on the internet. Most of them have the following similarities:

• Focus on listening and mutual respect
• Consider intention and impact
• Encourage authenticity and vulnerability
• Be open to learning

**Compare and contrast WWIRR and CRP℠ Training**

The commonalities and differences of the trainings are summarized in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Characteristics</th>
<th>WWIRR</th>
<th>CRP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative over three years</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One time engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used storytelling as a primary teaching method</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used role play to teach techniques</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connected to Mississippi’s history</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Included engaging with art in the galleries as a teaching method</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Training schedule (created collaboratively by WWIRR and the CAPE Managing Director)

Learning Event #1

**Goals:** Identify guideposts and processes that will impact CAPE’s process in achieving goals of increasing empathy and reconciliation, combating prejudice, and achieving personal transformation through programs and exhibitions that leverage encounters with original art. Additionally, help CAPE understand what success will look like if our work is done thoughtfully and sensitively. This goal reflects the overarching goal of the series of training and not necessarily the goal of session 1.

**Staff Learning Event Agenda: 9-Noon**

I. Learning Event Objective/What Vision of Success Looks Like (MMA Leadership)

II. Introduction and Review of Day’s Agenda & Guideposts (WWIRR)

III. Staff Introductions via Community Building Exercise (story of names/hopes & fears) (WWIRR)

IV. What is Bias? (video & discussion: how does it impact our work? What do we need to continue doing and what do we need to change/why/how?) (WWIRR Staff)

V. What Stuck? (WWIRR Staff)

Learning Event #2

**Goals:** Educating the staff on issues related to racial inequity in Mississippi and beyond; preparing the staff to handle difficult conversations without casting judgment on community participants and their beliefs; equipping the staff to tease out conversations that begin with works of art and lead to greater truth and perhaps reconciliation and enabling us to put artworks in their social contexts when presenting them to the public.

**Staff Learning Event Agenda: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.-3**

I. Open With Reading/Poem (WWIRR Staff)

II. Review of Day’s Agenda & Remind of Guideposts (WWIRR)

III. Mississippi’s History: Look at the history of oppression/inequity in the state (WWIRR Staff)

IV. Level the Playing Field Exercise aka Privilege Walk /Debriefing (WWIRR Staff) (Sample https://www.uh.edu/cdi/diversity_education/resources/activities/pdf/privilege-walk.pdf)

V. View a vignette from “Cracking the Codes: The System of Racial Inequity”: Engage participants by talking about the causes and consequences of systemic inequity. Designed for dialogue, the film works to disentangle internal beliefs, attitudes and pre-judgments within, and it builds skills to address the structural drivers of social and economic inequities. (WWIRR Staff)

VI. View a vignette from TEDxEmory talk given by Dr. Camara Jones on “Allegories on Race and Racism.” Share via triads, then with a larger group. (WWIRR Staff)

VII. Fundamentals of Facilitation (WWIRR Staff/Partners)

VIII. What Stuck?

**Evaluation Methods**

The CAPE team created the following questions to assess how the training goals were being fulfilled and how the staff was impacted.

1. What did you learn that surprised you?

2. Describe how the information presented will change the way you interact with your colleagues, visitors and stakeholders.

3. Please describe how this training helps the Museum fulfill its mission.

4. In addition to the topics covered, what is something you wish you would have learned?
Staff Feedback: Common Themes.

- Unlearning misconceptions and biases is a daily practice.
- Framing questions with “have you considered” is a helpful technique to encourage broadening perspectives with visitors.
- Deepened trust with co-workers by hearing their stories and experiences.

Questions to consider

1. Has your institution participated in open and honest conversations about race and equity in the past, and if so, how was it received by your staff?

2. Was an outside consultant hired to manage the process? If you consider hiring consultants, it is important that they mirror the demographics of your staff. Our feedback showed that it was reassuring for White staff to hear the experiences of the White facilitators. It helped them see themselves on the life-long journey of anti-racism work. The feedback from Black staffers indicated that they appreciated the validation from the Black facilitator and felt encouraged by the opportunity to honestly discuss issues of race and racism.

3. Conversations about race and lived experiences are delicate, fragile, and complicated, AND the results of having them in a way that doesn’t emotionally harm your Black staff, and doesn’t shame your White staff, are immeasurable. Pretty please with sugar on top, invest resources and time in ongoing, sustained conversations about race. I highly recommend beginning with a team of consultants as a starting point, and whole-hearted support from your Leadership Team is essential. Eventually, your HR department, an employee resource group, or a staff-led committee will need to determine a regular training curriculum to create a culture of learning and unlearning. This function is now the responsibility of the Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer in collaboration with the Human Resources Director. The importance of allocating resources to ongoing training and development is critical to sustaining a culture where these issues can be engaged, and policies and practices can be evaluated with an equity and inclusion lens.

What we learned:

Deep listening to colleagues’ stories builds trust and empathy and will fortify staff for the uncomfortable moments that often accompany a conversation about race.

Including staff and community voices in the early stages of exhibition planning and programming adds value and may alert us to potential unintended impacts.

How we are changing:

Having consistent cross-departmental meetings that included all facets of the Museum at the beginning of the exhibition development process.

Enlisting the Community Advisory Council as a resource to help us think through potential community impacts and appropriate interventions.

Final Thoughts

If we expect our visitors to have thoughtful and often challenging conversations about race and equity in our galleries, the Museum must know how to have those conversations internally. This work is ongoing and should be viewed as essential to the institution as the art on the walls. That requires commitment from all levels, from the Board of Trustees to the security staff.

Chapter 3 describes the experiments performed in the Innovation LAB.
“If you have a dream: Number one, make a plan. And then execute that plan. And there will be failures along that line. Don’t let that discourage you. Because failure is part of the process... make necessary adjustments and you can be successful at whatever you do.”

– Kerry James Marshall, Artist
The Innovation LAB was a physical space within the Museum, where visitors were invited to respond, share, and participate in the Museum’s curatorial process. The goals of the LAB were:

1. Consider/challenge traditional modes of presenting information;
2. Invite the visitor to become a content generator and activator of an object—use visitor responses and feedback to create new modes of presentation;
3. Investigate how people see works of art in relationship to one another and seek to understand the museum’s role as a facilitator of these relationships and
4. Reflect on this process to identify and incorporate new insights and directions into future exhibitions, particularly the new permanent collection *New Symphony of Time*, which was re-installed in September 2019.

**Lab experiments:**

Phase 1: October 9, 2018–October 29, 2018  
Phase 2: October 30, 2018–November 19, 2018  
Phase 3: November 20, 2018–January 6, 2019

**Phase 1:**

Background: Titus Kaphar’s *Darker Than Cotton* (2017) displayed by itself. This work depicts the image of a traditional eighteenth-century landowner (presumably a slaveholder) that is peeled away to reveal a magnified image of a Black woman, which centers her story and uncovers the true source of the slaveholder’s wealth.

Our goal in Phase 1 was to give visitors the chance to look at the work and to ask questions about what they want to know about the piece, and also respond emotionally. These two questions will help us understand a) the experience they’re having when looking at the work and b) what might help make their experience more meaningful.

**Visitor prompt:**

Take a minute to look at one of our most recent acquisitions. This work of art intentionally does not have an accompanying label with information about it because we want you to have the chance to experience it unfiltered. Help write the label by telling us what you’d like to know about it.

Spend a few minutes looking at the work (Challenge yourself to look for at least 3 minutes). Notice everything you can—the subject, the materials, the colors, the technique.

How does this painting make you feel? How do you (or don’t you) connect to this work of art?

What questions do you have about the painting? What information might make looking at this work of art more meaningful?

Your responses to these questions will be used to create a label that will be part of Phase 2 of the Lab.

*Darker Than Cotton* by Titus Kaphar
TITUS KAPHAR (born 1972)
*Darker Than Cotton*, 2017
oil on canvas

Titus Kaphar’s work challenges traditional narratives of history, exploring issues of race and gender through the lens of historical portrait painting. In recalling 18th and 19th c. American portraiture, Kaphar draws upon a tradition of painting that most often was devoted to the depiction of white males, including well-known figures from history such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Andrew Jackson.

In *Darker Than Cotton* and other paintings from his ongoing *Cut Outs* series, Kaphar literally carves out figures from the compositional space of the of the canvas. Here, an unknown woman of African descent stares directly through a man’s silhouette. His absence allows her to be seen and engage the viewer with an untold story, yet he is not fully removed from the composition. When asked about the figures’ identities, Kaphar responded: “The piece is at once about [Thomas] Jefferson and Sally Hemings, and it also has nothing to do with them. It alludes to the reality of hundreds of thousands of untold narratives about the worst kind of usurped liberty.”

Collection of the Mississippi Museum of Art
Gift of the Gallery Guild
2018.008
Compilation of Results:
We were fortunate to have our AAMD Diversity intern (Aylen Mercado), who compiled the results from Phase 1. Aylen input the responses during phase 1 into an Excel spreadsheet and determined how many times keywords or phrases were mentioned, and created a word cloud based on the responses received. The infographic is pictured to the right.

Phase 2:
Background: Titus Kaphar’s *Darker Than Cotton* (2017) was displayed with two object labels—the first one written prior to the original display and the second written after people had the chance to respond and to ask questions. During this phase, visitors were invited to respond to the two object labels by identifying what they like, don’t like, and still have comments about. The curatorial staff would use the responses to consider its own process for writing extended labels.

Visitor Prompt:
In addition to information such as artist name, media, and date of creation, museums use extended labels or labels with more text that give context to what an artwork might be saying. During Phase 1 of the Lab, there was no additional information on display about this work. Now, we’ve added two labels beside the work of art—one that was written by curators and educators before Phase 1 and one that was written by curators and educators AND VISITORS in response to visitor questions and feedback asked during Phase 1.

Take a look at the work of art. Now, read the object label to the left of the painting. How does it (or doesn’t it) contribute to your understanding of the piece?

Now, read the object label to the right of the painting. How does it (or doesn’t it) contribute to your understanding of the piece?

Using the reproduced labels on the table, take a few minutes to mark up one or both of the labels.

Make a CIRCLE around: Anything that you find particularly helpful.

Mark a LINE through: Anything that you think is unnecessary.

Add NOTES in the margins to: anything that’s missing, needs defining, doesn’t make sense, etc.

But even with the same information on hand, artworks say different things to different people. Give voice to this piece and tell us what it’s saying to you.
Phase 3 (1-month):

Background: Titus Kaphar, *Darker Than Cotton* (2017), displayed in conversation with Thomas Sully’s *Portrait of Mrs. Frisby Augustin Freeland*, 1831-1905. These two works were placed alongside each other to explore how works of art, when placed side by side, generate new narratives. The Kaphar will continue to have an extended label (potentially revised after Phase 2’s feedback process) alongside Thomas Sully’s that will only have a tombstone label (This will be used as a topic of conversation in the December 4 program).

Visitor prompt:

In museums, stories are often told by placing objects side-by-side. These new narratives can change the way a viewer sees a work of art by framing a story or introducing a new idea.

Spend a few minutes looking at Titus Kaphar’s *Darker Than Cotton* (2017). Challenge yourself to look for at least three minutes. Notice everything you can—the subject, the materials, the colors, the technique.

Now, consider the work by Titus Kaphar alongside the 19th-century portrait by Thomas Sully. Our curators are considering displaying these two paintings side-by-side in the new installation of our permanent collection.

How does the story change and grow when these paintings are presented side by side?

Using the strips of paper, write words, phrases, or a hashtag (#painting) that come to mind as you look at the works of art together. Your input will help us develop language to interpret these artworks when we install them in the gallery.
A conversaion was facilitated by the Managing Director of CAPE to compare and contrast the two works and listen to how visitors engaged with the works.

Sample written responses from visitors:

“I feel like this is a breath of fresh air, truth and honesty can be cathartic.”

“Both women are treated as objects.”

“The man is almost rendered invisible.”

“Ms. Frisby’s features are muted and soft compared to the extreme detail of the Titus Kaphar piece, which may reflect the depth of each woman’s experience.”

A LAB experiment was conducted that featured Kristen Dorsey’s Blood Bling, which explored issues of identity.

The significance of this piece is best described by the artist:

“Blood Bling” comments on the play of superficiality and weight that Government Issued Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood Cards carry. An individual in possession of one of these cards is deemed a “card-carrying Indian.” The concept of “blood quantum” is a European creation and did not exist in Indigenous communities. It is based on the racist notion that culture follows blood and that the European blood culture is stronger and that the Native blood culture, therefore the “Native blood” would “breed out.” This tool of colonization remains steadfast in contemporary American culture and negatively affects Indigenous peoples who must apply for their CDIB cards from the American government to prove their cultural identities. The irony is that no other ethnic or cultural group must apply for membership to the United States government. The controversial cards are both a tool of power yet are deemed necessary for native nations to identify true members. Each tribal government handles the blood quantum issues differently; however, it remains a troubling and divisive issue for most Indigenous peoples on this continent.

After viewing Dorsey’s work, the participants were asked to respond to the following question:

Q: Has the information you learned today inspired you to do anything differently?

Responses from participants:

Participant #1 I did not know what a CDIB card was and want to learn more about our treatment of Native Americans.

Participant #2 Certification frightens me. Why do people have to do that? No one ever asks me how much of my blood is Irish or German. These programs have changed the way I look at the world.
What we learned:

Visitors are impacted and their perspectives can and do change after hearing the experiences of other visitors with different lived experiences.

Moderating these conversations is more of an art than science and requires empathy and patience, and is equally important as a deep knowledge of art history (not dismissing the value of this perspective, simply noting that both skills are valuable).

Label content influences the type of engagement that visitors have with the work, and visitors want to have clear accessible language on the label.

How we are changing:

Including additional voices in the label writing process, beyond curators.

Using extended labels during the re-installation of the Permanent Collection which, included more information about the artist, based on the feedback received in the LAB experiments.

Conclusions from the LAB experiments

The infographic and other visitor feedback show that visitors were interested in the stories connected to the subjects of both works of art and were able to make connections to their own lived experiences. Experiments in the LAB also revealed an interest in the identity and motivation of the artist that created the work. Furthermore, participant surveys taken after the programming suggested an increased curiosity about the perspectives of others, which can over time lead to greater empathy, according to research conducted by Susie Wilkening titled, Curiosity, Empathy and Social Justice: A Data Story.

Items to consider:

1. Is the visitor experience a stated priority?
2. Who is your typical visitor, and does that definition need to expand or shift?
3. How receptive is your Curatorial Department to engaging in a conversation with visitors and responding to the questions posed?

Final thoughts

The Innovation LAB was an opportunity to experiment and test how visitors respond to curatorial practices and demonstrate our responsiveness to their feedback. The practice of asking for input and reflecting on the changes to your institutional practices is fundamental to building trust with your visitors.

Chapter 4 will discuss the artist residency program on the national and state.
“If there is a function for art, it is to prompt conversation and action. If you can do it while seducing people with material and beauty, then I think you have a better chance at motivating people.”

- Sandy Rodriguez, artist
Artists Residencies

The Kellogg grant provided us with the opportunity to create two types of engagement with artists: an In-State Residency program for cities and towns outside of Jackson with local artists (defined broadly) and a National Artist In Residency program that featured the work of nationally recognized artists. Both programs were developed to engage artists and communities in a collaborative exploration of Mississippi places, their histories and co-produce art that fostered deeper understanding and honored personal truths.

Listed below is a chart that details the distinctions between the two:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>National Residency</th>
<th>In-State Residency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>National recognition, mid-late career</td>
<td>Early to mid-career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic focus</td>
<td>Jackson</td>
<td>State-wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition at MMA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not included in the residency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist highlighted in programing</td>
<td>Yes, Gallery Talks, Lectures, and Symposium</td>
<td>Some, but not comparable to the National Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>Over $70,000</td>
<td>$10,000 to 20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff involvement</td>
<td>Managing Director, Curators, Executive Director</td>
<td>Managing Director with minimal involvement from staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culminating Event</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Varied, depending on the proposal and the community involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happened to the resulting artwork?</td>
<td>Presented to the Acquisitions Committee and accessioned into the Permanent Collection</td>
<td>Stayed with the home community, and the exact location was determined by the community partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Travel</td>
<td>None, work was done in Jackson</td>
<td>Yes, most communities were 2–3 hours from Jackson, and site visits were conducted frequently</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In-State Residency

The In-State Residency program began with a call for Mississippi cities/counties interested in participating in the place-based residency program. The primary point of contact for the locations listed were art councils and cultural institutions.

The cities that responded were as follows:

Lafayette County  | Stone County  | Hancock County  
McComb           | Utica          | Meridian        

During the summer of 2017, the Managing Director conducted listening sessions with the communities listed and asked the following questions:

- Describe what you enjoy about your community. (Rose)
- Describe a challenge that your community is facing. (Thorn)
- Describe any new ideas or opportunities that would benefit your community. (Bud)
The Managing Director determined the most accessible location to meet in collaboration with the community partners. The meetings were held in the evenings or on a Saturday (not over an hour) to accommodate work and school schedules, and parents were highly encouraged to bring their children. Light snacks and refreshments were provided since most of the meetings were scheduled at 6:00 pm. The community partners performed outreach to their networks, and the Museum highlighted the event in its weekly e-blast. On average, between 20-30 people attended each session. When participants arrived, they were provided an agenda, pen, post-its, and marketing material about the Museum. The chairs were arranged in a circle as a visual clue signaling that everyone’s perspective is valuable.

The Managing Director then:

- Thanked the community partners.
- Introduced CAPE and the purpose of the meeting.
- Described the group activity and explained the questions which were placed on easels in the room.

Directions for the Group Activity.

1. Respond to each prompt on a Post-It.
2. Place the Post-It on a large flip chart.
3. All participants were given time to review each other’s responses.
4. A discussion was held after the responses were reviewed.
5. Each session lasted approximately an hour.

Flyer PDF used to advertise Listening Session
An example of results from a listening session:

Roses:
• I like art
• A lot of people at school
• Music + people
• Meridian Museum of Art does a great job connecting w/ organizations to do art classes
• Increased interest in arts downtown

Thorns:
• Getting the community to attend and support the arts opportunities
• City – negative communication
• Getting the youth involved in activities and events is challenging
• Civic and civil discourse
• Poverty

Buds:
• Clean up our city
• Activities, events, jobs for young adults in our community
• Amphitheater
• Total community involvement
• Showcasing chefs

The responses were gathered, transcribed, and uploaded to the CAPE website.

The listening sessions were conducted through the fall to issue a call to artists in December of 2017. Each artist was asked to review the community’s responses and use them as source material for their proposed project. The instructions provided are listed below:

Artists will select ONE community* for their proposed project. The proposal requirements are as follows:
• Be collaborative with the selected community during all phases of the proposed project
• Contain an element of co-creation and participation with the community
• Address an issue or event that is relevant to the community
• Reflect the community’s hopes and dreams for the future
• Reference CAPE’s values of equity, transparency, and truth:
• Provide a detailed budget that includes travel and materials
• Provide a timeline for execution during the 2019 calendar year
• Must be submitted by January 14, 2019, deadline through the form below

*The community selected for the proposal cannot be the artist’s primary place of residence. Our initial thinking for this restriction is that we did not want artists to be hampered or restricted by personal relationships in their communities. However, upon further reflection, we realized that the time needed to create relationships with an outsider might have been better spent on art-making or broadening the scope of the work proposed.

As a way to get staff more involved, we created a staff jury panel to score the proposals received.
Sample scorecard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The proposal contains co-creation elements with the community.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposal addresses an issue or event that is relevant to</td>
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<tr>
<td>the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The proposal reflects the community’s hopes and dreams for the</td>
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<tr>
<td>future.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The proposal references CAPE’s values of equity, transparency</td>
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<tr>
<td>and truth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The budget provides detailed information (includes travel</td>
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<tr>
<td>and materials) and is reasonable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The timeline proposed appears realistic and achievable.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does not meet proposal requirements= 0  
Meets the proposal requirements=1  
Exceeds the proposal requirements= 2  
Yes = 2  
No = 0

**Artist proposal descriptions and communities**

**Mark Geil - Hancock County**

Mark’s residency focused on the creation of a 360-degree photographic “quilt” of the communities in Hancock County. This project used 360-degree cameras and the metaphor of a community quilt to explore the varied narratives and histories of Hancock County. The final product was a centralized online repository for all these 360-degree videos. In collaboration with community partners, the project explored and documented what is special, vital, and difficult about living in Hancock County. The project was unveiled to the local community at the Literary Arts Festival, and the resulting video was archived at the local library. The equipment purchased with the grant remained with the community and is being shared with local arts organizations and schools as an educational resource.

**daniel johnson - Lafayette County**

daniel engaged the local Lafayette County organizations and individuals exploring historical narratives highlighting the relationship between land and power. daniel worked with local clay, collected oral histories and that highlighted local stories about land and power. As the residency moved forward, daniel collaborated with local organizations, which ultimately culminated in a multidisciplinary education and cultural event reflecting on land and power in Lafayette County.
Liana Ambrose Murray

Liana proposed creating a family photo installation that featured photographs and portraits of past and present generations of Utica, Mississippi. The installation was planned to include high-quality copies of community members’ old family photos to be displayed in the local community center. The resulting installation built by the artist and community members will be the anchor for a day of storytelling that will increase understanding of the interconnectedness of the history of Utica and inspire a shared vision of a future in Utica together.

Sample proposal agreement

Dear ________:

Congratulations on being selected to participate in the Center for Art & Public Exchange, In-State Residency Program. This residency, taking place in ____________, Mississippi, is part of the work of the Center for Art & Public Exchange (CAPE) at the Mississippi Museum of Art (the Museum).

This residency is budgeted for $10,000 and includes travel, time, housing and supplies. The timeline for execution and completion of the project is March – December 2019. The goals of the residency are to:

* Be collaborative with the selected community during all phases of the proposed project
* Contain an element of co-creation and participation with the community
* Address an issue or event that is relevant to the community
* Reflect the community’s hopes and dreams for the future
* Reference CAPE’s values of equity, transparency, and truth

Artists are asked to commit to the following during their residency:

* Coordinate a free, public space or venue in the chosen community where the project can be unveiled or displayed
* Collaborate with MMA to document the process by providing access for interviews, photography, and videography
* Provide a composed response (written, spoken, etc.) about the artist’s journey, or participate in a public program at MMA, following the conclusion of the project
* Provide MMA with a work of art from the final project or appropriate documentation if the project is ephemeral/temporary/site-specific
* Use evaluative tools created by CAPE during various stages of the residency
* The Kellogg Foundation and CAPE should be credited on all printed materials using the logos provided
* Invite MMA to any public events at the residency site

The Center for Art and Public Exchange commits to the following during the term of the residency:

* Providing funding in two disbursements, one in April 2019, and the second in June of 2019
* Resolving disputes in a manner that preserves the relationship between the artist, MMA, and the community
* Facilitating a conversation between the artist, MMA, CAPE and the community about where the resulting artwork will live upon completion of the residency
* Ensuring that MMA’s insurance coverage provides protection for the artist working in other venues that are associated with the residency
* Providing logos, contact information, and other support in a timely manner (within 24 hours on a business working day)
* Assist in developing community connections, facilitating the project and providing ongoing feedback
I am excited about your project and the impact that it will make on your selected community. Please let me know if you have questions. Please sign below to indicate that you agree to the requirements listed. I look forward to supporting the work.

Sincerely
Monique Davis

Monique Davis, Managing Director Signature
Artist Signature

In addition to having the artist proposals reflect CAPE’s values, it was also important to create an accountability process that reflected the values and supported the artist and community stakeholders. We implemented several practices to achieve that goal:

1. The CAPE Managing Director traveled to each community to introduce the artist and explain the residency to community members;
2. The artists completed brief update memos to document progress and identify any areas of concern;
3. Quarterly meetings were convened with the three artists and Managing Director to provide a space for learning and networking and
4. CAPE staff members actively participated in the closing events and exhibits, gathered qualitative feedback, and provided visual documentation resources for the Land and Power Summit in Lafayette County.

Memo Template

CENTER FOR ART & PUBLIC EXCHANGE

In-State Artist in Residence
Alignment update

Date__________
Artist__________
County/City__________

1. Describe the activities that have occurred since you began working on your proposal

2. List your Community Partners.

3. Are there points in your project where you would like CAPE’s support? Briefly describe the need and provide the dates.

4. Is there anything else you would like to share?
Learning Moment

During the quarterly check-ins, Liana shared that she was having difficulty connecting with community members and was beginning to feel isolated because of the rural nature of Utica. After several conversations, it became evident that she did not have the capacity to complete the residency. Her departure may not have been preventable. However, in hindsight, we should have done several things to provide support and clarity between the beginning of the contract and her departure.

The following program evaluation was used for both Daniel’s and Mark’s projects in Lafayette and Hancock counties.

Program Evaluation

SAMPLE

What did you learn from participating in this program?

What would you like to do because of this experience?

Did this program increase your understanding of communities different than your own? If so, please describe.

Questions to consider:

What are the goals and values that should be reflected in the project?

How will you authentically share power with the community and remain accountable?

What resources and time are you able to commit to supporting the artist? Determine the skills necessary for an artist to fulfill the goals stated and include cross-departmental voices in the selection process?

Does your institution have experience and or a relationship with the communities you have identified as potential partners, and who are your potential partners? Cultural institutions such as local arts agencies and libraries were typically excited about this type of collaboration – especially if there is no budget impact for them.
The National Artist Residency

The first National Residency was with the artist Jeffrey Gibson. Born in Colorado Springs, Colorado, Jeffrey Gibson (b. 1972) grew up in major urban centers in the United States, Germany, Korea, England, and elsewhere. He is a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and half Cherokee.

From Art Fix Daily:
This unique combination of global cultural influences converge in his multidisciplinary practice of more than a decade, since the completion of his Master of Arts degree in painting at The Royal College of Art, London, in 1998, and his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, in 1995. In addition to the Mississippi Museum of Art, Gibson’s artworks are in the permanent collections of many major art museums, including the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art; Denver Art Museum; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Nasher Museum of Art; National Gallery of Canada; Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art; and Smithsonian Institution.

During his summer residency, Jeffrey collaborated with a group of LGTBQ Mississippians of diverse backgrounds who participated in multiple workshops encouraging self-care and self-expression. The workshops included meditation, yoga, voice lessons, movement, dance, creative writing, and storytelling. Each participant developed a character for themselves, crafted a monologue, choreographed accompanying movements, and performed in a cabaret style show. Jeffrey curated the narratives into an original video, Wanderlust, that was shared with the Museum’s audience in fall 2018 and included a keynote conversation with the artist; breakout sessions in the galleries where Jeffrey Gibson: Like A Hammer was installed; roundtable discussion with project participants and the public; and the premiere of WanderLust.

During the discussion, the panelists shared the tremendous impact of the residency, and a few quotes are noted below:

Residency participant quotes during the program:
“The project allowed us to see the humanity in each other.”
“Look at the person as a person and resist labels.”
“The project should help people see us as individuals and see themselves in us, and will help them to be kind to us.”

Audience member memorable moment during the Q & A:
“Thank you for the courage it took to participate in the program. Do you personally have thoughts about how the non LGTBQ community can treat you better and be kinder to you?”

“This CAPE residency with Jeffrey Gibson embodied the importance of process: the process of making art, of discovering oneself, and of understanding the way others see the world,” said Julian Rankin, founding Director of CAPE. “We hope that the final artwork from this process will illustrate that complicated narratives and multifaceted identities can coexist in collaboration and include all people.”
What we learned:
How to trust the artist’s process while also monitoring progress and offering support when needed.
Not attaching to predetermined final outcomes.
The importance of asking the right questions during all stages of the residency, from listening sessions with community members to the artist’s selection process to the questions asked of the panelists during the mini symposium.
The importance of documentation to convey impact, which is a recurring theme throughout the Toolkit.

How we are changing:
Asking the In-State Artists to complete short check-in memos to ensure that projects were on track and to provide DOCUMENTATION, that could be used as data resources for Marketing and even Development.
Including staff members in the In-State Artist selection process that creates cross-departmental buy-in and support.

Final Thoughts
Connecting art, artists, and communities was the primary strategy we used to achieve the goal of narrative change for Mississippi. Including community members proved to be rewarding for the participants in the project as well as the artists involved and the participating communities.
Community Advisory Council members viewing Darker Than Cotton and the Portrait of Mrs. Frisby Augustin Freeland.

“I have always wanted my art to service my people - to reflect us, to relate to us, to stimulate us, to make us aware of our potential. We have to create an art for liberation and for life.”

- Elizabeth Catlett - artist
The Community Advisory Council (CAC) was created to engage community members in the ongoing planning and operations of the Museum. The CAC was intended to be a connector to communities and a demonstration of our commitment to transparency by sharing our strategic goals, priorities, and internal practices. The relationship was designed to be reciprocal and included sharing curatorial authority and being open to modifying operational practices based on the Council’s recommendations. Feedback received from the CAC provided data for real-time decision-making.

The selection criteria for CAC members was more of an art than a science, but some factors taken into consideration were:

- Reside in a zip code not currently represented in our membership – more specifically, west and south Jackson, which are lower-income areas compared to North Jackson and the surrounding suburbs (which are more affluent and Whiter).
- Represent a demographic that is under-represented in our membership and has strong connections and relationships within their communities. Currently, under-represented in MMA’s membership are the following:
  - People of Color
  - No college education
  - Spanish-speaking individuals
  - People under 40

Invitation sent to the prospective council members:

Dear Mr./Mrs. __________

The Center for Art and Public Exchange (CAPE) cordially invites you to join our Community Advisory Council with 15–20 fellow collaborators. We are asking all members to:

- Attend regular (no more than 3) community meetings annually in Jackson, MS;
- Connect CAPE/MMA staff to community members and leaders who will increase the impact of CAPE’s work, either as participants or supporters;
- Help CAPE/MMA think through exhibitions, community engagement approaches, and institutional strategies by offering evaluative feedback, information about opportunities for collaboration, and awareness of the desires of local communities and,
- Connect CAPE/MMA to local discussions that will increase the extent to which this work reflects the communities in which the institution lives and is relevant to the lives of contemporary Mississippians.

The CAC has two goals:

1. Leverage experience and wisdom to advise CAPE/MMA about courses of action that deepen impacts in surrounding communities and help strengthen relationships in communities that align institutional values with community needs and

2. Serve as a trusted collaborator and partner that can help CAPE/MMA responsibly mount potentially polarizing and controversial exhibitions and programs that boldly grapple with societal inequities (maybe partner or collaborator).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

One of the four goals of the MMA’s current strategic plan is to increase the relevance of the Museum to its community. With the formation of the Center for Art & Public Exchange (CAPE) in fall 2017, supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, MMA has committed itself to address the many societal inequities and gaps in understanding that persist in our communities.
The purpose of the Center for Art & Public Exchange is to use original artworks, exhibitions, programs, and engagements with artists to increase understanding and inspire new narratives in contemporary Mississippi. We understand that to build bridges between people and communities of different backgrounds, we must commit to a process that honors our core values of equity, transparency, and truth.

There is no financial commitment of support required. However, our hope is that Community Advisory Council members will engage in the Museum’s work and help open doors to new audiences. Our first gathering will be held Saturday, January 12th from 10:00 am – 1:00, in the Yates Room at the Mississippi Museum of Art. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Please RSVP by phone (601-965-9907) or email (mdavis@msmusuemart.org) by December 21, 2018. I look forward to your participation, and please contact me if you have any additional questions.

Monique Davis
Managing Director of the Center for Art and Public Exchange

Program logistics/specifcics:

Meeting frequency and timing:
Meetings were held semi-quarterly on Saturday mornings because most of the participants worked from 9-5 or were in school from 10:00-12:30. Light snacks and lunch were provided during the first meeting. Subsequent meetings ranged 60-90 minutes long.

Who participated in the conversations?
The entire staff was invited to attend and listen. The questions and reflection prompts were developed in collaboration with the grant evaluator and meant to gather honest feedback based on the CAC’s opinions and perceptions. The CAPE staff was cautioned not to become defensive if participants’ perceptions did not align with staff perceptions. The CAPE team also paid close attention to the ratio of staff to CAC members to mitigate any power dynamic.

Who maintained communication and contact?
The CAPE Managing Director communicated with the members on a bi-monthly basis and created the meeting goals and objectives.

Was there an incentive for participation?
The CAC members were provided two-year memberships as a token of appreciation as well as a way to encourage future opportunities to participate in member openings, etc. CAPE also provided the Museum’s bicentennial exhibit catalog, which captured the *Picturing Mississippi 1817-2017: Land of Plenty, Pain and Promise*.

The First Meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agenda Community Advisory Council Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 12, 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Welcome by Betsy Bradley, Director
Welcome by Monique Davis, Managing Director of CAPE (Center for Art and Public Exchange)
Meeting Purpose (Why are we here?)
Ice breaker
Community Agreements and Housekeeping
Overview of the day
Break (5 minutes)
Group Activity
Lunch
Vault Tour with Kali (Registrar)
Celebrations, Opportunities for Improvement
Next steps
Closing Ceremony and Fellowship
Meeting #1 (January 2019)

**Goals**
- Build community within the group
- Introduce the Museum and the CAPE initiative
- Demonstrate gratitude for their commitment to participate
- Learn about their current opinion of the Museum’s and CAPE’s relationships with their respective communities and with Jackson, Mississippi.

**Methods**
After the introductions, housekeeping, and general information sharing, the organizer divided the 30 members into five teams. Each team was asked to answer the following questions on a large piece of butcher paper. There was one question on each sheet of paper, and they were asked to only contribute answers that were not already listed.

- a. What comes to mind when you think of an art museum?
- b. What would you like to see and/or do at the museum?
- c. How is an art museum different from other museums?
- d. How could the museum better engage with the Jackson community?

The Museum’s registrar then took the group on a tour of the Museum vault to show them the permanent collection storage space. The group then returned to the meeting room, and the group shared their reflections on the butcher paper exercise. The session closed with expressions of appreciation. The CAPE team committed to scheduling the next two meetings early so participants could hold the dates on their calendars.

Meeting #2 (June 2019)

**Goals**
Demonstrate CAPE’s method of close looking at works of art and how the staff uses it as a tool for facilitating conversations that increase understanding of multiple views and perspectives in a non-threatening environment.

**Methods**
Close Looking Infographic
Larger image in the Appendix

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**Guired School Tour Tips**

**Mississippi Museum of Art**

SEE. THINK. TELL.
This methodology is not revolutionary, which makes the selection of the artwork of primary importance. The art should inspire conversations that connect to the goals of the program.

The close-looking activity took place in the Innovation LAB when Titus Kaphar’s *Darker Than Cotton* and *Mrs. Frisby* by Thomas Sully were on display. The staff modified the steps above and excluded prompts concerning materials and process; instead, they focused on the story the artist was conveying.

After the staff conducted the close looking activity, they asked the CAC members to complete the reflection (below) in writing and had a guided discussion about the experience.

**Evaluation questions**

- What did you learn that surprised you?
- How did it feel to engage with artwork in this way?
- What is something you wish the program and or conversations would have covered?

**Meeting #3 (August 2019)**

**Goals**

Determine how CAC members feel as they navigate the Museum, beginning in the parking lot and ending in the galleries. The staff asked that they examine signage, labels, furniture placement, music playing in the background, etc. This was constructed as a comprehensive examination of the Museum’s physical environment.

**Methods**

The Managing Director and the external evaluator created a basic grid of the Museum and asked the participants to indicate with emojis and words how they felt and what they noticed. Emojis were selected because they injected a sense of playfulness into the process.

The meeting ended with a conversation about the process, a commitment to examining the responses, and the encouragement to have internal staff meetings to address the comments noted. The Managing Director and staff will report on the progress at the next meeting.

**Meeting #4 (March 2020)**

**Goals**

Increase the CAC member’s understanding of the behind-the-scenes processes and steps involved in bringing art to the Museum.

**Methods**

Place FAQs, along with responses, around the room and discuss items of interest with the group.

**Sheet #1**

Q: How does an exhibit get here?

A: A gallery presents us with a proposal, then teams meet and ask the following questions:

- Does this align with our Strategic Plan?
- How will we fund it?
- How does it fit with our existing exhibition calendar?

**Sheet #2**

We say yes, then what?

- A contract is drafted and signed.
  
  Things that may be in the contract include:
  
  - Lighting requirements;
  - Security requirements;
  - Installation and de-installation requirements;
  - Insurance and
  - Shipping
**Sheet #3**

- Curatorial Considerations
- Will we issue a publication?
- Are we preparing the labels?
- Research
- Exhibition Design

**Sheet #4**

**Other teams are also meeting**
- Marketing – Will be determining PR Strategy and Audience Evaluation
- Education – Will be creating programming that connects to the themes in the exhibit
- Exhibition Design Team – Will be creating the layout for the exhibit
- Museum Store – Will be purchasing merchandise that connects to the exhibit

**Once the art arrives**
The registrar receives the art from the courier and performs a detailed inspection. The registrar, preparators, and the design team install the exhibit.

**Sheet #5**

**MEANWHILE!**
The Development Team is planning the Member’s opening and developing incentives to join. The Marketing Team is interfacing with other media outlets to create excitement. The Education Team has secured speakers to feature in newly developed and/or recurring programming. The group shared that they learned a lot about the timelines that impact Museums and appreciated another behind-the-scenes view.

**What changes did MMA/CAPE make based on impact from the CAC?**
The staff rearranged furniture groupings and adjusted signage to address the respondents’ comments that the Museum was architecturally beautiful but felt cold because of the lack of conversation areas.
The staff created a section in the permanent collection (*New Symphony of Time*) that displayed the treasured object stories of CAC members.
The staff called a special meeting in April to share COVID protocols with the CAC and asked for their input, advice and to see if there were any community needs that CAPE might be able to fulfill. A CAC member mentioned that senior citizens needed enrichment materials such as books, art supplies, etc., to keep them engaged and to counter the effects of the isolation. As a result, CAPE donated over 100 catalogs to senior care centers.
The CAC team is considered a resource for our programming/education team, and several members have been featured in our programming.

**Questions to consider:**

1. Are the Senior Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees fully committed to building and maintaining a relationship with a community-based group? In practice, that means attending the meetings, sharing strategic priorities and revealing often unseen processes?
2. What is the metric to determine who your Council participants will be?
3. What is your current relationship with your community? Are there existing relationships that you could leverage to build an advisory group?
What we learned:
It is important to have the Director attend the majority of the meetings; this conveyed how important this initiative was to the Council and was important to build trust and sustain the relationship.

Demonstrating how the Council’s input was used (such as rearranging furniture) strengthened the connection between the Council and the Museum.

How we are changing:
Considering the Council as a source for future Trustee appointments.
Consistently including the CAC in the earliest possible phase of exhibition planning, which also includes obtaining funding to provide stipends to the members.

Final thoughts
Building relationships is a continual, thoughtful process that requires time, consistency and mutual respect. This type of group has the potential to amplify your efforts to create meaningful programming and create a more welcoming institution. Always treat them well.
"One good conversation can shift the direction of change forever"

- Linda Lambert
The Re:Frame program was designed to facilitate public conversations about current issues connected to themes highlighted in artworks on display. Topics included: mass incarceration and Parchman Prison; minority farm ownership, economic injustice, and disenfranchisement; the resonance in the contemporary life of the cotton industry’s traumatic history, identity and documentation, and the ways governmental restrictions have impact our lives. The program format varied somewhat depending on the topic; however, here were some “must-have” elements:

- Highlight the voices of the people most impacted by the issue/topic discussed
- Connect the issue to the artwork using close looking
- Use Community Agreements to create “brave spaces” in order to have nuanced conversations

Re:Frame collaborators included:

- Southern Poverty Law Center - Works with communities in the South to dismantle White supremacy and advance justice for all people.
- Mississippi Center for Justice – A public interest law firm advancing racial and economic justice in Mississippi with policy advocacy, community outreach, education, and low-cost legal services.
- Mississippi Minority Farmers Alliance – A non-profit providing agricultural education and farm management training to minority landowners in rural communities.

Julian Rankin wrote the event descriptions for 2018 in his role as Managing Director; and, they were used on CAPE’s social media platforms.

**Re:Frame–Parchman (January 2018)**

**Event Description**

A mashup of a variety show, town hall dialogue, art exhibition, and the experimental programming format, Re:Frame emerged as a vehicle to level the playing field for voices from diverse backgrounds and experiences and provide memorable engagement. CAPE staff partnered with the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation to facilitate rounds of open dialogue. The mics were decentralized throughout the Mississippi Museum of Art’s grand hall, which was filled by young and old, Black and white, and conservative and liberal people. [Author’s Note: the audience also included people who had been incarcerated in Parchman Prison.]

Kim Rushing’s portraits of Parchman and its inhabitants were the artistic focal point and were continual reminders of the realities of prison as well as the realities for those who are held inside them. Together, the group discussed the complexities of Parchman, the realities of incarceration, and the racism embedded in the current prison system.

Musician Alphonso Sanders (pictured left), Chair of Fine Arts and Director of the B.B. King Recording Studio at Mississippi Valley State University, reinvigorated the room between segments of dialogue with original Parchman-inspired tunes.

**Re:Frame– Land ownership (April 2018)**

**Event Description**

Mississippi agriculture – especially cotton – established systems of vested plantation power, entrepreneurial farmers, sharecroppers, and enslaved populations. What did it take to subvert the hierarchy? What can we learn from the past to address land issues that continue to affect people in the South? At April’s Re:Frame, the intention was to explore the complexities of Southern farmland and delve into the history of economic justice through dialogue with art and with each other. It was held within the galleries of White Gold: Thomas Sayre. Guests included former U.S. Congressman and Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy; farmer Cindy Ayers, owner of Footprint Farms; and Chef Nick Wallace, who provided a punctuation to the evening with a dish sourced from Mississippi land.
Re:Frame—White Gold (June 2018)

Event Description
We gathered local podcasters and the public inside the galleries of White Gold, an immersive 2000-square-foot exhibition by artist Thomas Sayre that explores the complexities of a southern cotton field (also mentioned in Chapter 2). This discussion was held in conjunction with National Tee-Shirt Day and a Museum After Hours pop-up exhibition of cotton tees by local designers.

2018 Programming Notes
The first Re:Frame was held on the date of a recurring program titled Third Thursday: Museum After Hours, which features live music, a pop-up art show, and outdoor movie screenings during summer months. It is a social event that typically does not include heavy scholarly programming and has 300 loyal followers. Since the staff had a base of support with guaranteed attendance, we decided to experiment with the traditional format and have a facilitated discussion. We recorded the session and used quotes and photographs to document the discussion. The remaining two conversations for 2018 were held in the White Gold art installation, separate from the Grand Hall. They also occurred on Third Thursday, for the reasons stated above, but differ because the normal Third Thursday activities still happened throughout the Museum and outside. Both of these programs were also taped, responses were transcribed, and some were highlighted on the CAPE website.

We should note that the Re:Frame programming from 2108-2019 is largely reflective of the strengths and capacities of the Managing Directors, Julian Rankin (2017–September 2018), and Monique Davis (2018–present). Julian was the former Director of Marketing at the Museum and a published author. He excelled at capturing and documenting events on the website and sharing participant quotes and impressions. Monique’s experience is grounded in community organizing, facilitation, and advocating for social justice issues on the national and local levels. The focus for Re:Frame programming, under her leadership, shifted to facilitating and moderating challenging conversations along with documenting visitor impact. As the conversations became richer and more challenging, it became increasingly important to create spaces for brave conversations to happen, in conjunction with and inside of the galleries, and to provide visitors the opportunities for reflection.

Re:Frame—Moving thru Spaces (April 2019)

Event Description
Staged in front of another CAPE acquisition, McArthur Binion’s DNA IV, Re:Frame examined themes of identity, documentation, and the ways in which governmental restrictions impact our everyday lives. The panel included Anik Kurkijan, an immigrant from the U.K., who created the first Light Festival in Jackson; Aylen Mercado, an intern for the CAPE program, who is also a Deferred Action Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipient; Ravin Cline, a local paralegal, who runs an organization that facilitates assimilation into the U.S. for recent immigrants; and Emily Clark, who is an archaeologist associated with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH). A historical analysis (by Emily Clark) of how the Indian Removal Act affected the Choctaw Nation grounded participants in history while the other panelists provided personal accounts of the outsized impact our nation’s immigration system has had on their own lives.

Personal stories have the power to spark curiosity, which we believe leads to greater empathy. Having facts about immigration on display provided evidence to underscore the brokenness of the current immigration system without making it a distinctly partisan issue. Nearly all of the participants reported having a limited understanding of the current immigration system’s high level of dysfunction; many claimed they were inspired to learn more.
A sample of audience member responses to the questions listed are detailed below:

Q: What did you learn that surprised you?
Participant #1 Response - Indigenous people suffer from citizenship problems in similar ways to immigrants
Participant #2 Response - Immigrants are not only of Hispanic descent
Participant #3 Response - There are more immediate economic issues than previously aware

Q: What do you want to learn more about based on the information shared today?
Participant #1 Response - How can we become more effective advocates for immigration issues?
Participant #2 Response - What are the best ways to help people who encounter blocks to the path of citizenship?

Feedback Form
ReFrame August (2019)

Event Description
CAPE Re:Frame featuring CAPE intern Aylen Mercado and the Museum’s pre-Columbian art collection, which is on view in the Museum corridor during Museum After Hours. This program featured a discussion about the impact of having one person describing an object of emotional significance to someone else and how that experience can be connected to curators describing ceremonial objects displayed in our pre-Columbian Collection. The template used below was a detailed planning tool used to document the program’s goals along with specific logistic requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Away from Home: A Workshop and Conversation about pre-Columbian Peru and Present Mississippi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Event Specifics</td>
<td>August 15, 2019, 6PM–7:15PM, Yates Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td>Museum participants who are not familiar with the pre-Columbian collection and/or who are interested in learning more about the collection. For high school ages and above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Goals</td>
<td>To encourage participants to critically engage with pre-Columbian work and cultures displayed in museums and rethink understandings of ownership, cultural heritage, and sources of knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Description</td>
<td>The “Away from Home” program is for participants who are interested in learning more about the Museum’s pre-Columbian collection. The program introduces provenance and cultural heritage through an activity that centers the participant’s own familial culture. The program helps participants understand the effect of colonial documentation of pre-Columbian objects in art historians’ interpretations of the work that we read today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Strategic objectives does it connect to?</td>
<td>Institutional Growth, Wonder, Programmatic Innovation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Evaluation method/feedback Reflection Questions | · What did you learn or gain from this experience that was unexpected?  
· Are you thinking differently about pre-Columbian collections in any way as a result of this conversation? __yes __no ; if yes, please specify. |
| How do you plan to measure impact? | At the time of the program, we will take a participant count to know how many people engaged with this program in total. We will use the survey/reflection questions to learn how the program impacted people’s knowledge on the topic of pre-Columbian collections, provenance, and cultural heritage. In addition, we can review the responses to see if the program impacted how they think/view pre-Columbian collections in museums. |
### Materials needed

- Markers, 5x8 index cards (possibly two colors), cardstock white paper, pens for reflection questions, 4 tables with black table covers and 8 chairs around each table.

### Instructions

1. Participants will be seated at tables in the Yates room.
2. Begin by reading CAPE Community Agreements. Have Agreements visible in the room.
3. In the first activity, participants will draw a personal/home object and free-write a description about the object on an index card.
4. Images from each table will be collected and passed to another table in the room. Participants will pick up the new object placed on their table and write their interpretation of it.
5. Several volunteers will read aloud their interpretation and the original owner of the object will read their personal description. Before we move to the reflection piece of this activity, participants will be asked to look at the collection on display and think about what information is given to them and what information is missing (thinking of the share out that they had just done).
6. We will come back together and have a conversation about their reactions to having their personal/home object interpreted out of context and what connections can be drawn to the pre-Columbian collection.
7. At the end, I will share what questions I had when I began my research of the collection.

### Additional Notes

- Have pens available for reflection questions because pen ink is more legible when scanned to PDF. Use markers/sharpies for drawing to deter drawing and erasing from participants, which will consume time.

July–Sept Quarterly Outcome this program relates to: “A plan for the Innovation Lab and Re:Frame, in collaboration with the AAM Intern that connects relevant issues to works on display, and that is developed in collaboration with the AAM intern and the Curatorial Team C6, S3, S4.”

Feedback:
- Make the agenda permanently visible during the workshop on a big sticky note on the wall.
- Stop at 7:15, thank participants, and encourage them to continue the conversation beyond the workshop

**Lessons learned**

1. Provide evidence to support the goals of the program. The goal of the Movement thru Spaces Program was to expand the visitor’s perspective about immigration and documentation by hearing the life experiences of a diverse group of people that have interacted with the immigration system and the impact of that system on their lives. The audience was surrounded by artwork connected to the theme of identity and documentation and grounded the conversation. The feedback responses demonstrate that this was new information for many, and they were interested in learning more about the issue.

2. Lightbulb moments often happen in smaller groups. It is hard to let go of the number of attendees as a metric to measure success, but we have learned that participants are often more comfortable in smaller intimate settings. Success metrics have expanded to include something as “simple” as “Was the audience engaged?”
Questions to consider

1. What are the visitor goals for the program? What do you want the visitor to feel or be inspired to do?
2. How will you find out how your visitors heal or what they end up doing?
3. Who will be facilitating these conversations, do they have expertise, and/or are you willing to invest in building capacity internally?

What we learned:
Including the perspectives of communities that are impacted by the issue being discussed at the planning stage of programming is a best practice. Having conversations with formerly incarcerated people would have alerted us to the mismatch between the seriousness of the topic and the “gamification” of the issue.

How we are changing:
Creating smaller, intimate environments to discuss complex and nuanced issues that centered looking at art and conversation as the core programming element.

Creating new relationships with the Latinx community via the Community Advisory Council and will invite them to help us think through our pre Columbian Pottery exhibit.

Final Thoughts
Conversations with community members about art are the core of the program. Don’t get distracted by including too many unrelated elements. It will distract from the conversation and weaken your efforts.

Chapter 7 deals with the process and methodology used in the longitudinal study and the online panel.
“I want the Mississippi Museum of Art to be a refuge during times like these, but not in the typical sense of the word. I believe when most people hear that term, they immediately think of an ‘escape’ from the weightiness resulting from certain topics or awful things going on in the world. However, I want the museum to be a refuge as in a place where they acknowledge and don’t shy away from what’s happening and where discourse is welcomed and encouraged. I want MMA to be a place where their actions align with whatever they’ve personally pledged to do, for their part, to encourage inclusion.”

- Demeter (Online Panel Participant)
[not real name – Demeter was chosen by the panelist to maintain anonymity]
The purpose of the longitudinal study was to observe how CAPE programs impacted the museum’s current audience, typically a White female, middle-aged, upper-middle-class, and college-educated (WFMUC). Men were also included, and the gender breakdown was 60% (women)/40% (men), which also mirrors our membership demographics. In Year Two, CAPE experimented with personal journals to capture reflections after attending CAPE programming and to measure changes in attitudes and movement along the stages of the integrated racial identity development model created by John and Joy Hoffman. This framework begins and ends with stages that are thought to be the same for all people. In between, different stages are articulated for People of Color and White people.

Participants were selected based on the criteria noted above and sent the following invitation:

Dear ________ ,

Thank you for your continued participation at the Mississippi Museum of Art. As the Museum continues to evolve, we are experimenting with new modes of lifelong learning and visitor engagement. We hope that you will help us learn more about how these strategies impact the visitor experience. We’re innovating the way we co-create programs with the community, and your participation in this process could be part of a sea-change where community voices are more intrinsic to our work than ever before.

You are among a group of Museum supporters that we are inviting to participate in a year-long qualitative study to help us better serve our visitors.

We learn as much from visitors like you as you do from the art we display. You bring your own experiences, stories, and insights to every artwork. The opportunity to see through your eyes means that we can create exhibitions and programs that are more meaningful and exciting than ever, precisely because we can share the experience of encountering and interpreting the art with you.

As a participant in this study group, we are asking that you:

• commit to joining us on Wednesday, September 5, for an initial facilitated close-looking session with works of art from the Museum collection;
• attend a series of 5–7 regularly-scheduled Museum events in the year to come (you will be able to choose programs that fit your schedule from a calendar we will provide);
• set aside time to write, draw, or otherwise reflect on your experiences in a personal journal that will be provided to you; and,
• participate in a concluding close-looking session with works of art in early fall of 2019.

The lessons the Museum will learn from this process will help us develop new programming formats and approaches that will become part of the long-term life of the Museum. With your help, we can continue to grow as an institution, deepen visitor experiences, and innovate new ways to leverage the Museum’s 5,600 object collection to increase understanding and build community in contemporary Mississippi.

We know your time is valuable. As a token of our gratitude, participants will receive a complimentary year of Museum membership for yourself, a family member, or a friend (a $60 value); and, a gift basket including past Museum publications, art prints, and a gift card for lunch for two in the Museum café. You will also be recognized and thanked publicly in Museum communications, if you so choose, when we put the study findings into action. Most importantly, you will be an integral part in helping to guide the work we do.

Will you join us?

If you are willing to participate in this yearlong study group, or if you have questions, please contact Julian Rankin at XXX–XXX–XXXX, or at XXXX@XXXXX.ORG.

Sincerely,

Betsy Bradley
Process: Individuals who fit the demographic group (see above paragraph) were specifically invited to participate in the study. They were asked to attend at least three programs in the fall/winter and spring/summer semesters and respond to journal prompts. Each participant was provided a journal, and MMA staff developed questions for participants to reflect on and respond to at the conclusion of each program. Participants were told the study was an opportunity to be “secret shoppers” and that their responses would help the Museum experiment with different methods of engaging visitors with art. However, they were not told that race and equity were the topics of interest or selected based on specific demographic information. Accounting for attrition, our goal was to have 20–25 participants complete the year-long study for a total of 120 journal entries (60 each semester).

Data Analysis: Individual journal entries would be coded based upon the six (6) Stages of Racial Identity Development as outlined below. Audio recordings from the close-looking sessions would be compared to determine any change in participants’ willingness to share personal experiences and discuss issues of race and equity when engaging with the artwork throughout the study.

The integrated Model of Racial Identity Development (shown here) specifically refers to the experience of White people and is excerpted from the larger model, which shows the development of both White people and People of Color.

Summary of Stages of Racial Identity Development
Integrated Model developed by John and Joy Hoffman

White People

ACCEPTANCE: In this stage, whites can still dismiss or diminish comments or actions that indicate that racism is alive.

RESISTANCE: Whites move from their acceptance stage to the resistance stage, where they profess that racism is a thing of the past.

RETREAT: If their assumptions about People of Color and their own lack of privilege are proven false, they may enter the retreat stage. They may feel guilty and ashamed by how hard life has been, and still is, for People of Color.

EMERGENCE: After feeling guilty and ashamed, Whites may move into the emergence stage where they start to understand their privilege and how it has benefitted and continues to benefit them.

INTEGRATIVE AWARENESS: Hoffman asserts that Whites and People of Color both conclude that there is much more to them than their race or gender.
Program Overview Communication Letter

Thank you for participating in this year-long study group at the Mississippi Museum of Art to help us experiment with new modes of lifelong learning and visitor engagement. The opportunity to see through your eyes means that we can create exhibitions and programs that are more meaningful and exciting than ever. The lessons we learn from this process will help us leverage the Museum’s 5,600 object collection in exciting and innovative ways to build community and put Jackson on the map in the larger museum world.

How it works:
This year-long process will be bookended by two close-looking sessions with works of art from our collection: one in September 2018 and another in early fall 2019.

In the intervening months, we ask that you attend and participate in a series of Museum programs, which you will choose from a calendar we provide.

- Not every Museum program qualifies; we have specifically chosen a group of programs based on group dialogue with art objects.
- Since our programs are driven by exhibition schedules, we will break the year into “semesters:” – fall/winter and spring/summer. You will be asked to attend at least three programs each semester.

Following each program, you will be given a prompt to respond to in this journal. The goal of these prompts is to record what you experienced during the program and capture any ideas, reflections, or stories that emerged for you following the program.

The data:
The qualitative data you provide during this process (the reflections and writings in your journal and your conversations during the close-looking sessions) are anonymous. The only parties who may access this raw data will be our strategic planning and evaluation firm, Brocade Studio, and a small group of Museum staff members involved in facilitating this study group. Thus, while we may publish learnings from this process to benefit others in the field, we will do so without associating your name with your responses.

Should you have questions at any point, please feel free to contact us:
Julian Rankin
Center for Art & Public Exchange at MMA | XXXX@XXXX.ORG; XXX-XXX-XXXX

Monique Davis
Director of Museum Culture and Experience | XXXX@XXXX.ORG; XXX-XXX-XXXX

Shannon Morrissey
Brocade Studio | XXXX@XXXX.ORG; XXX-XXX-XXXX

Thank you again for supporting the Museum!
This section details the program choices available to longitudinal study group participants, with descriptions of the program and a corresponding prompt. In addition, participants were asked to bring their reflection journals to the program, record their responses after each program, and send the responses to Shannon at Brocade, who coded their reflections within the identity framework model. This table summarizes the programming that occurred during the fall and winter. The programs fall into 3 categories:

**Gallery Talks:** These are 30-minute encounters with a single work or a pairing of works led by a curator or educator. Gallery Talks are held during the lunch hour during the work week.

**Art Nights:** An evening series that combines art, literature, music and conversations. This is a multidisciplinary program that is an hour long.

**Mini-Symposium:** The structure is variable and is routinely done at the beginning or end of an exhibit. Elements that remain consistent are panel discussions that include artists, scholars and community members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Re:Frame Program for August Third Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Event Name</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Event Specifics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Goals</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Description</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What Strategic objectives does it connect to?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Evaluation method/feedback Reflection Questions** | • What did you learn or gain from this experience that was unexpected?  
  • Are you thinking differently about pre-Columbian collections in any way as a result of this conversation? __yes __no; if yes, please specify |
| **How do you plan to measure impact?** | At the time of the program, we will take a participant count to know how many people engaged with this program in total. Then, we will use the survey/reflection questions to learn how the program impacted people’s knowledge on the topic of pre-Columbian collections, provenance, and cultural heritage. In addition, we can review the responses to see if the program impacted how they think/view pre-Columbian collections in museums. |
| **Materials needed** | Markers, 5x8 index cards (possibly two colors), cardstock white paper, pens for reflection questions, four tables with black table covers and eight chairs around each table |
Instructions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be seated at tables in the Yates room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Begin by reading CAPE Community Agreements. Have Agreements visible in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In the first activity, participants will draw a personal/home object and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free-write a description of the object on an index card.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Images from each table will be collected and passed to another table in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the room. Participants will pick up the new object placed on their table</td>
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<tr>
<td>and write their interpretation of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Several volunteers will read aloud their interpretation, and the original</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owner of the object will read their personal description. Before we move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to the reflection piece of this activity, participants will be asked to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look at the collection on display and think about what information is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>given to them and what information is missing (thinking of the share out</td>
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<tr>
<td>that they had just done).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. We will come back together and have a conversation about their reactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to having their personal/home object interpreted out of context and what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>connections can be drawn to the pre-Columbian collection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. At the end, I will share what questions I had when I began my research of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the collection.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Additional Notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have pens available for reflection questions because pen ink is more legible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when scanned to PDF. Use markers/sharpies for drawing to deter drawing and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>erasing from participants which, will consume time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brocade’s Research Summary

The first half of the study did not meet our initial goal of 60 journal entries, and many of the responses did not mention issues of race and equity. In some ways, this was expected. Conformity (Stage 1) and even Acceptance (Stage 2) result in a sort of “colorblindness” and unwillingness of White people to talk about race, let alone racism. Our hypothesis is that participants will become more comfortable confronting race and racism with repeated attendance at CAPE programs. According to the model, Resistance (Stage 3), Retreat (Stage 4), and Emergence (Stage 5) are all necessary steps to reach Integrative Awareness (Stage 6) - meaning that no one can skip over these stages, though some will move more quickly than others. The strength of a longitudinal analysis lies in collecting and comparing data to demonstrate change over time repeatedly. To date, we do not have the quantity or quality of data required for a robust study. But, at this stage, we can identify themes and belief systems emerging from the 27 journal entries we have received.

The most common theme from the entries was the prevalence of emotional reactions to the works of art and facilitated conversations around personal and family history. This was especially true when the facilitators asked participants to recall songs, texts, or objects that had personal significance. For example, in the Visual Rhythm of Cultural Identity program, people recalled very visceral, emotional memories from their childhoods that specific songs evoked from their childhoods.

A Journal Entry

“Music, like art, is very powerful, and both conjure up many emotions. You can hear a tune and immediately be taken back in time when you first heard it or when you first danced to it. While there are many songs with melodies and lyrics that I love, the one song that truly answers the above questions for me and has impacted my life is a hymn, ‘It Is Well with My Soul.’ My memories and experiences with this song are very special and go all the way back to my childhood, where I was raised in a household filled with piano music, singing, attending church.”
Summary of Challenges and Recommendations
There were several challenges encountered during the study:

**Challenge #1** - Due to staff turnover, and shifting responsibilities, there was a lack of coordination between the evaluation team, program staff, and the Managing Director, which often resulted in prompts that were developed without the goals of the study in mind.

**Challenge #2** - The relationship management of the Study Group - scheduling and program attendance - was performed by the Managing Director while the submissions were sent directly to the evaluator (Brocade). This decentralized process made it more difficult to follow up with participants that were falling behind.

**Challenge #3** - Only some of the eight programs selected specifically referenced race, which could have contributed to the quality of the responses received.

**Challenge #4** - The participants noticed that the group was all White at the beginning of the study and mentioned it to the Brocade Team. To preserve the integrity of the study design, we were not able to disclose why. However, during a meeting with the participants, several members commented, and the research methodology was shared. This invalidated the results of the study and caused some feelings of distrust. The staff was able to repair the relationships with the study group participants, but this further highlighted both our need to be transparent and our lack of understanding about the research methodology selected.

**Recommendation**
To address the challenges noted, Brocade suggested that the entity responsible for conducting the research, regardless of methodology, be the primary contact for the study participants. This will ensure consistent communication with the participants, and a level of trust will be created with the research partner.

**Learnings from the Longitudinal Study**
As an institution, we are continually reminded of the importance of cultivating relationships and consistent communication. This process revealed that we did not manage the participant relationships effectively, and it also showed us that we did not clearly and/or consistently communicate with our research partner. We took Brocade’s recommendation to heart and contracted with Susie Wilkening of Wilkening Consulting to conduct a series of online panels that would take place over a period of time; Susie would manage the questions and panelist relationships, and the CAPE team would provide input on the nature of the questions. Coordination was improved with monthly check-in calls with the evaluation team, CAPE and Susie Wilkening.

**Online Panel**
In July 2019, the CAPE Team contracted with Susie Wilkening to conduct a series of online panels. Susie Wilkening is a well-respected researcher with over 20 years of experience in the museum field. Her company, Wilkening Consulting, administers the annual survey for the American Alliance for Museums and has conducted important research about the role of curiosity and empathy. MMA has contracted with Susie over the past ten years to perform demographic analysis of our membership and the larger community, which provided data that informed the development of two MMA strategic plans (adopted in 2019 and 2014).
Research Methodology

Initial BIG Question:
How does the Mississippi Museum of Art use art to explore issues of race and equity in Mississippi – and in ways that cultivate tolerance, understanding and proactive inclusion by more Mississippians?

The Qualitative Panel selection process
Art museum-goers were recruited using MMA email lists, and surveys
Broader population participants were recruited via Craigslist

Panel Mechanics

Phase 1 - October- November 2019
(Nick Cave FEAT)
45 participants
27 completed all questions

Phase 2 - May-June 2020
(Van Gogh Monet Degas and Their Times)
35 participants
16 new panelists who were asked to complete 10 questions
29 completed all 8-10 questions
19 panelists from fall who were asked to complete 8 questions

Panelist incentives
Free admission to the exhibits
Gift certificate to the Museum Store or an Amazon Gift Card

Sample Question from Phase 1

Q1 – Your Experiences with Art and Culture
Some people avidly participate in the arts, while others hardly ever participate, with most people falling in between. Most people fall in between. And, the individuals I invited into this panel reflect those varied levels of interest. But we’d like to get a better sense of how you do and do not engage with art and culture. So, for this question, we want you to think of art and culture with a broad definition, including visual arts (such as paintings and sculpture) as well as music, poetry, literature, movies, fashion, design, craftwork, food, and anything else you consider art and culture.

Here are some questions to help you think through your answer:

• Did you have any kinds of art and cultural experiences as a child?
• Did your parents or caregivers ever talk about art or take you to art museums, concerts, plays, festivals, etc.?
• If so, can you tell us a bit about those experiences?
• If not, why not?
• Do you do any art-related activities today, either as a viewer/consumer or as a creator?
  • If so, what are those activities, and why do you enjoy them?
  • If not, why not?
• Do you think art and culture affect how you view others or yourself?
  • If yes, how?
  • If not, why not?
• Is there anything else about art and culture that you would like to share with us?

The panel participants were required to visit the Museum. The instructions provided are listed below.

**A Visit to the Mississippi Museum of Art**
As part of this panel, we would like you to visit the Mississippi Museum of Art and share your candid and honest thoughts and feedback. Logistics for visiting are at the end of this question. During your visit, we would like you to specifically visit *New Symphony of Time* and *Nick Cave: Feat*.

**First, let’s consider New Symphony of Time.**

**Author’s Note:** *New Symphony of Time* is the permanent collection of the Mississippi Museum of Art.

• What was your first impression of this exhibition? (If you have visited it before, please share what you recall of your first impression.)
• Walking through the exhibition, what reactions did you have?
• Were you engaged?
• Why or why not?
• Take a look at a label in the exhibition. You will see that there is some biographical information and a photo of the artist.
• Do you find that information and photo helpful? Why or why not?
• Is there anything in this exhibition that challenged you emotionally or intellectually?
• Anything that made you uncomfortable?
• If so, what was it?

**Now, let’s consider Nick Cave: Feat.**

• What was your first impression of this exhibition?
• Walking through the exhibition, what reactions did you have?
• Were you engaged?
• Why or why not?
• The text and labels in this exhibition are rather different than *New Symphony of Time*. Which do you prefer?
• Why do you think that is?
• Nick Cave is deliberately trying to provoke a response in you, the viewer. What was your response to his artwork, both emotionally and intellectually?
• How do you feel about being deliberately provoked in this way?
• Was there anything that made you uncomfortable in this exhibition?
• If so, what was it?
• Finally, considering these two shows, was one more meaningful to you than the other?
• If so, which one, and why?

Feel free to share any other thoughts you have about these exhibitions or your experience at the Museum in general.
Logistics
The Mississippi Museum of Art is located at 380 South Lamar Street in Jackson. It is open Tuesday – Thursday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Friday – Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday noon to 5 p.m.

When you visit, please proceed to the front desk, tell them that you are a panelist and give them your panel screen name. They will provide you and your guests (up to four family members or friends) with stickers that will get you into all exhibitions at no charge. (If your screen name is your actual name, I have changed it to be your first name and last name initial, e.g., Jane Doe would be “Jane D.”) The last day that free admission is being offered to panelists is Sunday, November 24. If you cannot visit the Museum before that date, please let Susie Wilkening know at XXX@XXXX.XXX.

Online Panel Outputs
At the end of the process, Susie Wilkening produced:
1. A 400-page transcript of the questions and panelist responses.
2. A 174-page slide deck summarizing the findings with the chapters organized as follows:
   - Museums and Inclusion: National Context
   - Art and Individual Experiences
   - Art and Others
   - Art and Society
   - Art, Exhibitions and Inclusive Practice
   - Primer for Inclusive Practice
3. An Executive Summary was presented to MMA’s Board of Trustees.
4. The entire slide deck was presented to staff during a staff meeting.

Report Summary
1. There is no neutral position on race, and equity and those who expect “neutrality” from museums actually seek a White hetero-normative position but they haven’t embraced inclusion yet either.
2. There is a large segment of the population and of museum-goers who are not anti-inclusive but haven’t embraced inclusion yet either; this represents a significant opportunity for the Museum to deliver a major impact in Mississippi towards inclusion.
3. Curiosity is a powerful tool in your toolbox for cracking open worldviews and helping more people consider a more inclusive mindset.

MMA’s Institutional Response
MMA is digesting the information presented in this report. As our culture of equity continues to develop, this information will be rolled into a comprehensive and holistic strategy for ongoing program development and capacity building for staff. It was also important for us to share with all levels of the institution, including the Trustees, to demonstrate the challenges and opportunities for institutions interested in pursuing conversations about race and art.
What we learned:
Our lack of transparency in the longitudinal study damaged relationships with the participants and lowered participation from that point forward.
People learn by having conversations with other people who are different from themselves.
Creating a homogenous group as a cohort in the longitudinal study was a flawed assumption that was well-intentioned but misguided.

How we are changing:
Transparency is a core value included in our strategic plan and is a metric by which we measure our operations and programming decisions. However, we also acknowledge that this is an ongoing process that we will continue to hone and evaluate.

Final Thoughts
The Kellogg grant funded both evaluation processes. The online panel process was over $20,000, which puts this method out of reach for many institutions; however, there are lessons from both methods that could be instructive as institutions begin to consider evaluation methods and practices.

1. Create a culture of evaluation with staff and share the importance of the practice with all levels of your institution.
2. Be transparent with visitors and program participants about why you are collecting information and how it will be used. Consider sharing a summary of your findings via a newsletter or as part of a marketing campaign. This is a way to demonstrate accountability with your community.
3. Clearly communicate your intentions and goals with the participants.

Chapter 8 is a high-level summary of our recommendations and reflections.
“Art is a nontargeting way to expose the goodness of people to each other.”

– Monique Davis, Managing Director of CAPE
Congratulations, you have made it to the Recommendations and Reflection Chapter, where we reflect on the previous chapters and provide closing thoughts and recommendations! We have shared processes, practices, letters, templates, and forms that are intended to provide tools that will help you construct a sustainable initiative. Here we go!

Chapter 1 – History and Goal Development

1. Include the perspectives of many departments (Curatorial, Marketing, Development, Operations, Visitor Services, etc.) during the development of goals, especially if you are considering an initiative that will impact the culture of the institution as opposed to a stand-alone program.
2. Include your Trustees/Board early in the planning process. Their understanding and support are essential to the long-term sustainability of your initiative.
3. Create and maintain the spirit of experimentation and adaptability. Fully acknowledge that you are “Learning in Public” and that mistakes will be made, that it will be messy, and that you will adapt, grow, and change.
4. Align the initiative’s goals with your strategic plan; if your strategic plan is outdated, then use this opportunity to create a new one that reflects the goals of your work.

Chapter 2 – Staff Training

1. Find consultants who have expertise in trust-building within an equity framework and are willing to co-create a training curriculum with your institution.
2. Make a commitment to devote resources and time to inclusion and equity training. This is an ongoing practice.
3. An employee working group is a practical way to ensure that someone is focused on implementing and evaluating the training.
4. Include art-making or other activities into the training curriculum in order to infuse a sense of play into the learning experience.
5. Be mindful that trust-building is a journey that is impacted by your worldview and identity. The risk, real or perceived, impacts the willingness to be vulnerable and authentic. Consequently, it is imperative that leadership fully participate in the training and model those characteristics throughout the training – and afterward.

Chapter 3 – Innovation LAB

1. Clearly define the goals you would like to achieve. (This has been stated many times because it is IMPORTANT.)
2. Remember this is an experiment; prototype, analyze results, iterate, and be prepared to change based on the information you have learned.
3. Share the results with your audience and communicate how you will use the data you collected. Transparency will help increase trust with your visitors.
4. Make the visitor experience a priority.
Chapter 4 - Artist Residencies
1. Be honest about the strength of your relationships in the community selected for a potential residency. Outreach will be required if the relationship is just beginning, and this can be a slow process.
2. Build in evaluation tools that can track progress and measure impact.
3. Stay in communication with the artist and clearly communicate expectations.
4. Be open to the changes that occur during the artistic process and trust that the final outcome will be meaningful.

Chapter 5 - Community Advisory Council
1. Evaluate your institution’s readiness to let community members “peek behind the curtain” and share authority in meaningful and visible ways.
2. Involve your entire staff in the recruitment phase, but be mindful of how many staff members attend the Council meetings. It could shift the power dynamic, and Council members might feel constrained by the presence of staff members.
3. Remember that relationship-building is a marathon, not a sprint. Pace yourself. Move “at the speed of trust,” as adrienne maree brown writes in Emergent Strategies.

Chapter 6 - Re:Frame
1. Meaningful and impactful conversations often happen in intimate settings. Determine alternative measures of success that move you away from solely focusing on attendance numbers.
2. Too many elements of a program can distill your message. Be mindful of sensory overload.
3. Your institution will more than likely have elements of this programming model – experiment and build on what already exists.

Chapter 7 - Longitudinal Study
1. Begin to build a culture of evaluation and data analysis.
2. Share how the data will be used (Yes, this is worth repeating!).
3. Determine what you want to measure and why – it should, of course, align with your mission and strategic priorities.
4. Devote resources ($$$) to hire consultants to help you create meaningful metrics and include your staff in the conversation. Devote time to process what you will learn and make space to implement your learnings.

You are about to begin a journey that will challenge you, inspire you, frustrate you, and ultimately change you – and your institution. Remain open to the journey.
Thank you.

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**Foundations**
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Henry Luce Foundation

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Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP

Mississippi Museum of Art
Betsy Bradley (Director)
Julian Rankin (Founding Managing Director)
MMA Staff
CAPE Changemakers
MMA Board of Trustees

**Collaborators and Partners**
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Brocade Studio (Madge Bemiss)
Mountain Top Vision (Dina Bailey)
Wilkening Consulting (Susie Wilkening)

The National Advisory Council
The Community Advisory Council
The City of Utica
Lafayette County
Hancock County

**Artists and Residency Participants**
Jeffrey Gibson and residency participants
daniel johnson
Mark Geil
Liana Ambrose Murray

**Training Partners**
The William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation
The Critical Response Team at Liz Lerman
About the Author

Monique Davis is Managing Director for the Center for Art and Public Exchange (CAPE) at the Mississippi Museum of Art (MMA), where she also serves as the Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer. CAPE is a W. K. Kellogg Foundation-funded initiative that uses artwork, exhibitions, engagement with artists, and programming as a vehicle to have conversations about race and equity. Davis is responsible for creating brave spaces that expand visitors’ perspectives and reveal our shared humanity. She is deeply committed to the belief that art has the power to transform and inform us. Prior to her tenure at the Museum, Monique served as the Senior Program Manager for Parents for Public Schools of Jackson. Her primary responsibility was teaching parents how to be effective advocates for their children by creating workshops to help parents navigate bureaucratic and often dehumanizing systems. Her career has been a winding path that has resulted in her owning and operating a restaurant, advocating for homeless veterans at the federal level, and creating safe spaces for nursing mothers. Her board affiliations include Shift Collective (Chair); Visit Jackson (Treasurer); USDAC (United States Department of Arts and Culture) Cultural Agent for Mississippi; Coleman Center for the Arts (Treasurer); and Alternate ROOTS (member and former Chair). Davis is a CPA and a graduate of Howard University.
Credits

Headshot Credits:
Betsy Bradley Photo by Ellen Rodgers
Monique Davis Photo by Imani Khayyam

Art Credits:


Design and Toolkit Layout:
Latrice Lawson
Appendix 1
CAPE Close Looking Infographic

Appendix 2
CAPE Innovation Lab Palette

Appendix 3
CAPE Evaluations: Year One–Three

Appendix 4
MMA Strategic Plan
Center for Art and Public Exchange

Innovation Lab Phase 1

Visitors were asked for feedback for the following prompts:

- How does this painting make you feel? How do you (or don’t you) connect to this work of art?
- What questions do you have about the painting? What information might make looking at this work of art more meaningful?

I am concerned about the woman. I want to know that her ideas are valued, something other than her body. I am African-American and my ancestors were also slaves.

Total visitor responses: 52
Total words: 849
Most frequently used words: 30

Participant questions about the painting:

Who are the figures depicted?
What’s the story the cut-out is revealing?
What is the connection between the two individuals in the painting?
What significance did she play?
Maybe the label should be covered?
Who is the white man in this picture?
Who is the African American woman?
Why is he peering down?
What does she see? What is she looking at?

Participant feelings:

I am concerned about the woman.

I feel that the picture is powerful and it speaks volume.

The painting makes me feel good and it shows us how far we’ve come as people and back then people weren’t treated as they are now (age 14).

It makes me feel like I’m looking at hidden history.

James Baldwin’s book The Fire Next Time speaks to here I feel.
## CAPE Evaluations

### CAPE Evaluation: Year One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching Goal</th>
<th>Activities/Strategies</th>
<th>Intended Outcomes</th>
<th>Evaluation Methods</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Transform the Museum Internally:**  
new acquisitions, staff equity training,  
CAPE Innovation Lab | New Acquisitions  
MMA will acquire and display work from artists of diverse backgrounds. The Museum’s collection will become more equitable and representative of Jackson communities. | Track the new acquisitions that reflect this commitment to race and equity. | Mississippi River Bank (Andrews), Sharecropper (Gibson), DNA: Black Painting, IV (Binion), Flying Geese (Thomas), Road to Shubuta (Saterstrom), The Engagement (Odutola), Darker Than Cotton (Kaphar), Untitled (Luster). | |
| | Racial Equity Training for Museum Staff  
Staff will expand their understanding of issues related to racial equity in Mississippi. They will acquire skills to facilitate conversations that lead to personal transformation through art (building empathy, combating prejudice, etc.) | Staff training planned and executed by the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation. | Staff interviews and training outlines provided by William Winter Institute. | |
| | CAPE Innovation Lab  
Visitors will engage with the museum’s curatorial process and have a role in determining how MMA installs, presents, and interprets art. | Titus Kaphar’s Darker Than Cotton was unveiled in the Lab in December 2018. | No data reported in year one. | |
| **Transform the Museum Audience:**  
national artist residencies, state-wide artist-led workshops, community advisory council | National Artist Residency: WanderLust + Jeffrey Gibson: Like A Hammer  
MMA will bring nationally-recognized artists to Jackson to engage community members in place-based work. These residencies will connect local issues in Mississippi to national conversations about race and equity. | Interview with Jeffrey Gibson; focus group with WonderLust participants; video footage from the experience and production. | Interview with Jeffrey Gibson, focus group with WonderLust participants, and video footage. | |
| | State-wide artist-led workshops  
MMA will fund two artist residencies per year to bring artwork and artist-led workshops to communities across Mississippi. | Staff conducted community listening sessions at six (6) locations across the state. | Materials from sessions in Oxford, Meridian, Utica, Stone County, Hancock County, and McComb. | |
| | Community Advisory Council  
MMA will convene an advisory council of community members and stakeholders. This council will inform institutional processes to build relationships in the Jackson community beyond MMA’s traditional audience. | The CAC will serve as an evaluation tool itself — helping MMA expand its audience. | No data reported in year one. | |
| **Inspire Personal Transformation and Civil Action:**  
Re:Frame Community dialogues, longitudinal study, leadership seminar | Re:Frame Community Dialogues  
MMA will use artworks and exhibitions, (i.e. White Gold by Thomas Sayre) to challenge visitors’ understanding of racial justice issues through conversations around the historical, social, and cultural significance of visual art. | Re:Frame programs will be recorded, and half-sheet evaluations forms will be used to capture visitor’s reactions and responses. | Quotes from audio recordings and synthesis of visitor feedback. | |
| | Longitudinal Study with Museum Members  
MMA will design an experimental study to evaluate the impact of CAPE programs on MMA’s traditional audience (i.e., White, middle-aged, upper-middle-class, often women). | Museum members were invited to participate in a longitudinal study in which they attend CAPE programs and respond to reflection questions in a personal journal provided. The entries will be collected and analyzed by Brocade. | Excerpts from journal entries. | |
| | Leadership seminar on art and social justice for corporate community  
MMA will build curriculum for a leadership seminar to involve the corporate community in CAPE. The seminar will foster personal transformation through exposure to visual art and build corporate membership and support of MMA. | Potential to create a pre- and post-assessment for seminar participants. | No data reported in year one. | |
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<tr>
<td>Transform the Dominant Narrative about Mississippi: Picturing Mississippi, symposium, national advisory council, digital storytelling</td>
<td>Picturing Mississippi exhibition</td>
<td>Picturing Mississippi celebrates the 200th anniversary of statehood for Mississippi. It brings topics of race and equity to the forefront, which may challenge the narrative held by MMA’s traditional audience.</td>
<td>Go-along interviews with MMA staff in the gallery to collect impressions and anecdotes as to how Picturing Mississippi differed from the previous exhibition, The Mississippi Story.</td>
<td>Staff interviews and their recollection of visitors’ reactions to the exhibit.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Symposium about art and social justice</td>
<td>MMA will host an annual symposium about art and social justice, establishing the museum as a convener of national conversations about artistic responses to civil rights and racial equity issues.</td>
<td>Audience evaluation forms were completed by attendees along with a web-based post-survey.</td>
<td>Statements from the survey and audience evaluation forms.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>National Advisory Council</td>
<td>MMA will build connections with national institutions, influencers, and funders whose work aligns with the overarching goals of CAPE.</td>
<td>The National Advisory Council will serve as an evaluation tool in itself -- helping MMA remain at the forefront of conversations around visual art, civil rights, and racial justice.</td>
<td>No data reported in year one.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Digital Storytelling + Social Media Engagement</td>
<td>MMA will build a strong web presence and create digital spaces on social media to highlight artistic responses to civil and racial justices issues.</td>
<td>Media attention generated by CAPE or CAPE programs will serve as an indicator of successful narrative change in Mississippi and beyond.</td>
<td>MMA was featured in articles by The New York Times and Hyperallergic.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Permanent Collection Reinstallation</strong></td>
<td>Picturing Mississippi celebrates the 200th anniversary of statehood for Mississippi. It brings topics of race and equity to the forefront, which may challenge the narrative held by MMA's traditional audience.</td>
<td>Susie Wilkening’s panel questions will include questions that relate to the reinstallation. We are working on placing a comment book in the exhibit to gather reactions and feedback.</td>
<td>Prompting questions, open ended opportunity to provide feedback.</td>
<td>Objects from the NSOT have been incorporated into the Teaching Fellows Curriculum and the CAPE Managing Director will teach a session in October.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Racial Equity Training for Museum Staff</strong></td>
<td>Self selected staff members will learn how to continue the culture of equity internally with new staff members and externally with visitors. The training will happen from August-November in three short sessions, and the last session will involve an activity with the entire staff.</td>
<td>Staff training planned and executed by the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation.</td>
<td>Surveys that ask participants to reflect on new learnings. The train the trainer program will begin at the end of Year 2 and finish in Year three. Mybe we could get the Teaching Fellows/Young people to help code (open for discussion)</td>
<td>William Winter training dates for year two were October 2018, May 2019, and September 2019. The focus of the first training was familiarizing colleagues with White Fragility, team building and to talk about art work in the Gallery in ways that were constructive and factual. This was done in preparation for handling negative visitor feedback responding to some of the themes of gender equality and indigenous oppression that were highlighted in the Jeffrey Gibson exhibit. The second training was an intervention in response to the Black Out exhibit and discussing the methods used to discuss images of enslaved people brutality and violence.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CAPE Innovation Lab</strong></td>
<td>Continue the experiments that share authority with visitors using varying experiments. The results will be used to inform programming and exhibit content.</td>
<td>Prompt questions in the Lab, journal entries, close looking conversations.</td>
<td>Responses to prompts are gathered and archived in a LAB Log. Conducting the second experiment with DNA IV and Blood bling.</td>
<td>Conducted 2 experiments and also used as a teaching tool for the Community Advisory Council to familiarize themselves with the ways CAPE uses close looking to facilitate conversations about race and equity in the Galleries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transform the Museum Audience: national artist residencies, statewide artist-led workshops, Community Advisory Council</td>
<td>National Artist Residency</td>
<td>MMA will bring nationally-recognized artists to Jackson to engage community members in place-based work. These residencies will connect local issues in Mississippi to national conversations about race and equity.</td>
<td>The evaluation methods will be developed based on conversations with the artist, who has not been selected at this time.</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<td></td>
<td>State-wide artist in residence</td>
<td>MMA will fund three artist residencies per year to bring artwork and artist-led workshops to communities across Mississippi.</td>
<td>Questions will be developed in coordination with the artists and Managing Director.</td>
<td>The Managing Director along with Madge will develop surveys for the participants in the culminating exhibits. We will have information about new partnerships and community involvement that we can include in the report, along with descriptions of the work being done.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Community Advisory Council</td>
<td>The CAC will meet three times throughout the year in preparation for the Museum’s Takeover in October. There will also be a concluding celebratory event in December/January.</td>
<td>MMA will gather insights and feedback at each CAC meeting: 1) perceptions of art museums, 2) feedback on close-looking in the lab, 3) brainstorm ideas for Museum Takeover.</td>
<td>Notes and insights gathered from CAC meetings. We have had two activities</td>
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How can we capture the impact of the Museum Takeover event? We need to revise the intended outcomes on this – and determine how to capture impact.
### CAPE Evaluation: Year One

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<th>Feedback tools/Data</th>
<th>Scheduling + Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inspire Personal Transformation and Civil Action:</strong> Re:Frame community dialogues, longitudinal study, leadership seminar</td>
<td><strong>Re:Frame Community Dialogues</strong></td>
<td>Re:Frame Community Dialogues</td>
<td>MMA will use artworks and exhibitions to challenge visitors’ understanding of racial justice issues through conversations around the historical, social, and cultural significance of visual art.</td>
<td>Quotes from audio recordings and synthesis of visitor feedback. Audio did not happen, but we do have qualitative feedback and the intern created</td>
<td>We have had 3 Re Frame conversations. 1. featuring Talameka Brice discussing the role of Art and Activism (she had just finished painting the Obama Mural on a local school), 2. discussed migration and documentation with a panel of experts and people impacted by the issue and connected it to the McArthur Binion that was in the LAB. 3. Aylen our AAMD intern created an immersive exercise that explored ownerships of objects and who has the right to tell people’s stories.</td>
<td>We used qualitative questions to determine if the participants learned new information, if it sparked curiosity, and/or resulted in changes in belief.</td>
<td>Are the Re:frame community dialogues still happening?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longitudinal Study with Museum Members</td>
<td>Museum members were invited to participate in a study in which they used personal journals to reflect on CAPE programs. This was an attempt to capture the impact of CAPE on MMA’s traditional audience (i.e. older, White, upper-middle class, usually women).</td>
<td>At the conclusion of each CAPE program attended, participants were asked to respond to a series of prompts or questions in personal journals that were later collected and analyzed by Brocade along a spectrum of racial identity development.</td>
<td>Brocade summarized and analyzed 27 journal entries into a report on the fall/winter programs. So far we have received four additional journal entries from the spring. Panel information will be used for Year 3</td>
<td>Shannon prepared a detailed analysis that described how the study participants responded to programming and concluded that the majority of participants do not think about race unless it is specifically referenced in programming.</td>
<td>Will we also have data from the online panel in time for the Year 2 report?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Land and Labor Acknowledgement</strong></td>
<td>Leadership seminar on art and social justice for corporate community</td>
<td>MMA will build curriculum for a leadership seminar to involve the corporate community in CAPE. The seminar will foster personal transformation through exposure to visual art and build corporate membership and support of MMA.</td>
<td>This will be developed in coordination with the Director of Interpretation and be implemented in Year 3.</td>
<td>Qualitative questions will be developed in coordination with other CAPE Team members.</td>
<td>Adrienne will have a significant role in developing the curriculum that will be used.</td>
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<td>Transform the Dominant Narrative about Mississippi: national symposium, national advisory council, digital storytelling, AAMD Intern</td>
<td>Symposium about art and social justice</td>
<td>MMA will host an annual symposium about art and social justice, establishing the museum as a convener of national conversations about artistic responses to civil rights and racial equity issues.</td>
<td>This will be developed in coordination with the Director of Interpretation and be implemented in Year 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>How can we capture the participant experience of the symposium?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Advisory Council</td>
<td>MMA will build connections with national institutions, influencers, and funders whose work aligns with the goals of CAPE.</td>
<td>Document the emerging partnerships and how the NAC's input impacted the development of the Strategic Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Expanded Relationships and services provided</td>
<td>Seph Rodney- Writer in Residence, Elaine Gurian Museum Consultant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spotlight on National Conferences, Podcasts, etc.</td>
<td>MMA will maximize opportunities to highlight artistic responses to civil and racial justices issues by presenting lessons learned on national platforms focusing on conferences that highlight social justice.</td>
<td>Create an archive of media mentions, podcasts, and workshop presentations that feature CAPE programs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>List of media mentions and workshops that feature CAPE.</td>
<td>Creative Placemaking in Columbia, Speaker at Ideas on Tap about Visual representation in the Digital age for the National Humanities Council, Panelist for the Margaret Walker Center about a Civil Rights Photographer Bil Freidlander, MPB Mississippi Arts Hour, State of Inclusion Podcast. Spoke on a panel of Kellogg grantees at a convening pf Kellogg Trustees last fall.</td>
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MISSION

The Mississippi Museum of Art connects Mississippi to the world, and the power of art to the power of community.

VISION

Committed to honesty, equity, and inclusion, the Mississippi Museum of Art is a leader in engaging art, artists, and participants in the critical work of reckoning with the past, connecting with each other in the present, and envisioning a future without division.

CORE VALUES

Warm Welcome + Inclusion. The Museum will model open hospitality for all people and will demonstrate inclusiveness at all levels of its operations and programs.

Honesty + Diversity. Honoring diverse viewpoints, histories, and lived experiences, the Museum will be a place for honest conversations that respect difference in the service of increased understanding and empathy.

Local Relevance + National Distinction. The Museum pursues deep investigations into Mississippi’s cultural history, and produces programs of high quality and relevance that attract new national partners seeking to explore the relationship between Mississippi and the world.

Artworks + Artists. Museum programs will honor the primacy of artistic objects as sources of meaning and will include, when possible, meaningful opportunities for participants to have personal experiences with visual artists.

Excellence + Equity. Museum programs, exhibitions, and collections will place artistic value as critical, while simultaneously dismantling traditional hierarchies of genre and style.

Trust + Authority. The Museum values academic scholarship and accuracy; and, at the same time, it trusts the voices of people who have lived experiences that deepen the meaning of its exhibitions.
WHAT MAKES THE MISSISSIPPI MUSEUM OF ART DISTINCTIVE

The Mississippi Museum of Art is more than an art museum in Jackson, Mississippi. It is a museum of Mississippi, and also a museum that connects Mississippians to our culture, our history, our communities, and to each other. It is a museum informed by the legacy of our past and emboldened by a vision of a future without division. It is a community gathering space, a setting for quiet reflection, and a place for social encounters among friends and where strangers become friends. It builds relationships between Mississippi and artists of national renown wanting to re-connect with their ancestors’ homes, and with partnering institutions that see the centrality of Mississippi’s stories to the American narrative. It is a place of learning and growth, of genuine human connection, and of artistic inspiration.

The Mississippi Museum of Art is a place where its vision of truth, beauty, and unity intersects with the lived experiences of the human beings with whom it shares its home, and who honor it with their presence. It honors the imaginative universe while it anchors itself in the reality of the current moment. It is not a solution to the problems facing the world, but rather a sign of hope.

With consistent leadership for the last 16 years, the Museum has built a solid program of exhibitions, public programs, artistic and community partnerships, and educational initiatives that generated the community good will and public credibility that make it a leader among arts and civic institutions in the state. The Museum has long advocated the potential for personal transformation within its visitors as a result of careful staging of encounters with artwork. It has also worked strategically towards diversifying its participants and increasing its relevance to all who enter its doors. Now, the Museum is exploring issues of shared authority, artist partnerships, penetrating privilege and traditional narratives, and its institutional responsibility for investigating the deep and important questions about our shared landscape of Mississippi.
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<tr>
<th>STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</th>
<th>OUR WINNING ASPIRATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCAL RELEVANCE</strong></td>
<td>Mirror Mississippi demographics in participation, membership, and support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building trust and partnerships locally</td>
<td>Demonstrate trustworthiness to our communities, and the Museum’s trust in the expertise and experience those communities offer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting Mississippi to national artists, curators, and thought leaders</td>
<td>Enable new connections, interactions, and experiences. Be a safe place for challenging conversations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NATIONAL DISTINCTION</strong></td>
<td>Become the destination for national artists and scholars aiming to understand the impact of slavery, disenfranchisement, and the Civil Rights Movement on the imaginations of our country’s most profound artists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building innovative and aspirational systems of leadership, infrastructure, and funding</td>
<td>Change the national narrative about Mississippi to be one of resilience, authenticity, leadership, and progress.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH</strong></td>
<td>Build high-functioning, fully operational network of employee and trustee teams that continually learn and grow, strengthen leadership qualities, deepen community involvement, and create innovative projects that gain the attention of their peers nationally.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Build endowment to $30 million to decrease operational insecurity and to create opportunities for innovation and culturally meaningful programs and collection building, and to increase tolerance for risk.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PROGRAMMATIC INNOVATION</strong></td>
<td>Re-build the traditional relationship between museum and audiences from one of scholar and student to that of co-investigators of cultural issues that stem from human experience.</td>
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<td>Demonstrating innovation and integrity in exhibitions, collections, and programming</td>
<td>Create innovative strategies for sharing art and art experiences beyond the Museum’s walls.</td>
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<td>Build a culture of nimble adaptivity that equips the Museum to respond quickly to events, opportunities, and challenges that emerge in the community and nation.</td>
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<td><strong>WONDER</strong></td>
<td>Create an environment where, through experiences with art, our visitors begin to reimagine themselves in relation to the world beyond themselves.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspiring wonder, sharing stories, and expanding imaginations through the power of art</td>
<td>Inspire a sense of wonder, awe, and excitement in visitors of all ages.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MISSISSIPPI</strong></td>
<td>Through deep investigations into Mississippi’s cultural history, launch national conversations that recognize Mississippi’s centrality to America’s narrative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting Mississippians to our culture, our history, our communities, and to each other</td>
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CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES
› Definition of culture expanding
› Demographic changes
› Building trust
› Recruiting staff from outside of the community due to lack of training programs in Mississippi which can create an undesirable distance between staff and community

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
What are our mechanisms for listening to community members and for being aware of issues that are most important to residents and participants?

How do we reach a leadership role in the community, such that the work of the Museum is seen as an essential part of civic engagement and an agent of transformation in our community?

WINNING ASPIRATIONS
› Mirror Mississippi demographics in participation, membership, and support.
› Demonstrate trustworthiness to our communities, and the Museum’s trust in the expertise and experience those communities offer.
› Enable new connections, interactions, and experiences. Be a safe place for challenging conversations.

DESURED OUTCOMES
› Museum participants, staff, and trustees more closely resemble the population of our state and community.
› Staff and trustees deeply embedded in the community.
› A Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Access plan and policies with targets and metrics for accountability.
› Documented learnings from community partners.
› Increased public participation in programs and exhibitions due to local ownership.
› A continued and long-term partnership with Tougaloo College.
› Thoughtful and sensitive exhibitions and programs reflecting the diverse cultures represented in our communities.
› A system for co-curating sections of the Mississippi galleries that rotate every 12-18 months.
› A pipeline of a diverse pool of potential museum employees from Mississippi colleges and universities.
FOCUS

The Center for Art and Public Exchange (CAPE).

› Continue series of bold public programs that link artists and artwork to social justice issues affecting community members.

› Continue supporting communities and artists in their on-site work together that explores local cultural history, especially as regards race and equity.

› Empower the Community Advisory Council to influence Museum considerations of exhibitions, collections, and programs.

Develop and sustain inclusive strategies for building participation at all levels of the Museum.

› Forge partnerships with organizations whose constituencies reflect our target audiences.

› Continue to invest annually in participant research to better understand our visitors, members, and stakeholders.

› Reward staff participation in community-based organizations outside of the Museum.

› Recruit and sustain a board of trustees which reflects the diversity of the community and brings intelligence about effective partnerships with the communities in which they live and work.

Harness the intellectual capital of local colleges and universities with the Museum’s collection to create a hub of academic activity for local college students and faculty.

› Leverage the success of the Teaching Fellows Program and the Art and Civil Rights Initiative to build a new structure of learning opportunities for local college students and, potentially, a diverse pool of Museum job candidates.

› Create partnerships with other institutions (Spelman, University of Arkansas, among others) to create further opportunities for local college students.

› Create plan for deeper involvement of faculty, social events for college students, and a mechanism to pursue other partnerships as they arise.

› Create a long-term partnership agreement with Tougaloo College that builds on the success of the Art and Civil Rights Initiative.

Create healthy, mutual relationships with community partners that result in new connections, interactions, and experiences for our visitors and increased trust in the Museum.

› Develop the infrastructure for staff and trustee reports on intelligence from other local organizations, Jackson City Council and State Legislature priorities, grassroots movements, and visitor feedback.

› Demonstrate accountability to the community through structured responsiveness.

› Expand our capacity to respond quickly to community or national events with relevant programming.

› Further empower CAPE Community Advisory Council to co-create programs; develop mechanisms to hold Museum staff accountable to the Council.

› Establish regular feedback loop between programming staff and visitors and participants.

› Deepen relationships with City Council members and City leadership.

› Hold trustees accountable for the relationships they build for the Museum, for membership recruitment, and other ambassadorial tasks associated with advocating for the Museum.

The Mississippi Museum of Art is in a position to help address two urgent issues facing Mississippi: the lack of opportunities for its undergraduates to pursue graduate, or in some cases undergraduate, studies in art history or museum education; and the weak supply of native professionals to staff the state’s art museums. The Museum’s home city of Jackson is the location of four colleges and universities. While several of these colleges own artworks, most notably Tougaloo College’s collection, none of them has an art museum. Through two recent initiatives, the Museum has instituted programs which offer local college students opportunities that have increased interest in art museum careers among them, and that have also positioned the Museum to function a bit like a university museum for all four colleges. Thus, the Museum is building a ladder of opportunities for undergraduate students.
CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES
› Geographic isolation from national artistic centers
› Bias of national partners about provincialism of Mississippi
› Recent recognition by respected national organizations
› CAPE’s National Advisory Council

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
How do we leverage decades of high-quality programs, responsive exhibitions, and deep civic partnerships to go more boldly into artistic enterprises that challenge our collective understanding about Mississippi as a place, and its place in the world?

How do we build up the “Center” part of CAPE to hold the artistic and intellectual resources that attract artists, scholars, and curators from around the country to Mississippi for research, residencies, public programs, and as partners in creating traveling exhibitions?

WINNING ASPIRATIONS
› Through deep investigations into Mississippi’s cultural history, launch national conversations that recognize Mississippi’s centrality to America’s narrative.
› Become the destination for national artists and scholars aiming to understand the impact of slavery, disenfranchisement, and the Civil Rights Movement on the imaginations of our country’s most profound artists.
› Change the national narrative about Mississippi to be one of resilience, authenticity, leadership, and progress.

DESIRED OUTCOMES
› Strategic alignment with the Baltimore Museum of Art that results in new projects, engaged staff and trustees, and increased opportunities for collaboration on all levels.
› Bold exhibition program with national traveling partners and funders.
› Courageous slate of programs and speakers.
› An inclusive and diverse board of trustees who are leaders in the work of equity and access in the museum field.
› Increased scholarship and intelligence about artists and artistic traditions from Mississippi that have affected the national cultural landscape.
› Changed narrative about Mississippi and its work focused on truth, reconciliation, and healing.
FOCUS

Strive to change the narrative about Mississippi to one about resilience, authenticity, leadership, and progress through progressive programming, relationship building, branding, national storytelling, and staff development.

› Identify and engage with national artists who have family histories in Mississippi. Facilitate relationships between national artists and local communities through artist-in-residence programs.

› Commission the CAPE National Advisory Council to be ambassadors and connectors for Mississippi.

› Build a staff of professionals who are nationally connected and recognized as leaders in their respective roles.

› Incentivize staff towards professional development and travel.

› Create sabbatical program for senior staff individual research projects.

› Aggressively recruit talent to Mississippi.

› Continue to engage a national PR firm, and include more national advertisement in media plans.

› Commission a new branding package.

Create a dynamic system of public programs, scholarship, and collections building that expands Mississippi conversations to include national artists, curators, and thought leaders, and that results in a well-rounded Center for Art and Public Exchange.

› Continue the annual symposium that expands the conversation and intellectual capital either about an upcoming exhibition, current initiatives, or an issue of significance to the artistic community.

› Develop and include a Land Acknowledgement Statement in Museum practice, and further examinations of indigenous art forms and narratives within conversations about Mississippi, race, and equity.

› Engage artists, scholars, and community members in the symposia.

› Explore non-traditional formats, including art-making, small conversations around single works of art, and real-time digital Q & A.

› Empower the National Advisory Council to connect the Museum to new participants and communities.

› Create artistic and academic fellowships for commissions, papers, and exhibition prospectuses that result from work and research in Mississippi.

Pursue long-term, multi-layered partnerships with national museums in cities that share part of Mississippi’s cultural history (Chicago and Baltimore, re: Great Migration, as an example). Work should include co-creating exhibitions, national public symposia, digital programming, and staff and trustee collaborations.

› Engage scholars and a guest curator to create Great Migration traveling exhibition as first in a series.

› Engage in national partnerships with museums that share values and community issues of the Mississippi Museum of Art, beginning with the Baltimore Museum of Art. Include collaborations at staff and trustee levels that involve not only project development but sharing of information, learnings, and ideas.

The Great Migration: Its Creative Legacy  Today, for a large percentage of African-Americans living across the United States, the American South is either a place their family left, a place that was traumatic and dangerous to their ancestors; OR it is a place they visited during summers to spend time with older generations who remained. The American South of the 21st century continues to reckon with the impact of The Great Migration, the exile of six million American citizens whose very existence was in peril, the loss now understood to have filled northern and western cities and left the southern region deprived of generations of inventors, thought leaders, writers, artists, and political leaders. The MMA is planning an interdisciplinary research project culminating in a major exhibition to explore the continued impact of the Great Migration on contemporary artists whose families worked in the American South. Traveling to major American museums in migration destinations, the project will include a research and programming partnership with the MS Department of Archives and History and the Two Mississippi Museums.
CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES
› Moving from managing the financials to operating from a robust business plan that leverages Museum assets to support its mission
› Programmatic growth and internal systems
› Recruiting and retaining the highest quality museum professionals
› Trustee engagement and fundraising

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
How do we model, as an institution, our core values, and how do we plan our institutional growth, capitalization, and human resources in response to those values?

How do we build enough financial security to create comfort with planned growth and the risk necessary for innovation?

How do we build an infrastructure that is as progressive as our programs?

WINNING ASPIRATIONS
› Build high-functioning, fully operational network of employee and trustee teams that continually learn and grow, strengthen leadership capacity, and create innovative projects that gain the attention of their peers nationally.
› Build endowment to $30 million to decrease operational insecurity and to create opportunities for innovation and culturally meaningful programs and collection building, and to increase tolerance for risk.

DESIRED OUTCOMES
› Integrity regarding diversity, inclusion, equity, and access being apparent at all levels of the Museum and transforming relationships with visitors, the community, and our peers nationally.
› An updated governance and trustee evaluation plan.
› A dynamic, well-functioning, motivated, and ambitious staff of colleagues who support each other, the Museum’s mission and values, and strive to improve their performances annually.
› A trustee fundraising plan.
› A trustee-led volunteer program.
› An endowment that contributes 30% of the Museum’s annual operating budget.
› A master plan that articulates space needs and growth potential for the next 10 years.
› Ownership of budget, revenue, and efficiency among all staff and trustees.
› An increase in memberships as a direct result of diversity and inclusion work and engagement with students and families.
FOCUS

Increase financial and operational security by focusing stewardship efforts on individual and endowment gifts and national foundation grants.

› Plan and implement an endowment building campaign.

› Review and restructure funding models for contributed and earned income to include new consumer behavior and platforms, incentivize legacy giving, and maximize profit on revenue-generating operations and programs.

› Improve and focus major gifts strategies.

› Maximize operational efficiencies and cost-savings.

› Track revenue growth that results from diversity and inclusion efforts, as well as from the work of CAPE.

› Through state-of-the-art technology, development, data analysis, research, and evaluation, grow operational systems that create a foundation to support artistic and programmatic growth.

› Maximize staff retention through incentives, benefits, and professional development opportunities.

› Build acquisitions funds and activities through an annual Fall acquisitions fundraiser produced by the Collectors Club.

Build new Governance Plan that increases the Trustees’ learning opportunities, fundraising capacities, and avenues for contributing to the success of the Museum.

› Empower the Trustees Committee and director to work with individual trustees on matching their assets and abilities with Museum needs.

› Create an annual training plan for trustees including a re-vamped orientation, sexual harassment training, crisis management, and the ethics of good governance.

› Continue Corporate Leadership in the Arts seminar to build pipeline of future trustees who are committed to the Museum’s values and strategic priorities.

› Require 100% trustee participation in the American Association of Museums’ Facing Change Initiative.

Build a 21st-century volunteer program that reflects changes in the labor force and community demographics AND that serves the Museum’s needs.

Increase productivity, professionalism, recognition, and retention of Museum staff while, at the same time, creating a dynamic group of teams that attract new colleagues from across the country to join them.

› Build new system of staff teams focused on each strategic priority.

› Invest in leadership development of senior staff by supporting presentations at industry conferences, publications, and training.

› Offer staff vacancies to junior staff to encourage growth, institutional history, and consistency.

› Prioritize diversity and inclusion when recruiting new employees.

› Work with each employee to create personal and professional growth targets and concretely reward growth, innovation, and performance excellence.

› Continue to build an internal culture for learning and reflection amongst staff by providing the time and structure for the full staff to regularly engage with works of art, grapple with challenging questions, and to share expertise with one another.

Facing Change: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access

The Mississippi Museum of Art is motivated by its mission as an art museum in and of Mississippi to be relevant to, and reflective of, its communities at all levels. Since launching the Center for Art and Public Exchange in 2017, the MMA staff has undergone extensive training by the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation, so that its team is undergirded by the integrity of practicing internally what it envisions for its community—especially in terms of allowing art to draw forth conversations that strengthen our understandings of ourselves and of those different from us. Taking that commitment to the board governance level, the MMA is excited to have been selected to participate in the American Alliance of Museums’ Facing Change Initiative, taking in place in only five American cities. Working in tandem with other Jackson museum boards, the MMA Board of Trustees has committed to a three-year training program, the result of which will be new and updated policies, procedures, and commitments to diversity, inclusion, equity, and access across the entire museum.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>WINNING ASPIRATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>› Museums’ resistance to change</td>
<td>› Re-build the traditional relationship between museums and audiences from one of scholar and student to that of co-investigators of cultural issues that stem from human experience.</td>
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<td>› Building a strategically learning organization at all levels</td>
<td>› Create innovative strategies for sharing art and art experiences beyond the physical walls of the Museum.</td>
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<td>› Audience expectations</td>
<td>› Build a culture of nimble adaptivity that equips the Museum to respond quickly to events, opportunities, and challenges that emerge in the community and nation.</td>
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<th>QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER</th>
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<tr>
<td>How do we share our authority to create more equity between artists, our community, our audiences, and our institution?</td>
<td>› Models of co-curating exhibitions to share with museum colleagues.</td>
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<td>How do we use our resources to engage new audiences and satisfy their appetites for relevance, timeliness, participation, and variety?</td>
<td>› New exhibition development plan and procedures.</td>
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<td>› Findings from the Innovation Lab that inform changes to internal and programmatic practices.</td>
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<td>› An ingrained system of integrating the intelligence from regular programmatic evaluation into decision-making processes that build increasingly meaningful and impactful programs.</td>
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<td>› Increased ownership of the Museum’s collection by people in rural communities and urban neighborhoods.</td>
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<td>› Broadened and deepened relationships between children and their families at all ages.</td>
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<td>› An energized force of Museum participants, cultural partners, and community advisors who strengthen the community’s investment in the Museum and the quality of its programming.</td>
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Re-define the curatorial process to maximize opportunities for community ownership and innovative learning opportunities.

› Expand the curatorial process to include non-curatorial staff, artists, cultural organizations, and students as co-curators.

› Build mechanism for exhibition planning that considers community issues, visitor data, and survey feedback.

› Engage in short-term experiments for interpretive tools while gathering participant feedback, and make formative adjustments during the run of exhibitions or program series.

› Use innovative staging and layered interpretive tools to integrate transhistorical narratives and space for personal connection and meaning.

› Expand the CAPE Innovation Lab’s space and cede to the Community Advisory Council decisions about investigations to pursue, design, and programming. Equip Museum curators and educators to help the Council realize its visions and goals.

› Expand technological assets to allow for customized experiences.

› Create dynamic staff teams organized by strategic priorities rather than historic museum organizational structures.

Build systemic, layered evaluation structure that analyzes effectiveness and impact of the Museum’s programs and services.

› Maximize capacity to make data-driven decisions by using existing data being captured in its most useful ways.

Focus definitions of success on impact rather than numbers of participants.

Create innovative models for sharing art outside of the Museum’s walls.

› Pursue planning grant for using shipping containers to display art and stage programs in rural communities and urban neighborhoods.

› Take to scale the following successful pilot programs: 2nd and 3rd Grade Initiative; Teen Council; and Teaching Fellows Program—thereby creating a continuum of engagement by children and young adults in the Museum.

› Engage young people via the Teen Council in the efforts of CAPE, acknowledging them as the generation capable of enacting real change.

Informed by the success of the art therapy programs for people living with dementia and with cancer, study the possibility of an additional program that employs art-looking and art-making as therapies for people who have experienced singular or generational trauma.

› Partner with University of Mississippi Medical Center, national neuroscientists, and sociologists to examine the impact of multi-generational, racialized trauma on Mississippians.

› Together with partners, study research and, if warranted, plan art therapy protocols to decrease the negative impact and perhaps behavior caused by trauma.

Art Therapy, Trauma, and Healing: Engagement with art has proven to have unexpected palliative benefits for people living with autism, dementia, cancer, and other debilitating illnesses. Likewise, close observation of artworks is now used across the country, and here at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, in the training curricula of physicians and health-care providers to increase empathy and observational/diagnostic skills. We are also beginning to understand the impact of multi-generational trauma on the epi-genetic make up of humans who continue to demonstrate behavior as though they are being threatened generations after a traumatic event occurs. Can working with art, artists, and art-making tools mitigate the negative impulses that trauma leaves behind in the human neurological system? Can we better understand our neighbors and fellow Mississippians when we think about the legacy of trauma and the healing power of art? The Museum will be working with partners in the art therapy, neuroscience, and sociological fields to investigate these questions and pilot programs to begin to test our theories and to contribute to the overall wellness of its community.
CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

› Audience expectations
› Gaps in collection
› Hearin Exhibition Series
› Rapid shifts in technology

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

How do we most effectively translate the power of art to inspire more meaning in the lives of our visitors and more harmony in our communities?

WINNING ASPIRATIONS

› Create an environment where, through experiences with art, our visitors begin to reimagine themselves in relation to the world beyond themselves.
› Inspire a sense of wonder, awe, and excitement in visitors of all ages.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

› A devoted core of visitors who attend weekly close-looking sessions for spiritual renewal.
› Evaluation of artist residency programs that continue to affirm the life-changing experiences artists create in community.
› Children who are touched by art and become lifelong museum visitors.
› Increased and diversified audiences experiencing the Hearin exhibitions.
FOCUS

Continue to prioritize the visitor experience at all levels of museum operations.

› Create spaces for reflection and quiet conversation in the gardens, galleries, and public spaces.
› Take care of the visitor experience by offering warm welcomes, information when needed, comfortable seating, and opportunities for suggestions and comments.
› Refine our systems for responses to visitor inquiries and suggestions to demonstrate institutional accountability to the individual.
› Through thoughtful program development, visitor welcoming, space planning, and beautiful installations, maximize the opportunities for visitors to have transformative encounters with art.

Continue and build programs that focus on individual meaning-making and opportunities for personal discovery.

› Create partnership with public school districts to expand the 2nd and 3rd Grade Initiative to maximize opportunities for children to have meaningful and awe-inspiring encounters with original art.
› Continue artist residency programs aimed at creating personal meaning and life-changing opportunities for participants.
› Move the family engagement activities from one discrete space into some of the gallery spaces to enable adults and children to experience the wonder of art together.

Through the Annie Laurie Swaim Hearin Memorial Exhibition Series, continue to bring international art, to which our typical participant has limited access, to Jackson.

› Establish network of museum partners to bring increasingly distinctive national and international exhibitions to Mississippi.
› Focus interpretation and programming strategies on threads of the exhibition that have ties to local artists, populations, or cultural traditions.

Continue and expand reflective practice as a tool for increasing the wonder and deepening the engagement with art, both with individual museum goers, as well as the staff and trustees.

› At monthly staff meetings and bi-monthly board meetings, end with a 30-minute session with conversation and reflection in front of a work of art. Ensure that the voices of the full staff and all of the trustees are valued in these conversations. Aim for expanding the capacity of non-program staff and trustees to lead these experiences.
› Expand guided sessions of looking closely at art to regular, weekly events for the public that offer opportunities for quiet reflection, intimate conversation, and personal discovery.
› Continue to focus on building spaces for reflection, reading, writing and learning in Closer Look spaces within the exhibitions.

The Annie Laurie Swaim Hearin Memorial Exhibition Series:

For 27 years, The Annie Laurie Swaim Hearin Memorial Exhibition Series has brought to Jackson world-class art from around the globe and has attracted more than half a million people to the Mississippi Museum of Art. Whether it’s the gasp of transcendent beauty of a Fra Lippo Lippi painting of the annunciation or the tears summoned by a lonely Van Gogh’s self-portrait, the emotions and wonder evoked by these treasures remain with visitors for the rest of their lives. When one is touched deeply, below the mental and intellectual stimulation to the soulful transcendence of the everyday, the impact is life-changing and priceless. And when these encounters occur in a community or with someone else, a special bond exists that no constructed barrier can erase. Creating the environment where visitors may encounter the mysteries of the most brilliant human creations can occur is a primary commitment of the Museum. Thus, the Museum will diligently research the best available art to show in Jackson and the optimal ways to share it effectively with all audiences.
CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES
› Mississippi’s layered and difficult history
› Artists lost to Mississippi through migration
› Curiosity by ex-patriots about ancestral homes

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER
How do we honestly explore the darknesses present in Mississippi’s past while, at the same time, trust artists to help inspire new visions for our people’s futures?

How do we encourage artists working in Mississippi to bravely and authentically explore their own stories in their artwork?

WINNING ASPIRATIONS
› Through deep investigations into Mississippi’s cultural history, launch national conversations that recognize Mississippi’s centrality to America’s narrative.

DESIRED OUTCOMES
› A deeper understanding of the complexities of this place called Mississippi and its relationship to the world beyond its borders.

› A new Collections Development Plan that emphasizes collecting American art that connects Mississippi’s stories to the national narrative.

› The Museum is a trusted vehicle for bringing people together to discuss what Mississippi means and what it can become.

› More authentic conversations with Mississippi artists and more opportunities for them to engage with national exhibitions and artists. Increased opportunities for Mississippi artists on the national level resulting from closer relationships with Museum staff and programs.
FOCUS

The Center for Art and Public Exchange.

› Execute the plan through 2020.

› Evaluate success and determine whether to continue as a separate center or to sunset it in 2023 as work becomes central to the Museum’s values and mission.

› Empower the CAPE Community and National Advisory Councils to introduce new voices and platforms for storytelling based on objects on display or in the collection of the Museum.

› Publish proceedings of symposia to attract future participation by scholars and artists.

› Continue to demonstrate courage in staging exhibitions and programs that respond to Mississippi’s reality while also inspiring participants to discover opportunities for hope.

Nurture and collect Mississippi artists of excellence and originality.

› Develop new plan for biannual Mississippi Invitational, which considers statewide exhibitions, thematic presentations, and community residency components.

› Maximize opportunities for national artist residencies to conduct master classes with local artists.

› Engage local artists in conversations related to exhibition strategies, collections strategies, and organizational priorities to find connections with those trying to tell personal stories related to Mississippi’s history.

Through our partnership with the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum and the Museum of Mississippi History, create opportunities for deepening the understanding of the contexts of exhibitions and programs.

› Continue to expand conversations among members of our joint working team to include not only exhibition and program collaboration but also sharing scholars, educational tools, and communication strategies.

Re-Installation of Mississippi Galleries.

› Continually rotate sections of the galleries with different types of exhibitions, for example, small exhibitions focused on one artist, one contemporary issue, or one genre.

› Also make room for exhibitions co-curated by local artists, community partners, or the Community Advisory Council.

› Include community voices, as well as those of artists, scholars, and curators, when offering expanded text panels, vinyl, or other interpretive tools.

Evaluate and re-structure our Statewide Affiliate Program to create broader and deeper investment in the Museum by people in communities outside of Jackson.

New Symphony of Time: For ten years, The Mississippi Story delighted and moved visitors to the Mississippi Museum of Art. It realized curator Patti Carr Black’s goal, to evoke the sense of place that is Mississippi. Beginning and ending with wise words by Eudora Welty, the exhibition made visitors from far away feel as if they understood Mississippi, and it made many Mississippians feel connected to each other and affirmed in their collective history. The time has come for different voices to be heard, and different stories to be told, in the Museum’s Mississippi galleries. Margaret Walker Alexander, a National Book Award winner, poet, and longtime Jackson State University professor wrote brilliantly of the complexities of life for 20th-century Americans, and Mississippians. Her poem, “This is My Century: Black Synthesis of Time,” inspired the re-installation of the galleries and installations of art that ask questions about ancestry, migration and movement, place and privilege, and home and healing.