

Neuberger Museum of Art

POSITION DESCRIPTION: Director

October 2011

“The Neuberger Museum of Art engages and inspires diverse audiences by actively fostering the study, appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of modern art, African art and the art of our time.”

The Neuberger Museum of Art is the premier museum of modern, African, and contemporary art in the Westchester/Fairfield County area. An outstanding arts and education institution, the Museum was conceived with the dual purpose of serving both as an important cultural resource to its regional, national, and international audiences, and as an integral part of Purchase College. Located on Purchase’s 500-acre campus, the Museum’s 78,000 square foot building was designed by the noted architectural firm of Philip Johnson and John Burgee, as part of a master campus plan formulated by Edward Larrabee Barnes. The Museum’s physical size makes it the one of the ten largest museums in New York State and the tenth largest college museum in the country. In addition to displaying work in its five major exhibition galleries, and alternate project spaces in the building, the Museum also exhibits public sculpture in its three exterior sculpture courts and across the Purchase College campus.

The Museum’s outstanding permanent collection was initiated in 1969 with Roy R. Neuberger’s donation of 108 works of mid-century art, which grew to over 700 works in the following years. At the time of its formulation, the Roy R. Neuberger Collection was considered the most important private collection of American contemporary art in the world. Since that time, the permanent collection of the Neuberger Museum of Art has grown to over 7,000 works of uncompromised quality and variety. Holdings include such remarkable resources and treasures as the Roy R. Neuberger Collection of American Art, the Aimee W. Hirshberg and Lawrence Gussman Collections of African Art, the Hans Richter Collection of Dada and Surrealist Objects, the George and Edith Rickey Collection of Constructivist Art, American, Mexican and European master works from the collection of the late Dina and Alexander Racolin, and the Luis Calzadilla Collection of Contemporary Latin American Art. The Neuberger Museum of Art continues to collect, guided by Mr. Neuberger’s commitment to supporting the work of contemporary artists who examine and expand the ideas of our day.

Neuberger Museum of Art

First and foremost a University Museum with a strong education emphasis, the Neuberger Museum of Art presents seven to eight special exhibitions annually in addition to its displays of permanent collection. The Museum's special exhibition goals have been to present modernist works in new and thought-provoking contexts, showcase the breadth and artistic range of African art, present surveys of established artists, and explore new artistic expressions by emerging artists. These goals have been expanded by the establishment in 2008 of the Roy R. Neuberger Exhibition Prize, awarded every two years to an artist for an early career survey and monographic catalogue. Within each of these areas the Museum is highly committed to presenting a variety of media, a range of cultural perspectives, and to exhibiting works by women and artists from diverse cultural backgrounds. The Museum is justifiably proud of the quality of its exhibitions and public programs. Its exhibitions are reviewed regularly in the national and local press, including *The New York Times*, *Art in America*, *ArtNEWS*, *Sculpture*, *The Art Newspaper*, *L'Oeil*, *Art Actuel*, and *The Financial Times*.

Accompanying its exhibitions, the Museum programs readings, films, concerts, family festivals and workshops for the community. Museum lectures, the most significant of which is its Yaseen Lecture Series, have featured noted speakers such as Claes Oldenburg, Maya Angelou, Chuck Close, Robert Wilson, Meredith Monk, Andy Goldsworthy, and Faith Ringgold. In its interdisciplinary work in these areas the Museum articulates with the College, home to a thriving liberal arts and sciences program, the school of art and design, and conservatories in music, dance, and theatre arts. Cross-campus collaborations are part of the mission of Purchase College.

Before the Museum opened in 1974, the Friends of the Neuberger Museum of Art was formed to advance the Museum's goals. A separately-incorporated campus-related foundation, The Friends is a membership organization open to the public. It has been a dedicated and close community, with some loyal members involved for decades. The Board of Directors of the Friends of the Neuberger Museum of Art, composed of citizens from the region and representatives from Purchase College, State University of New York, oversees the Friends. The Board of Directors helps and directly supports the educational and cultural mission of the Museum, including acquisitions, exhibitions and programs.

Neuberger Museum of Art

Volunteer opportunities at the Neuberger include the Museum Service Council, the Auxiliary Council, and the Docent/Research Council. The 100 member Docent Council receives extensive and noteworthy training and education. The Neuberger is an AAM accredited institution with an annual operating budget of approximately \$3.5 million and a full and part time staff of 22. An integral part of a campus devoted to the arts and surrounded by the vibrant art scene of New York City and the Hudson Valley, the Neuberger enjoys the opportunity to be a tastemaker for contemporary works as well as a focal point for dialogue and engagement with art of the last century and other cultures.

THE COLLEGE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Purchase College, part of the State University of New York's network of 64 publicly funded universities and colleges, was founded in 1967 by Governor Nelson Rockefeller. Envisioned as the arts campus of the SUNY system, Purchase would uniquely combine conservatory training in the visual and performing arts with liberal arts and sciences programs, a professional performing arts center and a professional museum on one campus. Construction of the campus was completed in 1971 and the first building finished was the Neuberger Museum, which opened in 1974. It was designed to permanently house the works of American artists collected over half a century by Roy R. Neuberger. Purchase College is situated directly across the street from the world-renowned Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Gardens at the world headquarters of PepsiCo, Inc.

Located just 25 miles north of New York City, Purchase College uniquely combines professional conservatory training in the visual and performing arts with rigorous majors in the liberal arts and sciences. Our faculty and staff are committed to inspiring an appreciation for both intellectual and artistic talents in all students. Named by Princeton Review as one of the "Best 376 Colleges, 2012", the campus celebrates individuality, diversity, and creativity as we encourage students to "Think Wide Open". At Purchase College, the arts play a special role – liberal education infuses the arts and the arts infuse the campus.

Purchase alumni/ae are at the forefront of their fields, including artists Fred Wilson and Gregory Crewdson, reporter Adam Nagourney, scientists Carl Safina and Jill Bargonetti, directors Chris Wedge and Hal Hartley, playwright Donald Margulies, choreographer Doug Varone, actors Edie Falco, Stanley

Neuberger Museum of Art

Tucci, Parker Posey, Sherry Stringfield, Susie Essman, John Treacy Egan and Robert M. Jiminez. Purchase faculty includes an extraordinary community of artists and performers, composers and producers, scholars and scientists.

THE POSITION

The Director of the Neuberger Museum of Art provides the overarching vision for the Museum, building upon its role as an outstanding arts and education institution and directing its course for exhibitions, programs, fundraising, and board relations. This vision identifies the role of the museum as an educator and a gateway to the arts – communicating the role of the arts and the artist in society and the connection of the arts with its audiences. The Director will be an articulate and persuasive spokesperson who can represent the Museum’s interests to the College, community, patrons, funders, and the State as well as to regional, national and international art communities. The Director will be an energetic fundraiser who will increase the Museum’s base of financial support and work with a group of dedicated volunteers.

Reporting to the College Provost and working closely with staff, the Director is the principal executive officer of the Museum, responsible for all aspects of leadership, including overseeing the Museum’s day-to-day operations and for developing and administering an active exhibition and public programming schedule. The Director will ensure that the Museum continues to provide programming of the highest quality that not only reaches out to capture the interest and support of broader audiences regionally and nationally but also provides innovative connections with campus-wide programs, curriculum, and students. It is expected that the Director will be an effective administrator who can generate ideas as well as empower others to explore their creative limits.

The Director will be expected to:

- Know the Neuberger thoroughly: its history, potential, culture, collections, programs, constituents, and base of support. From an informed position, the Director will lead the development and implementation of a short and long term strategic plan for special exhibitions of modern, contemporary, and African art, and fully utilize the Museum’s permanent collection

Neuberger Museum of Art

for exhibitions as well as the enhancement of special exhibitions and study. The Director will anticipate the future needs of the Museum to secure its position within the College and the art world at large.

- Forge strong yet sustainable working relationships with the President, Provost, department heads, the Performing Arts Center Director, and faculty to secure their support for the Museum and enhance the arts mission of the institution and curriculum. Position the Museum to be an integral participant in life on campus and in the community. Keep the Provost informed of all relevant issues and attend College meetings as institutional needs demand.
- Engage the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Neuberger Museum of Art and members (“Friends”) to bring forth their best ideas and increase their support, cultivating existing as well as new patrons, and generating interest and excitement in the Museum.
- Ensure that sound fundraising strategies are in place, working collaboratively with the President, the Purchase College Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Neuberger Deputy Directors and the Board of Directors of the Friends to attract and secure resources to the Museum.
- Ensure an increase in Museum funding from private sources, including from its Friends, for programmatic needs, work with the Board of Directors and staff to strengthen the Museum’s collection through careful acquisitions and relationships that may lead to appropriate gifts.
- Manage, motivate and evaluate Neuberger staff. Ensure an integrated and collegial staff structure in which effective delegation and accountability is practiced and upheld.
- Evaluate the Neuberger’s programming and provide clear direction for the planning and the efficient implementation of exhibitions, publications, and outreach. Ensure the integration of exhibition and education objectives. Continue to find other ways to expand and deepen the

Neuberger Museum of Art

Museum's connection to New York City constituencies and remain an active and visible participant in its art, life and culture.

- Actively manage the Museum in a fiscally-responsible manner, taking into consideration the financial implications of programming for a public institution. Work with staff and the Provost's office to develop and implement the institution's annual budget. Monitor the preservation and maintenance of the Museum's physical assets (grounds and building), prioritize expenditures for their upkeep and determine the best use of available indoor and outdoor space.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will have the following experience and qualifications:

- A masters or doctoral degree in an appropriate discipline and senior administrative experience in an art museum known for quality and excellence. Professional experience in an academic environment is a decided plus. Competence, ease and experience handling multiple revenue streams, a professional staff and potentially complex budgets effectively.
- An understanding of and commitment to contemporary art and culture. Knowledge of the art world and its key players. An appreciation for modern and African Art and an ability to translate this into compelling collaborations and exhibitions. Demonstrated ability in crafting innovative approaches to exhibition and educational programming that speaks to internal campus and external audiences.
- A proven ability to build and nurture relationships with a wide range of individuals from artists to academicians to donors to civic leaders. A track record of engaging, motivating and holding a board accountable. A proven ability to fundraise from a variety of sources, including successful experience cultivating and soliciting gifts from individual donors. Capital campaign experience is a plus. A demonstrated ability to serve as an effective spokesperson for a program.

Neuberger Museum of Art

- Creative, strategic and resourceful leadership. Ability to negotiate graciously yet remains clear, decisive, proactive and fair. Experience in the subtleties of motivating, directing, and working with others yet also able to hold his or her own.
- Commitment to and experience in bringing cultural experiences to a wide and diverse audience. A high degree of personal and professional integrity, credibility, and good judgment.

Please submit applications to the attention of Sarah James and Mark Tarnacki at
Neuberger@PhillipsOppenheim.com

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