

KRANNERT ART MUSEUM
STRATEGIC
PLAN
2024 – 2027



We are proud to present Krannert Art Museum's new strategic plan, our first plan shared publicly since 2013. Developed collectively by the entire team, and drawing on the wisdom of diverse community voices, our goals over the next three years focus on the needs of the here and now while prioritizing a sustainable future. Equity, care, a just use of resources, community relevance, and a deep sense of welcome and hospitality live at the plan's core. We expect you to hold us accountable, and we will report back each year on our progress.

VISION

We envision a world where art and creativity transform peoples' lives and inspire us to become more engaged members of our communities.

MISSION

KAM fosters engagement with the visual arts by creating meaningful connections for our diverse communities, histories, and worlds.

CORE VALUES

POSITION MUSEUM AS LABORATORY

KAM promotes knowledge and experimentation, invites critique, reckons with our past, strives for excellence in interpreting our collections, and sparks curiosity and wonder in our audiences.

PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

KAM carefully stewards our resources and the environment through sustainable and ethical practices in our operations.

CENTER CARE AND ACCESSIBILITY

KAM values accessibility for all by prioritizing universal design, nurturing belonging and connectedness, and embracing multiple learning styles and types of knowledge. KAM holds space for change-makers, uplifts historically underrepresented artists and communities, and remains open, cooperative, and responsive.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We are responsible to the communities of east central Illinois and University of Illinois students, faculty, and staff, while connecting with audiences nationwide and across the globe.

We believe that as part of a land-grant institution, KAM bears responsibility to confront histories of Indigenous displacement and provide support to this land and its communities.

We are a space for joy, sanctuary, dialogue, learning, contemplation, and social engagement.

We are committed to the ongoing work of greater accessibility, diversity, and inclusion.

We recognize that listening, collaboration, and a commitment to equity transform the here and now.

We embrace the exchange of ideas, diverse learning styles, ways of knowing, languages, lived experiences, and imagined futures.

We believe that care and compassion for our communities and our team is fundamental to the work of the museum.

We understand that storytelling and relationship building are necessary to the formation of an art-centered community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

I. ART AND INQUIRY

KAM is committed to research and the production and sharing of knowledge in the visual arts through engagement with and for our communities.

1. Build an inclusive collection reflective of diverse and underrepresented artists, stories, histories, and experiences.
2. Use our collections and exhibitions as a portal for critical inquiry, self-awareness, and social justice through teaching, research, and public engagement.
3. Collaborate with university and community partners in our region.
4. Provide a safe and secure place for collections and visitors, home for a diversity of thought, and space to connect with present-day challenges.



Photo: Della Perrone

CASE STUDY #1

ART AND INQUIRY

By Mariana Seda, Associate Director for Strategic Communications, College of Fine and Applied Arts

Krannert Art Museum's opening in 1961 emerged in part from a need to house a large and growing art collection that the university amassed since its foundation. As responsibility for the collection extends into preservation and care, the staff establishes conservation priorities. Conserving these works of art is essential for maintaining a healthy collection. And, by focusing on treating works that allow KAM to expand the stories and experiences of historically underrepresented artists and communities, decisions about conservation can help drive more inclusive exhibitions and long-term installations.

Recent conservation efforts at KAM have stabilized and repaired works at risk of further deterioration, often not presentable prior to treatment. "Treating and then displaying works from storage that were made by women and artists of color," said Director Jon Seydl, "is one way we can fulfill the strategic goal of increasing the diversity of the artists on view."

"More often we're trying to extend the life of a piece as it is, thinking more about the artist's intent and less about restoration," explained Kim Sissons, collections manager for KAM. "Conservators are scientists and artists, but they're also researchers, thinking about the artist's process, how they worked, and what they used."

Some conservation projects can be as straightforward as using a special vacuum to remove dust and light debris from an object. Or they may be more complicated, as with KAM's painting *Machine Five* by Hedda Sterne. This work had been re-stretched by the artist or her gallery in 1950 causing a tear in the lower right hand corner and creating a distracting bulge in the canvas. Paintings conservator Heather Galloway repaired the tear with thin synthetic fabric prepared with heated adhesive; she addressed the cracks in the paint layer from the bulge by applying diluted fish glue with heat.



Paintings conservator Heather Galloway examines the surface of *The Assassins* by Sue Coe
Photo: Kim Sissons

KAM's 2023 exhibition *Pattern and Process* showcased how artists have used elements of pattern to challenge our ways of knowing and interpreting the world, how we connect with the past, reclaim culture, or assert our identities. The curator, Kathryn Koca Polite, wanted to include Arturo Alonzo Sandoval's human-sized textile *Moth III*. When acquired in 2021, the textile appeared gray and dingy from grime and wear over time. With intervention, Jane Hammond

from ICA Conservation Center in Cleveland, gently cleaned and wove stray fibers back together, avoiding the more aggressive approaches of washing or trimming off loosened material. This helped preserve most of the material and gave it a renewed vibrancy, meeting the artist's intent to explore notions of transformation and rebirth.

Read more about this topic at kam.illinois.edu/news

II. ENGAGEMENT AND BELONGING

Engagement and relationship building commits KAM to deeper and more equitable ties with our communities – from social engagement to fostering belonging. We are committed to connect meaningfully to and reciprocate with our communities. Through these activities we ensure that the museum is accessible, responsive, and reflective of our place and world.

1. Develop and sustain long-term relationships with our diverse communities and engage in work responsive to their needs.
2. Become a more socially just organization through a deepened commitment to equity, diversity, and antiracism.
3. Prioritize physical and cultural accessibility.
4. Prioritize welcoming visitor experiences for all audiences.



Photo: Della Perrone

CASE STUDY #2

ENGAGEMENT AND BELONGING

By Rachel Lauren Storm,
Assistant Director of Community
Engagement and Learning

“ArtSpeak has inspired our students for many years. Even after graduation, students cherish their experiences at Krannert Art Museum, fostering a lifelong love for the arts.”

– Andrea Cox, ArtSpeak facilitator and art teacher at RTHS

In the heart of Krannert Art Museum’s vibrant initiatives for engagement and belonging lies ArtSpeak, a program fostering creative exploration and collaboration with Rantoul Township High School since 2006, in a small city with a highly diverse student body. Over the years, ArtSpeak has evolved into a dynamic platform where young minds delve into the world of art, finding inspiration, mentorship, and a sense of belonging within the museum’s walls.

Last spring, the program turned an ordinary orientation tour into an immersive day-long field trip at the museum. This special event featured artist talks, career exploration sessions, and engaging activities designed to inspire students to create artworks in response to works in the museum’s collection.



ArtSpeak students, 2024. Photo: Rachel Lauren Storm.

In an exciting development, ArtSpeak students proudly showcased their work at KAM as part of Boneyard Arts Festival. The students went on to participate in the museum’s inaugural Teen Takeover of KAM featuring local artists DJ Tim Williams, Joy Yang, Dan Wild, Stacey Robinson, Kofi Bazzell-Smith, and Marc-Anthony Macon

offering workshops in music, collage-making, experimental sound, live drawing, and digital art.

As ArtSpeak approaches its twentieth anniversary, the partnership between Rantoul Township High School and KAM continues to expand and flourish, as we seek to sustain and expand this long-term relationship and engage in work responsive to their needs.

Reflecting on the profound impact of ArtSpeak, Allison O’Hern, a creative writing teacher, shares, “ArtSpeak provides Rantoul Township High School students with a place to thrive. Students feel supported and safe to explore creative endeavors while learning about different artistic opportunities.”

ArtSpeak testifies to the power of collaboration between schools and cultural institutions. With the support of both Krannert Art Museum and Rantoul Township School District #193, ArtSpeak remains a beacon of creativity, collaboration, and community.



ArtSpeak student presenting her work at SPEAK Café. Photo: Rachel Lauren Storm.

Read more about this program at
kam.illinois.edu/news

III. SUSTAINABILITY

KAM is committed to environmental, operational, and financial sustainability. Our dedication to environmental and organizational health depends on careful development and stewardship of resources, budgets, and the museum facility. KAM prioritizes long-term stability for our team, our finances, our building, and our planet.

1. Diversify revenue sources.
2. Prioritize sustainable environmental practices.
3. Create a long-range facility plan.
4. Achieve re-accreditation to maintain KAM's position as a top tier unit within the university and maintain our excellence nationally.
5. Steward and grow excellent relationships with university administration.
6. Nurture a work environment where employees experience support and connectedness.



Gelvin Garden, Krannert Art Museum. Photo: Fred Zwicky

CASE STUDY #3
SUSTAINABILITY

By Mariana Seda, Associate Director
for Strategic Communications, College
of Fine and Applied Arts



Amy L. Powell, 2024. Photo: Della Perrone.

As KAM embraces a refreshed mission, a new connection with the Chancellor's office will strengthen our threads with the university and promote sustainability. KAM Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art Amy L. Powell, began an additional role at the Chancellor's office last fall as the curator of Campus Arts Research within the new Office for Arts Integration, and under the direction of Cynthia Oliver, Special Advisor to the Chancellor for Arts Integration.

The new office aims to amplify and infuse the arts and creative practices across campus in various ways such as embedding the arts into teaching and learning and broadening community partnerships and

engagement with art. Additionally, the office aspires to activate more interdisciplinary arts research through collaborations between artists and researchers – all goals that align with those of KAM.

Within this role, Powell hopes to continue supporting the research and production of practicing artists by bringing them to campus, fostering collaborations with faculty researchers, and providing space and resources to create deeper connections with both campus and community.

"One feature of campus arts research is that it establishes the possibility of building upon potential exhibitions at KAM with a more profound engagement with other

campus sites or resources," said Powell. One of the first events hosted by this office will take place in early fall 2024. madison moore, artist-scholar, DJ, and assistant professor of Modern Culture and Media at Brown University, will visit Urbana to deliver a performance lecture at the Gallery Art Bar centered around queer Black nightlife organized by Powell, Blair Ebony Smith, and Rachel Storm. The event coincides with KAM's closing events for Jen Everett's exhibition, *Could you dim the lights?*, as well as the community's annual music and entertainment-focused PYGMALION Festival.