**Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame**

**Notre Dame, Indiana**

<https://sniteartmuseum.nd.edu/>

**DIRECTOR**

**Overview**

The Snite Museum of Art at the University of Notre Dame (ND) seeks a director to lead this prominent university museum at an exciting moment. Major funding was received in 2017 for a new museum building, and the new director will work with the Office of the Executive Vice President and the University Architect in selecting the architect, constructing and opening the new Raclin Murphy Museum of Art at Notre Dame in 2021. The director will also have the opportunity to shape future exhibitions and to continue and enhance the Snite’s integral role in the vibrant university community, and in particular within the new Notre Dame arts district, which already features the Charles B. Hayes Family Sculpture Park, opened in 2017. The director will report to the Vice President and Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and work with a generous and loyal Advisory Council. The director will lead a staff of 16 in exhibition development and educational programs serving over 7,000 ND students and faculty, 15,000 primary and secondary school students, and in recent years, over 43,000 total visitors annually.

The new director will also collaborate on the completion of a major digitizing project. The Snite and the Hesburgh Libraries received a $455,000 Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant, since enhanced by $500,000 in private gifts, to support making the Snite, Library, Special Collections, and Rare Books collections searchable, discoverable, and available for teaching and research.

The director must be a forward-thinking art-museum leader and scholar able to collaborate with diverse elements in a university community and oversee a dedicated professional staff to achieve a shared vision. While the Director may or may not be a person of faith, s/he must wish to support the mission of Notre Dame as a Catholic research university in, for instance, its aim “to cultivate in its students not only an appreciation for the great achievements of human beings but also a disciplined sensibility to the poverty, injustice and oppression that burden the lives of so many. The aim is to create a sense of human solidarity and concern for the common good that will bear fruit as learning becomes service to justice.” (From the University’s mission statement at <https://www.nd.edu/about/mission-statement/>).

The director will coordinate and partner with ND academic departments, colleges, and schools to enhance the role of the arts in the curriculum. S/he will work with Development Office staff dedicated to the museum and maintain strong relationships with the Advisory Council to ensure continuing generous financial support from benefactors and alumni. The director will embrace the roles of advocate and relationship-builder for the museum and the arts within the University and ambassador for the museum in the larger South Bend community and nationally.

**About the Museum**

Considered to be one of the finest university art museums in America, the Snite Museum is a member of the AAMD and accredited by the AAM. Its permanent collection contains over 29,000 artworks that represent many of the principal cultures and periods of world art history. Highlights, and areas targeted for continued development, include collections in Mesoamerican art (considered to be a remarkable collection), Old Master drawings, nineteenth-century French art, nineteenth-century and modern photography, decorative arts, African art, and the George Rickey Sculpture Archive. In recent years the museum has increased emphasis on acquiring, exhibiting and interpreting works created by African-American, Native American, Latino/a, as well as female artists.

In the current building, there are ten permanent exhibition galleries featuring highlights of the collection, and four galleries for special exhibitions. Some special exhibitions are organized to support Notre Dame teaching and research; some feature portions of the collection not normally on view; some feature contemporary artists and themes; and some are borrowed from other national museums.

Snite Museum curators and Notre Dame faculty publish research that is invaluable for the interpretation of the collections. A recent example is *Rembrandt’s Religious Prints: The Feddersen Collection at the Snite Museum of Art*, written by Emeritus Professor Charles M. Rosenberg (art history) and published by Indiana University Press. In production is *Dimensions of Power*, written by Visiting Curator of African Art Elizabeth Morton, to be published in connection with the recent reinstallation of the museum’s African art collection.

The University began collecting and receiving donations of art in 1874. At first collections were displayed in the library, then in Bond Hall, and finally in the specially built O’Shaughnessy Galleries. In 1976 Frederick B. Snite gave Notre Dame $2 million to fund a new art museum to be named after his son, who had died after a long struggle with polio. The Snite Museum opened in 1980. Designed by Ambrose Richardson, A.I.A, the 70,000 square-foot structure was a three-story core bridging the adjoining Ivan Mestrovic Studio (converted into a gallery) and O'Shaughnessy Galleries. With this new structure the University has been able to exhibit its rapidly developing collections of art within a professional museum environment. The new sculpture park opened in 2017 (<https://sniteartmuseum.nd.edu/exhibitions/sculpture-park/>), and the arts district already features the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, with the school of architecture currently under construction. The upcoming Raclin Murphy Museum of Art at Notre Dame expansion, projected to open in 2021, will provide state-of-the-art space to permit more of the growing collection to be on view.

Today 85% of Notre Dame’s students visit the museum with or because of classes in art history, studio art, and a wide range of other subjects. Notre Dame is the state’s second most popular tourist attraction after the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

**Position Responsibilities Include:**

* Providing vision for the museum within the University, the community, and the field.
* Leading processes to develop strategic plans and manage and monitor their fulfillment.
* Managing museum activities in collaboration with professional staff: collecting documenting, researching, conserving, exhibiting, interpreting and publishing art.
* Enhancing the role of the arts at the University in partnership with faculty in academic departments, colleges, and schools.
* Conducting curatorial research that is shared through exhibitions and publications.
* Establishing operating policies and procedures and ensuring their execution.
* Overseeing daily operations and finances.
* In concert with a university task force, plan, open, and launch the Raclin Murphy Museum of Art at Notre Dame.
* Working with the university development office to raise the remaining capital for the new museum.
* Cooperating with library staff to ensure completion of the Mellon digitizing project.
* Working with the university administration and the museum Advisory Council.
* Representing the museum in public forums, including participation on boards, in committee activities, and involvement in national professional organizations.

**Opportunities**

The director will have the opportunity to:

* Play a central role in planning and building the new Raclin Murphy Museum of Art at Notre Dame, opening in 2021, located in the developing campus arts district.
* Take the reins of a successful, respected, financially sound and strongly supported art museum with $27 million in endowments for acquisitions, exhibitions, conservation, and education. A cash reserve will give the new director flexibility for initiatives.
* Build on a solid base of working relationships with faculty and students to enhance the museum’s role in academic life and the importance of arts at the University.
* Work with Notre Dame’s remarkable development department, in which two staff are dedicated solely to the Snite Museum.
* Recruit at least one curator to fill an open position.
* Shape the museum’s collections and the range of its presentations.
* Enjoy ND’s steady support of the operating budget, plus the fact that maintenance and security staff support the museum outside of its operating budget.
* Lead a dedicated, qualified staff that is ready to embrace new leadership and respond to active, engaging management.
* Benefit from being a part of one of the top 20 universities in the US (*US News & World Report*). Notre Dame is a diverse academic institution with a strong liberal arts tradition, a major national presence and the resources to make things happen – “a good stage on which to achieve a vision.”

**Challenges**

* The arts are rapidly advancing, but have yet to achieve the same status as other fields in the University’s culture, although the liberal arts overall remain strong.
* The staff is small for a museum of this scale and soon to expand, lacking a chief curator and adequate support and administrative staff. University priorities affect staff size.
* The director will oversee a building project while running very active museum operations.
* As at any university, reconciling different future visions for the museum among faculty, staff, and others as the new museum is launched and operates.
* Balancing innovation, risk, and the presentation of today’s issues with the mission of ND as a Catholic university.

**Qualifications**

* MA in Art History, Fine Arts or Museum Studies; PhD advantageous.
* A scholar and a learner.
* At least five years’ successful direction of an art museum, ideally within a college or university, or similar experience leading a large department at a significant museum.
* Experience with facility planning and construction, or a similar large-scale renovation or expansion project within a museum – in particular, experience with and acumen for space and functional planning and visioning a new museum.
* Ability to forge an inspiring vision that integrates others’ aspirations while staying abreast of the evolving ND environment.
* Political skills, diplomacy, and an engaging personality; able to nurture partnerships and press forward with strength and finesse in a typically nuanced university environment.
* Deep understanding of and dedication to the art-museum field; and awareness of current thinking and innovations in the field.
* Demonstrated management skills – big-picture planning, museum processes (exhibition and program development), budgets, and professional staff.
* Creates an open, productive environment in which staff are challenged, motivated, held accountable, and appreciated.
* An articulate, enthusiastic public face and advocate for the museum and the arts within and outside the university.
* Demonstrated success cultivating and maintaining relationships with key constituents and donors.
* Relationship-building skills: with faculty, library, theater and arts departments, administration, and the larger community.
* Ready to embrace life in a university situated outside an urban environment.
* A creative risk-taker within the larger context of a Catholic university.

**About South Bend and the Region**

South Bend is a city of 101,000 people situated on the [St. Joseph River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Joseph_River_(Lake_Michigan)) in northern Indiana, just five miles from the border with West Michigan. Today the city is thriving and has become a very attractive place to live under its much-praised young mayor, Pete Buttigieg. South Bend is on an upswing after a period of decline following loss some major manufacturers in the later twentieth century. Today, there are still large corporations in the city, including Crowe Horwath, [Honeywell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honeywell), and [AM General](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AM_General), and the University of Notre Dame and two large hospitals are now the area’s largest employers. The Mayor has promoted economic projects, including Ignition Park around the old Studebaker plant, being redeveloped as a technology center to attract new industry. South Bend is seeing increasing variety in its restaurants, breweries, and entertainment offerings. Chicago is 93 miles or two hours away, providing access to a major urban environment with celebrated museums, theatres and art galleries.

University faculty and museum staff praise the quality of life and low cost of living in South Bend. Real estate is affordable compared to coastal regions or big cities, enabling residents to own spacious homes in pleasant and historic neighborhoods or to live in the nearby countryside on large acreage. Many faculty and staff enjoy short commutes by car or bicycle to campus in the city’s light traffic. There are numerous opportunities for outdoor recreation, including cycling and kayaking on the River. Lake Michigan is only 20 miles away and offers beaches, sailing, and other water sports. Notre Dame is a well-resourced university that provides a rich cultural life, “fantastic resources” and “prominent national speakers such as Supreme Court justices,” say staff. At times, it is difficult to choose between the multiple concerts, films, plays, sports events and lectures offered right on campus, as well in South Bend or Chicago.

**About the University**

The University of Notre Dame is rated among the nation’s top 25 institutions of higher learning in surveys conducted by *U.S. News & World Report*, *Forbes*, and *Niche*. The University was founded in 1842 by a priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross. It is located adjacent to South Bend, Indiana, the center of a metropolitan area with a population of more than 300,000. The University was governed by the Holy Cross priests until 1967, when governance was transferred to a two-tiered, mixed board of lay and religious trustees. Notre Dame has grown from the vision of the founder, who sought to establish a great Catholic university in America, and has remained faithful to both its religious and intellectual traditions.

One of America’s leading undergraduate teaching institutions, Notre Dame also has been at the forefront in research and scholarship. The aerodynamics of glider flight, the transmission of wireless messages, and the formulae for synthetic rubber were pioneered here. Today researchers are achieving breakthroughs in astrophysics, radiation chemistry, environmental sciences, tropical disease transmission, peace studies, cancer, robotics, and nanoelectronics. The undergraduate college has 8,500 students, and the growing graduate schools, plus the schools of law and business, offer more than 50 advanced degrees.

Notre Dame has an exceptionally loyal alumni body, and it has attracted scholars who are interested in teaching and scholarship, as well as shaping the character of students. Notre Dame has a unique spirit. It is traditional, yet open to change. It is dedicated to religious belief no less than scientific knowledge. It has always stood for values in a world of facts. Many students and faculty have a relationship with the church (82 percent of students are Catholic), and this religious orientation to some extent shapes the museum and its offerings – in broad terms and with positive elements, such as the strong traditions of scholarship and social justice. There is a willingness to grapple with important issues. As a university, Notre Dame is welcoming and supportive of faculty, staff, students and visitors of all faiths and no faith. Visit: [www.nd.edu](http://www.nd.edu).

Notre Dame is an EOE and encourages diversity. There is no requirement for applicants to be Catholic.

**Nominations and Inquiries are welcome**

Nominations and inquiries are welcome in strict confidence by contacting Scott Stevens or Marilyn Hoffman at [searchandref@museum-search.com](mailto:searchandref@museum-search.com).

**How to Apply**

Email cover letter and résumé (Word documents preferred), salary requirement, and names of 3 references with contact information by May 21, 2018 to: Scott Stevens and Marilyn Hoffman, Museum Search and Reference, [searchandref@museum-search.com](mailto:searchandref@museum-search.com). References will not be contacted without prior permission of the applicant.

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