



*The Questions We Ask*  
*The Stories We Tell*

**STRATEGIC**  
PLAN  
2023 - 2027



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GALLERIES OF AFRICAN ART



Do Not Step on Platform





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## Climate for **Museums 2023**

In 2023, museums face  
new challenges:

- Purpose within their communities
- Inclusion, diversity, equity
- Viewpoints and authority
- Audiences and how to engage with them
- Relevance in today's world
- Who owns their collections
- Funding
- Authenticity

# Perceptions of the MCCM



## Our stakeholders feel strongly about us...

- Love our collections
- Quality of our programs
- Ability to explore the world in one place
- Logical layout, uncluttered, small size
- Calm, quiet space – second home
- Proximity on campus
- Beautiful objects
- Ease of use for teaching
- Learning experience
- Inspiring for children
- Multimedia where incorporated
- Wonderful staff
- Well disciplined – good at what we are good at

## ...and they feel there is scope for change

- Need to be better known
- Ethics
- Contemporary art, artists, and issues
- How to make objects speak and start conversations
- Greater range and diversity of cultures
- Greater range of perspectives
- Outreach to our communities
- Need to take the museum “on the road”
- More objects
- More objects on loan from other museums
- More space + better bathrooms
- Parking and accessibility + hours





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## Our Challenges

Our stakeholders feel we need to:

- Stop being a hidden gem
- Be more involved with the university
- Be relevant
- Speak to today's important issues
- Be more ideas driven
- Clean up our collections
- Agree on what we stand for
- Reach out to new audiences
- Be more creative
- Be more well known
- Talk more about what we do





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## Our Opportunity

MCCM is part of **Emory University**, a national leader in research and teaching, a hub for new ideas

We are part of **Atlanta**, a city of growth, activism, social justice, and diverse communities

We are partners with the **Libraries**, which gives us greater reach and access to resources we need

Our **challenge** is to connect the dots, to challenge stereotypes, to become relevant to new stakeholder communities, to become creative, to become cultural entrepreneurs





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## Our Changes

What we propose is a set of fundamental changes to our museum

These will change not only **what we do** but more importantly, **how we do it**

## Our Roles



### It will be centered on our basic roles:

#### As a unit of Emory University

- Support and participate in university teaching using objects from our collections
- Provide students with opportunities to experience museum work that shapes their studies and future careers
- Support and encourage research from objects
- Collaborate with our staff and faculty peers
- Program talks, lectures, conferences, that enrich the university's intellectual climate

#### As a public museum

- Promote the public understanding of the diversity and creativity of world cultures through our collections, exhibitions, and public programs
- Support learning for K-12 schools
- Provide a window into the work of a university, promoting the work done by our faculty peers

#### Shared between the two

- An exemplar of integrity, inclusion, and fairness
- A locus for communities
- Reflect the identity and makeup of our communities
- A place where ideas can be shared and explored
- Advocate for the society we want to be
- An incubator for creativity



# Our Potential

...and our potential for being known as

Socially minded

Activist

An advocate

Thoughtful

Creative

Relevant

Entrepreneurial

Inspirational

Exciting

Innovative

Inventive

Respectful

Genuine

Collaborative

A leader in ethics  
and social change

A good partner

Bold

Unafraid of tackling  
difficult topics

Brave

Impactful





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## Our Plan

Our plan needs to set forth our

- Core Values
- Mission
- Vision
- Goals



## Our Core Values



### Our core values are:

#### **Integrity**

We uphold the highest ethical standards in all aspects of our work, from collecting and preserving artifacts to interacting with our visitors and stakeholders. We act authentically and genuinely, respecting the views of others.

#### **Inclusivity**

We strive to create a space that is welcoming and accessible to all. We work with communities to realize their diverse perspectives in the programs we present.

#### **Diversity**

We celebrate and promote the diversity of human cultures and perspectives, recognizing that a deeper understanding of our shared humanity is essential for creating a more just and equitable world.

#### **Scholarship**

We are committed to upholding the highest standards of academic excellence and rigor in our research, exhibitions, and learning programs.

#### **Creativity**

We encourage creativity and innovation in all aspects of our work. We work with creators to share their perspectives in the work we undertake and with change makers who use the arts to drive social change.

#### **Community Engagement**

We believe that our museum is an integral part of the community we serve. We strive to foster meaningful connections and partnerships with our visitors, neighbors, and stakeholders.

#### **Environmental Responsibility**

We strive to be a leader in sustainable museum practice and climate responsibility, recognizing that care for cultural heritage necessitates care for the people and land to whom the objects in our collection belong.



## Our Mission

*"The Michael C. Carlos Museum celebrates world cultures and the peoples for whom they belong. As a department of Emory University, we advocate object-based teaching and research. As a public museum, we are a place of learning, dialogue, engagement and creativity for all."*





**Portrait Head of a Roman**  
Marble, 1st-2nd century AD  
This portrait head comes from an ensemble that was part of the great Roman Empire. It is a marble bust of a man, possibly a senator or a public figure, which was found in a public space such as a forum, a temple, or a house. The head is shown in a three-quarter view, looking slightly to the left. The hair is short and curly, and the beard is short and curly. The face is oval-shaped with a prominent nose and a slight smile. The bust is made of white marble and is mounted on a white pedestal.



**Head of a Goddess**  
Marble, 1st-2nd century AD  
This head of a goddess comes from a statue that was found in a public space. It is a marble bust of a woman, possibly a goddess or a public figure, which was found in a public space such as a forum, a temple, or a house. The head is shown in a three-quarter view, looking slightly to the right. The hair is long and curly, and the face is oval-shaped with a prominent nose and a slight smile. The bust is made of white marble and is mounted on a white pedestal.

## Our Vision

*"Our vision is to create a more inclusive and equitable society, transforming the way people view cultural heritage and amplifying the voices of others."*

# Our Goals

We have five key goals that will guide us over the next five years. They will help us re-imagine our role within the university, embrace inclusion as our core approach, and become a museum of ideas as well as one of objects.

## EMORY

To double down on our relationship with the university



## INTEGRITY

To be known as a leading museum for ethics and action



## INCLUSION

To be seen as a place of inclusion



## RELEVANCE

To be known for being relevant



## CREATIVITY

To be a site for creativity







## Our Goal **Emory**

We have a strong track-record of supporting teaching, research, and student growth at Emory.

Consultation with the University has pointed to many areas for improvement. There is a perception that our relations with the faculties are growing apart. Despite our popularity with some, most Emory students never visit the museum during their time on campus.

### **Emory is our home-ground and the opportunities for growth are many**

- The arts at Emory are being revitalized
- The demand among students to engage with the museum is growing, to support their studies and career development
- Museum ethics are a potential area for teaching and research
- Art as a form of healing and healthcare is completely untapped

## **We need to double down on our relationship with the university**

*We need to be seen as a strong contributor to student and faculty life.*

### **Our Objectives**

- Create more opportunities for students to gain career changing experiences early in their studies, through internships and work-study programs
- Establish initiatives for the Oxford campus to use collections in teaching and display
- Host outreach events for the college and schools to raise awareness and get students into the museum for the first time
- Translate faculty and staff ideas into public programs
- Establish annual training programs and open calls for faculty to explore using objects in teaching and research
- Establish a student and faculty advisory council, as a focus group for new initiatives







## Our Goal Integrity

Integrity is a fundamental trait of museums, as it underpins their ability to serve as trusted partners in education, scholarship, and cultural stewardship.

**We have real and perceived ethical issues with our collections, a point that was raised consistently during the consultation phase. It is an issue which we tackle today through research and resolve through the return of objects to countries and communities of origin.**

To meet our overarching strategic goals, it is critical that we resolve the ethical issues surrounding our collections and by doing so prove our integrity.

**We should be known as a leading museum for ethics and action**

*We need to resolve our provenance issues and establish ourselves as a leader in ethical collecting.*

### Our Objectives

- Engage national authorities proactively to identify and repatriate objects that have been acquired through the illicit trade
- Return private loan objects
- Continue dialogue with Muscogee Nation (MCN) partners with the goal of returning ancestor remains and their possessions
- Promote understanding and dialogue through public programs, (lectures, talks, and videos) that relate our experience and approach
- Promote dialogue among our peers on how to approach research and repatriations through conferences, round tables, and networking
- Publish details on all repatriations on the website









## Our Goal Inclusion

Museums face a fundamental question of inclusion as they try to define their roles within society. In our case, there is a perception that we are part of an elitist institution. We are also part of a tradition where we explain from the authority of expertise, rather than encourage diverse points of view.

As we look to the future, we need to think more about who the museum is for, who are our communities, and whether we are good at representing the views of others.

### **Our opportunities for being more inclusive are astonishing**

- Our collections reflect multiple and diverse artistic traditions
- Atlanta is growing as a multicultural city
- We have collections and programs that can be shared with our Atlanta university partners
- Working with communities, we can amplify voices of others

## **We should be seen as a place of inclusion**

*We need to change our approach so that we become a place that communities call their own.*

### **Our Objectives**

- Adopt “world cultures” as our scope
- Champion “storytelling” as our approach, to amplify the voices of others
- Introduce sponsored free admission for all
- Change our approach to developing programs and exhibitions, so they are done in partnership with stakeholder communities, using focus groups, formal partnerships, and community ambassadors to generate ideas and change
- Create programs outside the museum, using spaces across the University and in spaces run by partners, to extend our reach and embed ourselves in communities
- Develop programs with our HBCU and local university museum peers to share collections and develop joint programming and exhibitions





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## Our Goal Relevance

We have a long tradition of creating scholarly exhibitions and programs in keeping with our role as a university museum. Today, there is a recognition that this approach limits our audiences and begs the question, are we relevant?

**There is great support for us to become more ideas driven, to engage in topics that have broader appeal and relevance to people today. These may include**

- Uncomfortable issues, such as slavery, child labor, colonialism, and climate change
- Important social issues that have links to the past
- The perspectives of others
- The lesser known arts
- More experiential programs, less academic
- Mythology and storytelling
- How things are made
- Cultural difference

## We should be known for being relevant

*We need seek ways to address issues that matter to people today.*

### Our Objectives

- Adopt a roster of ideas that we seek to address or touch upon during the five-year plan
- Commit to have 50% of lectures and talks made available digitally as part of MCCM publications
- Reinterpret and redisplay our permanent collection galleries, introducing areas for changing displays and incorporating different perspectives and voices
- Highlight and support the work of changemakers
- Explore how AI challenges the ethics of art and what constitutes creative expression







## Our Goal Creativity

As a museum, we are building a practice of working with artists, to create new works that connect historic objects to contemporary thought. These experiences have been powerful, bringing new perspectives to our collections as well as new audiences.

**We should be seen as a place of creativity, both in product and process. The timing of this is ideal. The arts at Emory are growing through the establishment of new programs and fellowships. Atlanta is becoming recognized for its particular approach to social justice and the arts.**

There is also untapped potential in exploring how art can be used as therapy. By doing this, we can join Emory's strength in healthcare with our interest in promoting art as a vital human experience.

## We should be a site for creativity

*We need to be known for encouraging creativity through the lens of the past, for expression, identity, and healing.*

### Our Objectives

- Establish an annual artist residency for social justice in conjunction with Emory Arts
- Develop a partnership with the health sciences to establish a new practice of art as therapy
- Invite artistic and creative community partners in our area (Decatur, Druid Hills, Clarkston, and East Atlanta) to discover their connections to the collections and weave the museum into their networks.
- Partner with community based organizations that promote art as healing (R2ise Recovery)
- Seek opportunities to include AI in exhibitions and in the online presentation of the collection

# Working with Partners

To achieve what we set out, we  
need to build and support partnerships

Atlanta Area Colleges  
and Universities  
HBCUs  
K-12 Schools

The Hatchery  
Goizueta Business School  
Health Sciences  
Emory Healthcare

Libraries  
Faculty  
Spiritual Life  
Campus Life  
Office of DEI  
Oxford College

Atlanta Art and  
Cultural Institutions  
Atlanta Regional Council  
for Higher Education

Emory Arts  
Science Gallery Atlanta  
Visual Arts Department

Artists  
African American Communities  
Muscogee Nation  
Changemakers  
Community Art Organizations  
South Asian Communities  
Latinx Communities



# Our Intended Outcomes



## By doing this, we will be known for...

- Having a new, fresh outlook, which allows us to think more creatively about how the arts can be used to support social change
- Being more active and more visible on campus by finding ways to become more part of student life and creativity
- Our emphasis on storytelling as a way to promote inclusion and encourage diverse viewpoints
- Our boldness in tackling topics that are difficult and our willingness to encouraging discussion and debate
- Our support of creators and activists in expressing their visions for a more just society
- Being inventive in what we do; using partnerships and the resources of the libraries and the university to make things happen
- **The questions we ask**
- **The stories we tell**

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# One Emory

Our Strategic Plan ultimately supports the One Emory – Ambition and Heart Strategic Framework

## **Faculty Eminence**

We will enable faculty and our curators and staff to become better teachers, to translate their ideas into programs for the public, and to further their research using museum objects.

## **Academic Community of Choice**

We will give students more opportunities to develop their minds using art and culture as a way at looking at the big issues of today.

## **Innovation through Scholarship & Creative Expression**

We will support artists who are motivated by social change, working with changemakers in Atlanta and beyond.

## **Thriving Healthcare & Inventing Cures**

We will investigate how art can support healing, in formal and informal healthcare, in partnership with the Health Sciences and Emory Healthcare.

## **Commitment to Our People**

We will enable ideas to take root, through training and funding for programs.

## **Emory + Atlanta**

We will become a true community leader and partner, developing programs and sharing collections with Atlanta's university museums and galleries, finally becoming Atlanta's visible gem.

ONE  
EMORY  
AMBITION and HEART





EMORY

MICHAEL C.  
CARLOS  
MUSEUM

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[CARLOS.EMORY.EDU](http://CARLOS.EMORY.EDU)

Follow us on social media!  
#carlosmuseum

