

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at DelArt

In 2015 the Delaware Art Museum began consciously focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion as a core part of its operations. This began with an intense focus on our internal practices in tandem with growing our outward-facing work. As Museum staff and the board continue these efforts we are now equally focused on changing the power structures within our century-old institution. We recognize that the below summary of our work is insufficient; however, we are committed to continuing this work in the months, years, and decades ahead in our effort to better reflect the diverse communities we serve.

Steps Museum has taken over past 5+ years:

Internal Work

- Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) core part of current strategic plan and Museum values
- Prioritized DEI work in our budget
- Several staff/volunteer trainings completed, including implicit bias training
- Completed accessibility audit; made numerous facility improvements
- Adopted more inclusive hiring practices
- Added new outward-facing staff positions and reoriented staff work towards community engagement by setting goals and establishing shared values
- New hires reflect greater diversity in ethnicity and experiences

Diversifying Programs & Content

- Centered community voices in exhibition, interpretation, and program planning as well as rebranding and social media through paid advisory committees
- Prioritized collecting works by women artists and artists of color in collections policy (61% of acquired works in 2019)
- 38% of special exhibitions in the past four years have featured underrepresented artists and narratives
- Collaborated with community organizations to host community-wide conversations on subjects relating to exhibitions such as *Wilmington 1968* and *Relational Undercurrents*
- Developed social justice themed tours available for school groups
- Diversified merchandise available in Museum Store – particularly books
- Hosting local chapter of the Well-Read Black Girl Book Club
- Developed Teaching Artist / Curator in Residence program with Chris White Gallery and DCAD to promote civic discourse around art
- Connected Series enables and promotes community led creative initiatives and collaborations at the Museum and throughout the community while diversifying audiences and expanding networks

- Red Apple Fund continues offering grants and scholarships to provide access to arts education for school groups and individual youth with demonstrated financial need
- Commissioned local, regional, and national artists of color for performance series and residencies that specifically address social issues impacting our community
- Wilmington Writers Conference and open mic nights highlight diverse voices

Ongoing initiatives / areas for growth:

- Set goal to have at least 30% people of color on staff and 30% trustees of color by 2025 (currently at 8%)
- Exhibitions, programs, and visitors better represent demographics of Wilmington
- A presence in downtown Wilmington
- Improve physical and online access
- Collection reinstallation (moved to spring 2021) including community perspectives
- Hire gallery staff trained in collection and trained to interact with all types of guests (grant pending to move forward)
- Diversify audience engagement so ALL staff and volunteers understand their roles in this effort

Commitment to changing power structures

- Staff is doing a great job with trainings, programs, community engagement, etc. But staff needs help with systemic change to diversify power structures. The following efforts are being led by the Board of Trustees:
 - More trustees of color (30% by 2025)
 - Dedicated funding to support diversity, equity, and inclusion work
 - Pushing local philanthropy and thought leaders to embrace and lead this effort in the sector

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