

March 23, 2017

We, the directors of the Northeast Small College Art Museum Association (NESCAMA), are deeply concerned about potential budget cuts that threaten funding so vital to us and to the good work that arts organizations do throughout the nation. We must continue to hold the line and to promote the arts energetically through the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

With small operational budgets, college and university art museums are particularly reliant on funding from the NEH, NEA, and IMLS. This funding preserves artistic, ethnographic, scientific, and historic collections, and creates access to cultural heritage unique to our respective diverse communities. This funding not only supports essential infrastructure, it enables us to pursue transformative programs that provide employment for emerging and young professionals. This funding ensures that our collections are interpreted, understood, and valued.

College and university art museums are uniquely — and importantly — positioned to make connections beyond the fine arts, to include disciplines from science to business, and to foster engagement beyond campus and into our communities. Our work inspires scholarship and engenders innovation. Our museums provide opportunities for young scholars to explore ideas and worlds that are challenging, encouraging critical thinking that will be of use in any professional path they choose to follow after graduation.

During this era of increasing polarization, museums, through their collections and exhibitions, demonstrate that there are multiple points of view and that these points of view can coexist.

While the debate about federal funding for the arts is nothing new, we encourage members of Congress to recognize that the resilience of the NEH, NEA, and IMLS, despite opposition over the years, is a testament to their enduring value.

Signed,

David E. Little, Director & Chief Curator
Mead Art Museum at Amherst College

Dan Mills, Director
Bates Museum of Art, Bates College

Anne Collins Goodyear & Frank H. Goodyear, Co-Directors
Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Bowdoin College

Kristin Parker, Interim Director

The Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University

Jo-Ann Conklin, Director

David Winton Bell Gallery, Brown University

Sharon Corwin, Carolyn Muzzy Director and Chief Curator

Colby College Museum of Art, Colby College

Anja Chávez, Director of University Museums

Longyear Museum of Anthropology/Picker Art Gallery, Colgate University

Tracy L. Adler, Johnson-Pote Director

Ruth and Elmer Wellin Museum of Art at Hamilton College

Richard Saunders, Director

Middlebury College Museum of Art, Middlebury College

Tricia Y. Paik, Florence Finch Abbott Director

Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, Mount Holyoke College

Janie Cohen, President, Board of Directors

New England Museum Association

Ian Berry, Dayton Director

The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College

Jessica Nicoll, Director and Louise Ines Doyle '34 Chief Curator

Smith College Museum of Art, Smith College

Kristina L. Durocher, Director

Museum of Art, University of New Hampshire

James Mundy, The Anne Hendricks Bass Director

The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College

Lisa Fischman, Ruth Gordon Shapiro '37 Director

Davis Museum at Wellesley College

Clare I. Rogan, Curator

Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University

Christina Olsen, Class of 1956 Director
Williams College Museum of Art, Williams College