

A Creative

MUSEUM

Collaboratory

2023-2024
**ANNUAL
REPORT**

MSU Museum

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

The MSU Museum is an innovative and experimental collaboratory that exists to catalyze creativity. Here, people can openly explore, express, and experiment with ideas across disciplines and interests, and indulge their natural curiosity about the world. The Museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and is the state's first Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution. The MSU Museum is a registered scientific institution with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and a member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience.

Since its inception in 1857, the Museum has been dedicated to the acquisition of diverse objects and specimens, as well as the creation of exhibitions that intricately capture our shared histories and experiences. These valuable collections and exhibitions serve as catalysts for enriching teaching, learning, and research endeavors, establishing the Museum as a pivotal space essential to the success of both students and faculty members. Administratively, the MSU Museum operates within the University Arts and Collections unit under the auspices of the Office of the Provost at Michigan State University.



First Fridays silent disco themed program



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am honored and excited to introduce the MSU Museum’s annual report for this remarkable past year, which has been marked by profound engagement, innovation, and community contribution.

This year, our focus has been sharply on advancing student and faculty success, driving research and innovation, and further enhancing our social infrastructure for the communities we serve. Our commitment to these areas is not just a reflection of our mission but a blueprint for our future.

We have intensified our efforts to support educational achievements by providing students with unique, hands-on experiences that complement their academic journeys. Through interactive exhibitions and collaborative projects, we have seen a noticeable increase in student engagement, which speaks volumes about the effectiveness of experiential learning.

In the realm of research and innovation, the Museum has been a bustling hub of creativity and discovery. Our initiatives have not only supported faculty research but have also fostered interdisciplinary collaborations that push the

boundaries of traditional museum offerings. This environment of dynamic exploration continues to position the Museum as a leader in cutting-edge, culturally significant programming.

Looking ahead, we are poised for an ambitious \$28 million upgrade to improve our facilities and continue our mission of excellence. This renovation, enhanced by a landmark gift from the Forest Akers Trust, will create new immersive and experiential learning spaces, further solidifying our position as a center of innovation and education.

As we prepare for this transformative journey, we will continue to present exhibitions and programs in downtown East Lansing, ensuring that our vibrant community engagement remains uninterrupted.

The future of the MSU Museum is indeed bright, and I invite you to join us on this extraordinary journey as we redefine the museum experience. Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm!

Warmest regards,

Devon M. Akmon
Director, MSU Museum



FROM THE VICE PROVOST UNIVERSITY ARTS AND COLLECTIONS

In July the MSU Museum building officially “went dark” for extensive infrastructure renovation. And just as the lights went out, the Museum announcement of the CoLab Studio’s next project was circulated to an international network, inviting artists, performers, designers, scientists and technologists to create together an interactive, hands-on exhibition that explores our perceptions of reality. Two Smithsonian Leadership for Change Interns arrived in East Lansing to work on an Afrofuturism sound installation opening in early 2025. And the inaugural MSUFCU Art Power Up Artist-in-Residence finished his 3-month residency with FRIB and the MSU Museum, culminating in an immersive installation that will light up downtown East Lansing this fall, just as the second artist-in-residence arrives.

So, while the building is under renovation, the MSU Museum continues its evolution from serving as one of MSU’s first learning laboratories in 1857 to a twenty-first century collaboratory. This annual report chronicles the Museum’s contributions to MSU’s strategic priorities of advancing discovery and innovation and exploring transdisciplinary solutions to current problems. As you read about exhibitions like *VirtualGenome* and *Domicology*, you will see how close partnerships with faculty and research centers bring novel MSU discoveries to a wider public. In the CoLab Studio’s *Food Fight!*, a space within the exhibition was dedicated to

co-programming with over twenty-five MSU and community partners. What unites these disparate exhibitions is co-creation, a way of operating that inverts standard museum practice. Expertise flows through, not from, the institution. The process produces a mix of ideas and perspectives that is unique to here.

The Museum’s collaborative ethos extends to the student experience. Students have created new exhibitions. Through a partnership with the Smithsonian, they have worked in cross-disciplinary teams to design new technologies that will travel with a national exhibition. A team of student CoLaborators have facilitated visitor conversations about global challenges and co-created programming that brought the arts, sciences and technology together to think differently about our possible futures. The students who work at the MSU Museum are practicing a discovery mindset and dialogic skills that will help them shape their careers. This last year, interns at the Museum represented over thirty majors across twelve colleges. As a hub of experiential learning, the Museum serves as a springboard for student success.

Thanks to the generosity of the Forest Akers Trust, the lower level of the renovated building will foster co-creation and experimentation. Newly installed collection spaces will provide ways of probing big issues by bringing together collections that span natural, cultural and social histories. But the MSU Museum is much more than these physical assets. People sometimes say of a space that is well lived in, “This is not a museum!” As it pops up in new places and spaces over the next eighteen months, the MSU Museum will continue to explore what a living, evolving, and collaborative practice can be.

Sincerely,

Judith Stoddart
Vice Provost
University Arts and Collections

Student Success

Supporting student success through curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular efforts is a cornerstone of our work at the MSU Museum. We believe in fostering a holistic educational experience that extends beyond the traditional classroom setting. By integrating diverse learning opportunities and engaging students in dynamic, enriching activities, we aim to enhance their academic growth, personal development, and career readiness. Our programs are designed to provide a rich, supportive environment where students can explore their interests, develop new skills, and gain valuable experiences that will serve them well in their future endeavors. Additionally, through programs such as our acclaimed *First Fridays* for college students, the Museum has created a welcoming space for students to socialize and connect.

Over the past year, 134 unique classes, encompassing over 5,743 student experiences, have engaged directly with the Museum's exhibitions and collections through coursework. This included the Arts, Cultural Management & Museum Studies (MUSM 488): Curatorial Practices in Museums and Cultural Organizations class, which utilized the Museum's collections to produce an exhibition over the course of the Spring 2024 semester. For the second consecutive year, Dr. Suzanne Fischer led her students through hands-on, experiential learning to produce an exciting exhibition titled *Marking Time: A Year of Spartan Marching Band Traditions*. This experience afforded students the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical setting, enhancing their understanding of curatorial practices and exhibition development.

In addition, this year we inaugurated an exciting new program called *Ignite Talks MSU*, aimed at empowering students to effectively articulate their research. Through an open call process, the MSU Museum coached and mentored selected students to become more effective and creative communicators. Each cohort concluded by presenting their talks in front of an audience using a creative format: a 5-minute presentation using 20 slides that advance automatically every



Caroline White and CoLaborators outside the *Food Fight!* exhibition

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Abbie Stevens and students at *Ignite Talks MSU*

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Professor Suzanne Fischer and students from the Spring 2024 Curatorial Practices in Museum Studies class

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15 seconds. This program has significantly enhanced students' confidence and ability to engage audiences, making their research more accessible and impactful.

Moreover, our CoLaborators program continues to serve as an exemplary model for immersive, high-impact learning through employment. This dynamic team of undergraduate and graduate students plays a pivotal role in fostering engaging discussions and integrating creativity into MSU Museum exhibitions and outreach initiatives. The program is carefully crafted to nurture interdisciplinary thinking and develop essential skills such as science communication, critical analysis, project management, and problem-solving. Students frequently describe their experiences as transformative, broadening their curiosity about global challenges and enhancing their confidence as effective communicators.



MSU students at the *First Fridays* program

Faculty Success

The MSU Museum plays a pivotal role in advancing faculty success by providing a dynamic platform for teaching, research, and public engagement. As a vibrant center for interdisciplinary collaboration, the Museum offers faculty opportunities to showcase their work through exhibitions and public programs, fostering a culture of innovation and scholarly exchange. The extensive collections and resources support faculty research, offering unique materials, including artifacts and specimens, that enhance academic projects and publications. By integrating faculty research into its programming, the Museum amplifies the reach and impact of scholarly work and enriches the educational experience for students and the wider community. In essence, the MSU Museum serves as a catalyst for academic excellence, supporting faculty in achieving their professional goals and contributing to the university's mission of advancing knowledge and understanding.

Over the past year, the Museum's commitment to fostering faculty success has been demonstrated through collaborations that convey groundbreaking research in creative ways. One example is the *VirtualGenome* exhibition,

a VR-based immersive platform curated by Dr. Jianrong Wang from the MSU Department of Computational Mathematics, Science and Engineering. Developed as part of a National Science Foundation grant Broader Impacts project, this interactive exhibition enabled visitors to explore the 3D structure of the human genome, navigate the genetic landscape, observe genes and related proteins, and gain insight into cellular structures using accessible and engaging VR technology. This initiative highlights the Museum's role in making complex scientific research engaging to the public.

In addition, the Museum presented the exhibition *Domicology: Creating a Sustainable Built Environment*, organized by Dr. Rex LaMore, director of the MSU Center for Community Economic Development and a faculty member in the Urban & Regional Planning Program. Curated by MSU faculty, staff, and students, this exhibition explored the economic, social, and environmental factors in the built environment. It delved into the possibilities for a sustainable future where the life cycles of structures are considered. The collaborative effort behind this exhibition involved multiple MSU departments and the State



Science On a Sphere® presentation
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VirtualGenome exhibition
[Click here to explore more content](#)

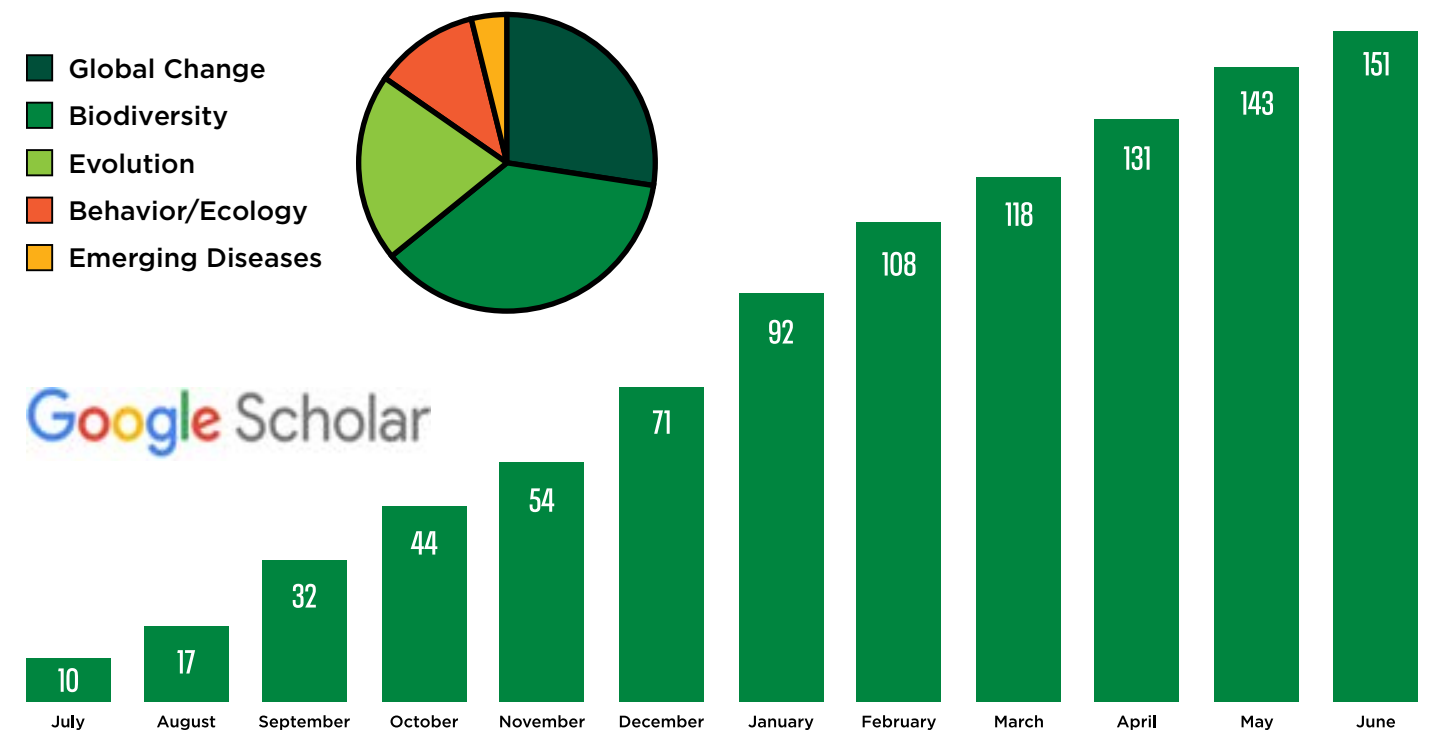
of Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, underscoring the Museum's commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration and sustainability.

Beyond these exhibitions, Museum staff support faculty with National Science Foundation Broader Impacts projects, teaching and learning opportunities on the Museum's Science On a Sphere®, and research utilizing the Museum's

collections. Over the past year, more than 150 new scholarly articles were published using the Museum's resources, showcasing its integral role in advancing faculty research. Through these diverse initiatives, the MSU Museum remains a cornerstone of academic excellence, enriching the educational experience for students and the wider community while amplifying the impact of scholarly work.

Publications citing use of MSU Museum Vertebrate Collections

cumulative July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 a new citation ~ every 2.4 days!



Natural science collection tour

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Community

The MSU Museum plays a vital role in enhancing social infrastructure on the MSU campus, fostering community and promoting collaboration. Over the past year, the Museum partnered with over 50 MSU campus and off-campus entities to produce and present dynamic and engaging events and public programs. Furthermore, we continued our work to establish the MSU Museum as a vibrant “third place” where our communities can drop in, hang out, and create new social connections.

The Museum’s rich array of public programming included a public talk, presented in partnership with WKAR Public Media, featuring legendary Detroit techno innovator Carl Craig during Black History Month. The program, *From Detroit to the Cosmos: Carl Craig on Techno and Afrofuturism*, moderated by Dr. Julian Chambliss, the Val Berryman Curator of History at the MSU Museum, was livestreamed to a global audience.

In February, the MSU Museum also partnered with MSU Libraries, Office of China Programs, Asian Pacific American Studies Program, Department of English, The Writing Center, and Center for Gender in Global Context to present award-winning author Curtis Chin, who discussed his book, *Everything I Learned, I Learned in a Chinese Restaurant*. The acclaimed memoir explores themes of growing up American-born Chinese and gay in Detroit in the 1980s and the role of food in shaping identity.

In March, during Women’s History Month, the MSU Museum partnered with the Native American Institute, American Indian and Indigenous Studies, EAGLE, MSU’s Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, and the W.J. Beal Botanical Garden to host the *REDress Project*. This evocative art installation spotlights the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The striking exhibition featured approximately 60 red dresses suspended along West Circle Drive in public spaces near the MSU Museum and Beal Botanical Garden, symbolizing



Peshawbestown Dancers and Singers performance

the haunting absence and powerful presence of these women and girls. The installation, created by Red River Métis artist Jaime Black-Morsette, garnered significant public engagement and media attention while raising awareness of the ongoing struggle for the rights and protection of Indigenous women and girls.

In addition to co-producing dozens of exciting and thought-provoking programs with our partners, our team worked diligently to uplift and highlight narratives of traditionally underrepresented populations, presenting a more complete depiction of our vibrant communities. This work continued with the creation of two new and important Museum advisory groups: the Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Advisory Committee, and the Student Advisory Committee. These groups will help shape and inform the Museum’s work now and into the future.



Silent disco themed First Fridays program



Carl Craig (right) in conversation with Julian Chambliss (left) about techno and Afrofuturism

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The REDress Project: honoring missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls
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Excellence

The MSU Museum is dedicated to excellence, advancing both MSU and the museum field through professional service and thought leadership. This commitment is evident in its significant contributions to national conferences, publications, grant review panels, and board service. Over the past year, the Museum has solidified its reputation as an innovative leader in the museum sector, playing a crucial role in shaping the future of museum practices and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations within academic museums.

MSU Museum staff have participated as panelists, moderators, and keynote speakers at numerous conferences, including those hosted by the Smithsonian Institution, American Alliance of Museums, Advancing Research Impact in Society (ARIS), Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (A2RU), Association

of Academic Museums and Galleries (AAMG), and the Burroughs Wellcome Fund. They have also contributed significantly to national conversations about the evolving role of museums in a democratic society. This includes serving as program advisor, facilitator, and panelist for the timely *Museums Respond: Strategies for Countering Antisemitism and Hate* summit, presented by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) in partnership with the Council of American Jewish Museums. The summit was a key part of IMLS's commitments under President Biden's *National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism*.

Museum staff have also served the professional field in other capacities, including field reviewer for the American Alliance of Museums' accreditation program and as content advisors for professional publications such as the Center

for the Future of Museums' 2024 *TrendsWatch*. They have mentored and advised other museums through the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience's *Addressing the Silences* program, served on the board of the American Alliance of Museums and other professional organizations, and participated as grant reviewers and panelists for federal funding agencies, including IMLS.

On campus, Museum staff have contributed to various advisory and job search committees, assisting peers in other colleges and departments. Their involvement has been instrumental in helping other units develop strategic plans and advance the university's mission.

This dedication to professional service has led to numerous awards and recognitions. One of the Museum's most significant achievements was securing a \$2M investment from the Forest Akers Trust. This major award underscores the Museum's

vital role in fostering innovation and excellence in supporting student success on campus. The funding will enhance the Museum's capacity for groundbreaking teaching and learning, further establishing the MSU Museum as a center of excellence.

The Museum's growing media coverage, both locally and nationally, including stories on NPR's *All Things Considered* and in the New York Times, highlights its expanding influence and recognition. The Museum's dedication to excellence is reflected in its achievements and ongoing efforts to advance knowledge, foster innovation, and serve as a model for other institutions. As it continues to grow and evolve, the MSU Museum remains committed to setting the standard for excellence in academic museums.

Interim Provost
Thomas Jeitschko



Caroline White with students who designed a game for the *Knowing Nature* exhibition



Dr. Rex LaMore, *Domicology* exhibition curator, director of the MSU Center for Community Economic Development, and faculty member in the Urban & Regional Planning Program



PIXELS and
PERSPECTIVES
■ the intersection of AI and Art



PBS WKAR

MUSEUM

NOVA



Pixels and Perspectives
discussion and live art
demonstration



Beyond Collaboration
at the CoLab Studio

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Food Fight!
exhibition



CoLab Studio

Over the past year, the MSU Museum's CoLab Studio continued to push boundaries by exploring timely and relevant societal topics in innovative and surprising ways. Our yearlong collaborative project, *Prompt Response: Exploring Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)*, aimed at engaging our communities in examining the evolving impact of generative AI, culminated in the highly successful program, *Pixels and Perspectives: The Intersection of AI and Art*. This initiative, in partnership with WKAR Public Media and NOVA Science and Society, showcased the profound potential of AI in artistic creation and its implications for the present and future of our society.

Additionally, the *Food Fight!* exhibition and programming series addressed critical issues of food security, sustainability, and wellness. By merging art, science, and community engagement, this series created a dynamic

platform for education and activism. Featuring over 30 public programs, it drew wide community participation with over 1,000 unique attendees, and sparked vital conversations about the future of food systems. The exhibition included seven interactive exhibits carefully curated from over 150 submissions received through an open call process. The project also introduced the *Food Fight! Commons*, a space within the gallery reserved for dynamic community-based programming.

Furthermore, we launched the collaborative *MSUFCU Arts Power Up Residency* program, presented in partnership with the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams (FRIB), the STEAMpower Project, and Arts MSU. This program aimed to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, exploration, experimentation, and innovation on MSU's vibrant campus. The inaugural resident artist, Berlin-based Abel Korinsky of Studio Korinsky, participated in an array of public programs. Korinsky explored nuclear astrophysics while engaging with FRIB's laboratory environment and interacting with scientists, students, and staff, as well as the dynamic arts communities. The culminating exhibition will be presented by the MSU Museum in Fall 2024.

Through these initiatives and more, the MSU Museum's CoLab Studio significantly enhanced its role as an innovation hub for creative experimentation and interdisciplinary collaboration, leaving a lasting impact on both the campus and local communities.



Pixels and Perspectives
program graphic

Smithsonian Affiliations

In September 2001, the MSU Museum earned the distinction of becoming Michigan's inaugural Smithsonian Institution Affiliate, an honor that has since opened doors to a wealth of collaborative initiatives aimed at advancing research, generating new knowledge, and fostering public engagement. As an Affiliate, the Museum is uniquely positioned to partner with the Smithsonian and its network of fellow Affiliates, forging a multitude of mutually beneficial projects and programs. Together, these efforts have not only enriched the MSU community but also contributed to the broader pursuit of knowledge and cultural exchange.

Over the past academic year, the MSU Museum continued to strengthen its vital partnership with the Smithsonian. Our collaborations included the continuation of the *Knowing Nature: Stories of the Boreal Forest* exhibition that opened at the MSU Museum in April 2023. In support of this exhibition, two teams of MSU students created two new technological products. One of these products is a mobile application designed to help younger learners explore the exhibition content through a digital game. The second product leverages RFID technology to provide greater accessibility to visitors with visual impairments. The mobile application is now being offered with the exhibition as it tours across the nation. Additionally, the Museum continues to explore the possibilities of RFID technologies and is currently partnering with MSU's Axia Institute in Midland to provide an internship to advance this work.

In October 2023, during Hispanic Heritage Month, the MSU Museum partnered with WKAR Public Media, the Chicano/Latino Studies Program at MSU, and the Smithsonian Museum of the American Latino to host a public talk with Jorge Zamanillo, titled *Building a Legacy: Inside the*

Journey to Establish the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Latino. Zamanillo, the founding director, shared his remarkable journey from his early days as an archaeologist in Miami to becoming the driving force behind the establishment of this groundbreaking museum, established by Congress in December 2020. The program was supported by the Diana Huizar Rivera and Pedro Rivera, DO Mexican American Culture Endowment.

Additionally, the MSU Museum was one of four Affiliates selected by the Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage to participate in the *Cultural Sustainability and Legacy Planning for Craft Artists* project. This initiative aimed to enhance the visibility of elder African American artisans, safeguard their stories, and foster intergenerational and institutional relationships. As part of the *African American Craft Initiative*, it provided resources for museum and cultural heritage professionals to support cultural sustainability and legacy planning for these artists, thereby expanding their recognition through collaborative research, documentation, public programming, and community building across U.S. and international craft communities.

Finally, for the second consecutive year, the MSU Museum partnered with the Smithsonian to host two *Leadership for Change* interns. This eight-week, compensated program is designed to provide interns with engaging and valuable experiences, including programming that deepens their comprehension of and dedication to social justice and leadership. Participants also benefit from hands-on learning opportunities within their local communities, further enriching their commitment to creating positive change.



MSU President Kevin Guskiewicz (center) with museum student employees in New York City



Jorge Zamanillo (left) in conversation with Devon Akmon (right)

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Students who designed RFID for the *Knowing Nature* exhibition

"I'm pleased to report that the trustees of the Forest Akers Trust unanimously approved MSU's request to fund a \$2 million project titled 'Forest Akers Trust Immersive & Exhibit Labs' at the MSU Museum," said Stephen Terry, trustee of the Forest Akers Trust. "The objective of the trust is to promote the general interest and welfare of the student body of Michigan State University. This project clearly fits this objective, as the museum has been an integral part of student life and learning since the founding of the university in 1855."

MSU Museum Renovations

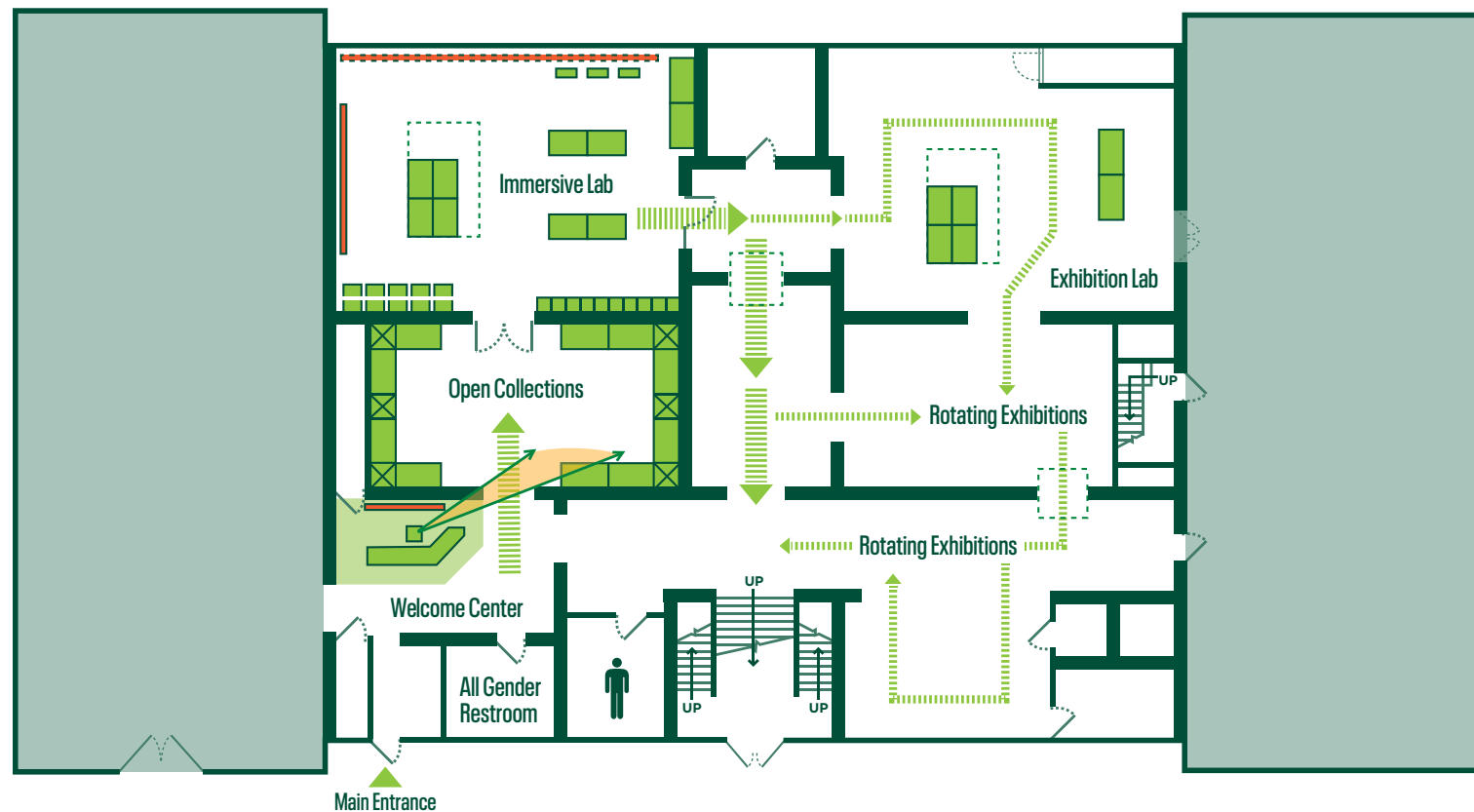
The MSU Museum stands at the dawn of an exciting new chapter. It is poised to enhance its strategic trajectory through an ambitious \$28 million upgrade. Sparked by a significant contribution from the University and endorsed by the MSU Board of Trustees, this renovation—scheduled to begin in 2024—aims to elevate the Museum to the forefront of best practices following the guidelines recommended by the American Alliance of Museums. This includes upgrading the climate control system to maintain stable temperature and humidity levels and integrating accessibility enhancements to ensure inclusive experiences for all visitors.

At the heart of this renaissance is a landmark \$2 million gift from the Forest Akers Trust, a catalytic show of support that will ignite the creation of two groundbreaking spaces within the Museum: an Immersive Lab dedicated to object-based learning and an Exhibition Lab focused on experiential learning. This strategic evolution transcends conventional approaches, breathing new life into student participation in exhibition design and enhancing interactions with museum visitors. It's a leap towards reimagining engagement with the Museum's vast collection of over one million objects and specimens.

These new labs are envisioned as fertile grounds for experiential learning, offering students a rare chance to spearhead the creation of immersive and educative experiences. This initiative places students at the heart of the Museum's educational mission, fostering an environment ripe with collaboration, innovation, and forward-thinking. Over the past year, staff have been diligently working to ready the Museum for the renovation project starting in July 2024.

During the upcoming year, the Museum will be presenting exhibitions and public programs in MSUFCU's new building at 311 Abbot in downtown East Lansing. The Museum will occupy an approximately 8,000 square foot space on the 6th floor of the building, which is at the corner of Albert Street and Abbot Road. This will enable the Museum to continue presenting exciting new exhibitions and other programs while the Museum undergoes renovations.

The future of the MSU Museum is bright, with transformative changes on the horizon. Stay tuned for an extraordinary journey as we redefine the museum experience!



Map of the renovated ground floor

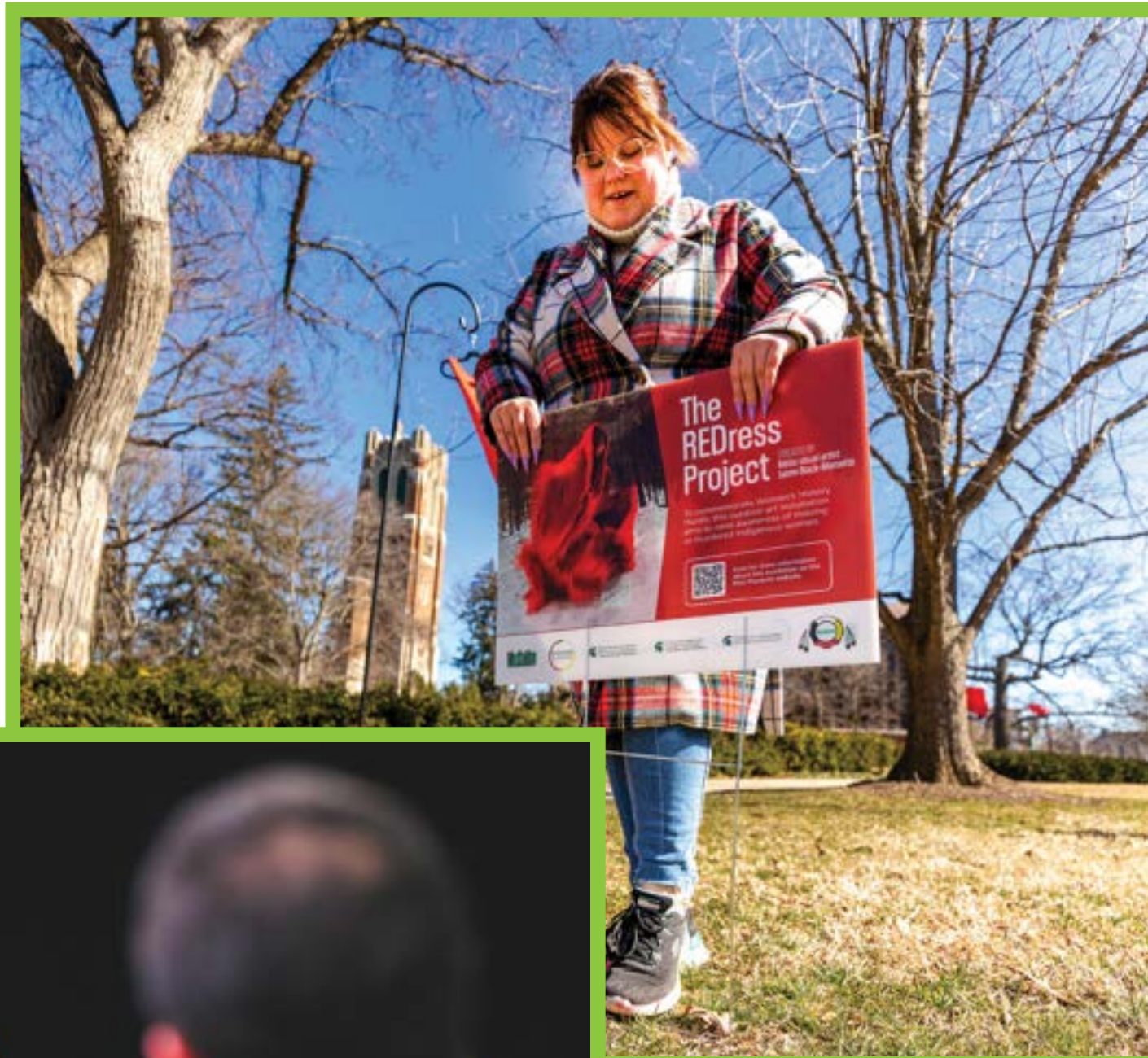


Exhibition curated by Museum Studies Curatorial Practices class

MSU Museum Staff

The MSU Museum owes its remarkable effectiveness and impact to its talented and dedicated staff. They are the backbone of the institution, bringing its collections to life and crafting unforgettable experiences for students, faculty, researchers, and the general public. Their expertise, passion, and commitment facilitate experiences at the nexus of art, science, cultures, and technology that educate, inspire, and provoke thought, which is what truly sets our museum apart.

From researchers and curators to educators and administrative personnel, every member plays a vital role in the Museum's success, fostering an environment where knowledge is shared, stories are told, and connections are made. Their steadfast dedication transforms the Museum into a creative collaboratory, where people can openly explore, express, and experiment with ideas across disciplines and interests, nurturing their natural curiosity about the world.



Brittany Carter installing signage



Mark Sullivan at the *Pixels and Perspectives* program

The Team

- Devon Akmon**, Director
- Laura Abraczinskas**, Vertebrate Collections Manager
- Denice Blair**, Ph.D., Director of Education
- Sandra Brown**, Associate Director of Development
- Brittany Carter**, Education Program Coordinator
- Julian Chambliss**, Ph.D., Val Berryman Curator of History
- C. Kurt Dewhurst**, Ph.D., Curator of Folklife and Cultural Heritage
- Samantha Ellens**, Archaeology Collections Manager
- Teresa Goforth**, Director of Exhibitions
- Michael Gottfried**, Ph.D., Curator of Vertebrate Paleontology
- Tam Heaton-Wyrick**, Associate Director of Development
- Liz Ivkovich**, Senior Director of Advancement
- Jeff Lambert**, Fiscal Officer and HR Administrator
- Barbara Lundrigan**, Ph.D., Curator of Mammalogy and Ornithology
- Marsha MacDowell**, Ph.D., Curator of Folk Arts and Quilt Studies
- Lynn Mande**, Administrative Associate II/S
- Natasha Miller**, Community Engagement Manager
- Julie Orler**, Administrative and Operational Support
- Stephanie Palagyi**, Communications Manager
- Kristin Phillips**, Digital Communication Coordinator
- Pamela Rasmussen**, Ph.D., Assistant Curator of Mammalogy and Ornithology
- Abbie Stevens**, Ph.D., CoLab Studio Public Programming Manager
- Mark Sullivan**, D.M.A., CoLab Studio Creative Director
- Lynne Swanson**, Cultural Collections Manager
- Sunny Wang**, Academic Information Technologist
- Ethan Watrall**, Ph.D., Curator of Archaeology
- Caroline White**, CoLab Studio Education and Learning Manager
- Carrie Wicker**, Education Assistant and Science On a Sphere® Coordinator
- Mary Worrall**, Director of Collections

“Being a CoLaborator inspired me to pursue a minor in Museum Studies, beginning at the start of my Junior year. I was excited by the possibilities for experience design in a museum setting and I started learning more about how museums function (collections, curation, exhibitions, education, etc.) in my courses and through working at the MSU Museum. My life-changing experiences at the MSU Museum (CoLaborator, Game Designer, Leadership for Change intern, WKAR exhibitor) have all accumulated to result in my pursuit of future opportunities in non-formal learning settings (museums, libraries, gardens, zoos, etc.). I love the freedom for out-of-box thinking when it comes to experience and interaction in a museum setting. It connects so well to my studies as an XA/ P2W student, encouraging me to think about both the physical and digital elements that can enhance and support visitor learning. I have the MSU Museum (and of course Caroline) to thank for entirely shaping my perception about what is possible with my degree.”

Emily Paterson, Professional and Public Writing

Graduate Students

Maileen Bugnaski, Arts, Cultural Management and Museum Studies

Rhian Dunn, Anthropology, specializing in Biological/Forensic Anthropology

Ani E. Hristova, Integrative Biology and Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior

Jamily Ramos de Lima, Integrative Biology

Bochi (Lily) Zhang, Music Performance

Undergraduate Students

Ben Adams, Biosystems Engineering

Muna Akwali, Criminal Justice and Psychology

Emily Arne, Zoology

Nadia Azam, Human Biology

Alastair Beatingo, Psychology

Samuel Booth, Film Studies

Sarah Cavanaugh, Business

Adair Cleland-Host, Environmental Science/Zoology

Jeneia Dinglasan, Psychology

Jason Fagan, Experience Architecture

Luca Ghilezan, Business

Emma Gorsline, Neuroscience

Kyleigh Haren, Zoology

Daniel Helo, Computer Science

Delaney Henderson, Arts and Humanities

Sean Hughes, Games and Interactive Media

Madi Imperio, Studio Art

Adam Ismaili-Alaoui, Computer Science

Joe Jones, Apparel and Textile Design

Vanshika Kadian, Computer Science

Daniel Lee, Public Relations

Evan Lee, Finance

Rachel Lewis, Art History and Journalism

Carlos Lopez-Resendiz, Actuarial Science

Sandhya Manivasagam, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology/Biotechnology

Preston Meeker, Environmental Biology/Zoology

David Mikola, Computer Science

Naamna Modi, Data Science

Jane Moore, Undecided

Emily Page, Zoology

Himanshi Pakale, Computer Science

Emily Paterson, Experience Architecture and Professional and Public Writing

Ryan Pham, Computer Science

Emma Riddle, History

Alanna Rundell, Prenursing

Saanch Rustagi, Psychology

Ava Stack, Engineering

Nicole Stocks, Games and Interactive Media

Mackenzie Taylor, Pol Theory & Constitutional Dem

Rachel Tiv, Games and Interactive Media

Sydney Urbaniak, Philosophy

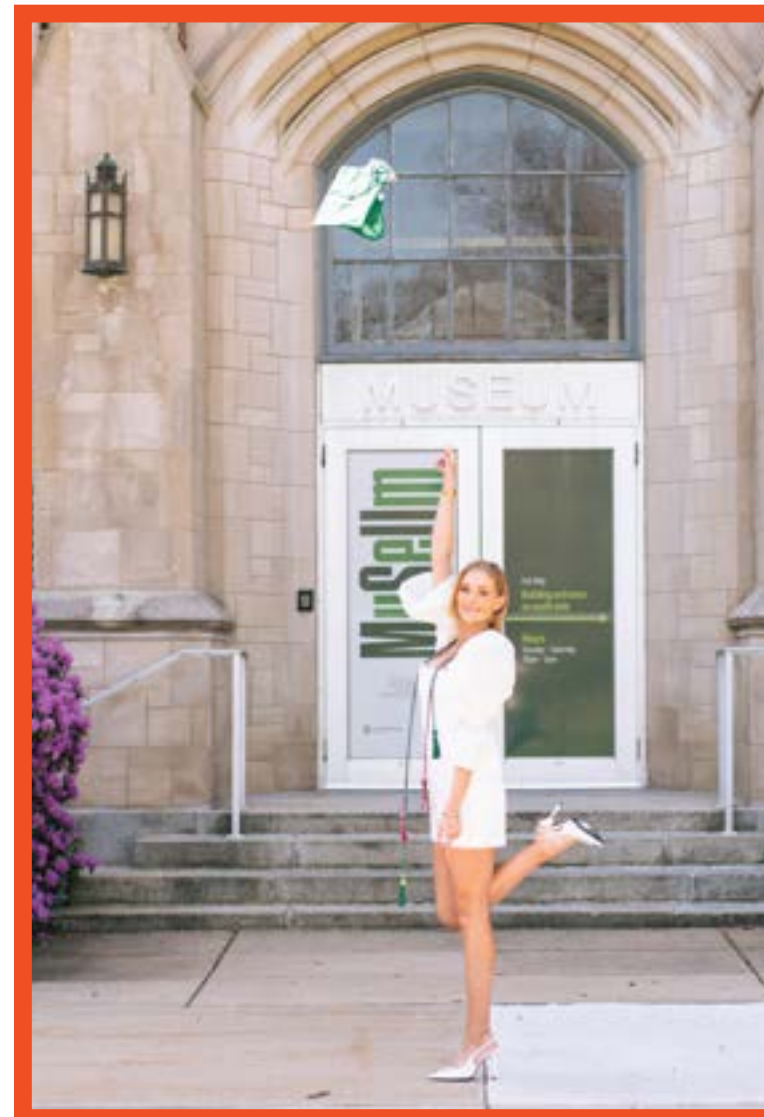
Atsuhiko Yaginuma, Astrophysics

Dorothy Zhao, Neuroscience, Psychology, and Human Biology

Elianna Zhao, Urban and Regional Planning

Abbie Stevens with CoLaborators at a *Food Fight!* program

Graduation photograph of Sarah Cavanaugh



Student Employees

Student employees and interns are integral to the success and development of the MSU Museum. Their involvement provides them with valuable opportunities to hone essential skills that enhance their education and future career prospects. Through hands-on experiences, collaboration with professionals, and exploration of various disciplines, they broaden their knowledge and expertise in areas such as research, curation, collections management, exhibition design, marketing, and communications. This professional growth not only benefits the students but also significantly contributes to the Museum’s mission and activities.

Their fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and deep understanding of their generation’s interests inject energy and creativity into our programs, helping to push the boundaries of what the MSU Museum can achieve. We are grateful for their outstanding work and dedication to the Museum’s mission!

“As I wrap up my four years at MSU, I am compelled to express a heartfelt gratitude for the incredible experiences the Museum has bestowed upon me. The knowledge and insights I’ve gained during my time as a comms assistant have been invaluable, thanks to your collective guidance, support, and expertise. As I attempt to navigate my place in the world of arts and culture post-graduation, I hope to cross paths with you all again and watch the continued growth of the Museum. The transformational growth made in the past 3 years is truly remarkable and has been a beacon of inspiration for all my future pursuits.”

Sarah Cavanaugh, Business

Afrofuturism & Quilts: Materializing Black Futures & Black Womxn's Quilt Legacies exhibition at the MSU Union Gallery in collaboration with the MSU Museum



Museum Advisory Committees

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Advisory Committee

The Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (DEAI) Advisory Committee at the MSU Museum is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for all visitors. This committee was formed to address barriers to accessibility within the Museum and ensure the Museum is accessible and equitable for individuals of all backgrounds and abilities.

By engaging with the broader community and soliciting feedback, the DEAI Advisory Committee ensures that the Museum reflects and celebrates the rich diversity of its audience, creating a space where everyone feels valued and represented.

Jena Baker-Calloway, MPH, Director, MSU Detroit Center

Ruth Nicole Brown, Ph.D., Chair & Michigan State University Foundation Professor
Department of African American and African Studies

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Kevin P. Leonard, Ph.D., Interim Director of the Native American Institute in the Office of University Outreach and Engagement

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The Student Advisory Committee at the MSU Museum fosters engagement and enriches the Museum experience for the campus community. Comprising of passionate and diverse students, the committee provides valuable insights and feedback on Museum initiatives, ensuring that the Museum remains a vibrant and inclusive space. The committee helps bridge the gap between the Museum and the student body, enhancing student involvement.

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Bhavya Mrinal, Computer Science

Angel Noaks, Marketing

Enrique Nunez-Mussa, Information and Media

Emily Paterson, Professional and Public Writing and Experience Architecture

Farhad Silevany, Management

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