

Dallas Museum of Art Receives \$300,000 to Support Launch of Its Museum Technology Laboratory

Laboratory for Museum Innovation will Test and Develop Digital Projects Pioneering New Ways of Engaging Museum Audiences and Enriching Visitor Experience at the DMA and Within the Broader Museum Community

The Dallas Museum of Art has received \$300,000 to support the creation of a Laboratory for Museum Innovation. The Laboratory will produce focused and highly innovative digital projects that will positively impact visitor experience at the DMA and offer a broad application to the global museum community. The three lead gifts to this new initiative are from AT&T, Texas Instruments Foundation, and Forrest and Cynthia Miller. Together with the recent \$500,000 grant from the Andrew M. Mellon Foundation supporting conservation at the DMA, this new grant will strengthen the Museum's role within the community as resource for education and innovation.

The Laboratory, to be led by Robert Stein, the DMA's Deputy Director, will utilize an open and collaborative approach to solve common challenges within arts institutions in novel ways. The Laboratory will mount a series of short-term pilot projects that will investigate and focus on enhancing educational resources for K-12 students and teachers; expanding data and information on its collections to aid scholars and visitors; deepening understanding of how visitors encounter works of art; and improving global distribution of content from the Museum and its audiences. Each of these projects falls under four specific areas of study at the Laboratory: Access to Collections; Visitor Engagement and Participatory Culture; Advancing Digital Scholarship; and Transformative Infrastructure. Work on the first pilot projects will begin this summer and continue through 2013.

"We thank AT&T, Texas Instruments Foundation, and Forrest and Cynthia Miller for their eager and enthusiastic support of the Dallas Museum of Art's Laboratory for Museum Innovation. Their generous commitment will allow us to develop cutting-edge technologies that further enhance the vital role that museums play in their communities," said Maxwell L. Anderson, the Museum's Eugene McDermott Director. "Under Rob Stein's leadership, the Laboratory will address important issues facing museums as we seek to make a difference in the lives of visitors both locally and globally."

"With social media and mobile computing becoming increasingly important factors in the lives of museum visitors, the methods and means to effectively engage with those visitors are changing at an incredible pace. Now is the best time in the history of the DMA for such an effort to be launched, and I am excited to be a part of it," noted Stein. "In an ever-connected age, museums occupy an important place as a significant local resource as well as an important cultural resource to a global community."

Robert Stein is widely regarded among the foremost technology innovators in museums today. His accomplishments were cited in 2011 by *The New York Times* in an article *Four to Follow in Museum Technology* and have been hailed by *The New York Times*, *The Guardian UK*, *The Washington Post*, and technology blogs like ReadWriteWeb.com.

Developer of the innovative cloud-hosted video platform called ArtBabble.org, Stein, together with Anderson, succeeded in building a partnership of 35 major international museums to contribute hosted video content about art and artists. In 2009, Stein founded an initiative to create TAP (TAPintoMuseums.org), a mobile technology platform for museums that was subsequently awarded a National Leadership Grant by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and brings together a dozen major U.S. museums around a common goal. From 2006-2009, Stein led a collaboration of 21 museums in a research project called Steve.Museum (www.steve.museum) that explored the potential for social tagging to improve collection access in museums. In 2011, Stein was awarded a grant from the Getty Foundation to innovate new methods for online scholarly publishing in art museums. A part of a larger collaboration of 10 museums called the Online Scholarly Catalogue Initiative, the grant supports the creation of innovative publishing tools that take advantage of technical innovation in mobile and tablet computing.

About the Dallas Museum of Art

Established in 1903, the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) ranks among the leading art institutions in the country and is distinguished by its innovative exhibitions and groundbreaking educational programs. At the heart of the Museum and its programs is its global collection, which encompasses more than 25,000 works and spans 5,000 years of history, representing a full range of world cultures. Located in the vibrant Arts District of downtown Dallas, the Museum welcomes more than half a million visitors annually and acts as a catalyst for community creativity, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse spectrum of programming, from exhibitions and lectures to concerts, literary events, and dramatic and dance presentations.

The Dallas Museum of Art is supported in part by the generosity of Museum members and donors and by the citizens of Dallas through the City of Dallas/Office of Cultural Affairs and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

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