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Mount Holyoke College Art Museum Receives Grant from Matisse Foundation

Mount Holyoke College Art Museum is the recipient of a challenge grant from The Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation in support of the new initiative “The Museum as Catalyst for the Creative Campus.” The Foundation’s grant will help fund the initial three-year phase of the project with a \$169,500 challenge grant.

Creativity, and the belief that it can be encouraged through museum experiences, is a key conviction informing the Museum’s plan to develop itself as a laboratory for innovative teaching. The Museum has already adopted a model of support for curriculum across academic disciplines, and for this reason demand for its services have been noticeably increasing each year. In the next phase of its evolution, MHCAM will extend its methodology to include new ways of assisting faculty in achieving the College-wide mission geared toward preparing students for a life of purposeful engagement in the world. To this end, the Museum will work with faculty to reinforce student mastery of skills that lie beyond the direct content of their courses, and embrace visual literacy, critical thinking, and creativity as whole.

A series of faculty seminars to be held during the three-year grant period will gather experts in the fields of education, creativity studies, art history, and material culture studies together with Mount Holyoke faculty to discuss the integration of object-based creativity training into the College curriculum. The first seminar will act as a “think tank,” helping to shape future Museum programs in the context of a “Creative Campus Initiative.” This initiative will offer practical components that faculty could include in their classes to encourage divergent thinking, create “what if” scenarios, receive and apply critical feedback, take risks, and communicate and collaborate productively with others. By helping to advance the College mission of producing a student population of productive thinkers and dreamers in every discipline who can apply and effectively communicate their ideas, the Museum will evolve into a center for innovative thought and skill building.

With “The Museum as Catalyst for the Creative Campus,” the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, already the steward of important and diverse collections of art, will cement its place at the interdisciplinary crossroads on campus and assert its centrality to liberal arts education in the 21st century.

The Mount Holyoke College Art Museum in South Hadley is a leading collegiate art museum. Its comprehensive permanent collection of 17,000 objects features Asian art, 19th- and 20th-century European and American paintings and sculpture, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman art, Medieval sculpture, early Italian Renaissance paintings, and an extensive collection of works on paper. For more information, visit www.mtholyoke.edu/artmuseum or call 413-538-2085