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The University of Maryland Center for the Visual Arts



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Abstract

Today the University of Maryland faces three different but related problems regarding management of its visual resources. Currently the University owns an incredible visual collection with the potential of drawing scholars from around the world, but it is not available to the public because of lack of space. One of them is the David C. Driskell Collection, which contains the material produced by the Center for the Study of the African Diaspora. Another one is the Elizabeth D. Alley Visual Resources Collection of 385,000 images, which is the second largest collection of its kind in the United States. At the same

time, both Art and Architecture libraries are currently at capacity, and new acquisitions must be placed in storage, making the access of information material slow and difficult. Recently, the Architecture Library was forced to move "The National Trust for Historic Preservation Collection" to the Hornbake Library to provide additional room and is once again nearing full capacity. Also, the University of Maryland is one of the few major research universities in the country without a fine arts museum to display student, faculty and local artists work. There is also no major art museum in Prince Georges County or Southern Maryland. For these reasons it is necessary to provide the University with a building that can efficiently accommodate its visual collections, manage the growing needs of both Art and Architecture libraries, and also create a cohesive centerpiece, a meeting point for the visual arts disciplines where both University and community art activities can occur. In this way a Center for the Visual Arts would greatly enrich the University, surrounding communities, and the State.

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