

Revised: Jan, 2014



COLLECTIONS PLAN

ABRIDGED FOR POTENTIAL DONORS

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE OF THE COLLECTIONS PLAN

The Collections Plan of the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art, Inc. (LRMA) is designed to serve as a guide for building a permanent collection that supports the mission of the Museum. It embraces the best practices for acquisition, de-accession, loans, care and usage of the collection, as outlined in the LRMA Collections Management document, while advising on the development of a comprehensive collection that balances physical and fiscal constraints with the mission and vision of the Museum.

B. MUSEUM MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

The **mission** of the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art is to collect, conserve, exhibit and protect the works of art entrusted to its care and stewardship. Through its exhibitions, programs, and expanding collection of 20th and 21st century art, the Museum strives to engage and inspire our diverse community by providing opportunities for education, enlightenment, interpretation, and research to students, scholars, and visitors.

Amended and approved by the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art Board of Directors on August 3, 2011

The **vision** for the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art as a collecting institution is to be in support of the Museum's Mission. As a relatively new museum, opened in 2002, the growth of the LRMA collection has been based almost exclusively upon donations from individuals, foundations and the St. Petersburg College Foundation, Inc. It is hoped that this document will assist donors to the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art to find value in both the donation of artwork, as well as in providing endowment funds so that the Museum may have the opportunity to grow its collection through purposed and thoughtful purchase acquisition.

C. STATEMENT OF CURATORIAL AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

The Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art adheres to curatorial and ethical practices and procedures outlined by the American Association of Museums, and other professional associations including the Association of Museum Directors and International Council of Museums. These standards represent the core values by which the Museum bridges its mission to develop an intellectual framework for analyzing its collection for planned development.

In this process, staff members and volunteers of LRMA, St. Petersburg College, LRMA Board of Directors, and other vested partners are to understand and adhere to the parameters of conflicts of interest and other ethical issues that might influence decisions

of the Museum in implementing its Collecting Plan. The final organization and writing of the document is performed by the Curator with the review and support of the Museum Director, Curatorial Department, and St. Petersburg College Office of General Counsel.

D. COLLECTIONS PLANNING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

The curatorial mission of the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art (LRMA) is to thoughtfully and purposefully grow its collection, provide access to the collection for its defined audiences and ensure the preservation and conservation of its collections in perpetuity. From its beginnings as a singular collection with the largest repository of works by Abraham Rattner, Allen Leepa and Esther Gentle to the addition of significant collections in the past ten years, including holdings of the Gulf Coast Museum of Art, LRMA is now poised to broaden its collecting scope to include other movements, artists and media of 20th and 21st century art. This is essential for the long term growth and development as a visual arts institution for collecting, research and education.

LRMA is also committed to Strategic Planning as a key to the successful development of the institution. This comprehensive process vests partners from the Museum, St Petersburg College (College) and community into defining goals for the oversight of the public trust mission of the Museum. Together Collections Planning and Strategic Planning are designed to create living documents intended to define the important organizational, programmatic and collections issues related to thoughtful refining of the goals of the Museum.

II. THE COLLECTION

A. INTELLECTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE COLLECTION

It is understood that the collection of the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art represents the Museum's core interpretive asset. It not only supports the mission of the Museum, but also serves to realign the mission as the collection grows or as collecting opportunities arise. However this is to be always accomplished through thoughtful and purposeful planning.

LRMA desires to establish and maintain high standards for the development, accountability, research and preservation of its permanent collection as defined by the Collections Plan and the Collections Management Policies in harmony with the Museum's other strategic documents. The purpose of this document is to analyze the existing collection for its strengths and weakness, provide an intellectual framework for the thoughtful development of its collections as a road map to the future and, in the process, create access to its collections through exhibitions, research and publications with educational and interpretive management.

It is also important to define the audiences for whom this collection will be developed. As a Direct Support Organization of St. Petersburg College, our primary audience is the

faculty and students of the College. As a symbol of cultural pride for the College, the Museum is a valued asset of the College that partners with the St. Petersburg College Foundation and acts in alliance with other cultural initiatives of the College. Students are a primary audience for the development of a collection that is educational, relevant and supportive to their educational needs. As a secondary audience, the Museum is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides cultural service to the community-at-large. This audience is broader and includes educational focus from early childhood to family, young adult, adult and senior adult interests in art education. The Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art, Inc. serves as a bridge connecting the College with the community through its exhibitions and programs to the benefit of all constituencies.

B. HISTORY OF THE MUSEUM AND THE COLLECTION

1. THE MUSEUM

The Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art (LRMA) began in 1997 with the transfer of art work, financial support and the signing of legal documents by Dr. Allen Leepa and his wife Isabelle Sutton Leepa to the St. Petersburg Junior College Development Foundation, Inc., which is now named the St. Petersburg College Foundation, Inc. The intent of the Leepa gift was to: 1) establish an art museum that would house and display works from the collection; 2) provide a center for research and accessibility to the collection; 3) serve as an educational visual arts institution for the College; and, 4) to support the interests of the larger community for an art museum. The organizational authority of this extensive collection, referred to as the Leepa-Rattner-Gentle (L-R-G) Collection, was defined under an agreement between the now named St. Petersburg College Foundation (who accepted and owns the gift), who then permanently loaned the gift to St. Petersburg College for \$1, and then the College in turn loaned the collection to LRMA (who is charged with managing the gift).

Between 1997 and the establishment in 2002 of the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art, Inc. as a non-profit organization, the College gathered, surveyed and inventoried the L-R-G Collection at a secure site in Largo, Florida. Here the work was assessed, studied for presentational interpretation and works selected for accessioning into the Museum's collections holdings as a singularly identified collection. This extensive process included the expertise of the newly hired Museum Director, Associate Curator & Registrar and Preparator, along with volunteers and staff assistance from the College for reviewing and formally reporting findings to the St. Petersburg College Foundation, Inc.

Planning, design and construction of a new architecturally-significant building also took place during this time frame and the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art officially opened its doors on January 22, 2002 on the Tarpon Springs Campus of St. Petersburg College. The Museum featured in its public spaces: 4,200 sq. ft. of permanent exhibition galleries, 1,850 sq. ft. of changing exhibition space, 1,000 sq. ft. of exhibiting space composed of the Museum Lobby and Focus Gallery Wall, a 2,500 sq. ft. *Challenge of*

Modern Art Interactive Gallery, an outdoor Terrace space, plus front desk and Museum Store operational space. Behind-the-scenes spaces included: 8 offices, an Archives/Library Room, Vault Storage area, preparatory spaces, loading docks, storage room facilities and other ancillary and mechanical areas.

The Museum incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in 2002. The Museum also functions as a Direct Support Organization of St. Petersburg College, and as such is subject to the policies and procedures of the College. The Museum's official governing authority is the St. Petersburg College Board of Trustees. The College ultimately owns the Museum facility, provides salaries for most budgeted and OPS employees, controls HR operations, oversees budgets from the College and non-profit operations, and manages other fiduciary and administrative responsibilities with the Museum Director reporting to the Tarpon Springs Campus Provost. As a non-profit organization, LRMA is governed by a Board of Directors who oversees the establishment of policies and procedures, best practices, programming and financial accountability of the non-profit side of the Museum. As a collecting institution, the Museum works with the College's Risk Management Office for insurance coverage bidding; LRMA develops and insures its accessioned holdings following the same procedural guidelines as used to manage the L-R-G Collection, insured by the St Petersburg College Foundation, Inc.

2. THE COLLECTIONS

a. CORE COLLECTION (Leepa-Rattner-Gentle Collection): The core collection of the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art is not owned by LRMA, Inc., but managed by the Museum through a tripartite agreement between the SPC Foundation, Inc., St. Petersburg College and the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art, Inc. The Museum, through a lengthy inventory and cataloguing process (using the year of 1997 as an identifier in the acquisition numbering), lists the Leepa-Rattner-Gentle (L-R-G) Collection as 1,176 paintings, sculptures, works on paper (drawings, watercolors, prints), tapestries and stained glass maquettes, plus over 3,000 objects (mostly works on paper) that have been inventoried. Ancillary archives (letters, journals, notebooks, catalogs, photographs) of Abraham Rattner (1893-1978), Esther Gentle (1889-1991), and Allen Leepa (1919-2009) provide historical overview of the artistic careers of each artist and forms the research material. Also within the L-R-G collection are 280 works, mostly prints and works on paper, by 19th century print artists and 20th century American and European contemporaries of Rattner including Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall, Georges Rouault, Fernand Léger and an important bronze head by Henry Moore. Many of these works were either collected by or gifted to Abraham Rattner and Esther Gentle during their lives. These objects are important and enrich the collection by providing additional contextual value.

b. SECONDARY CORE COLLECTION (Gulf Coast Museum of Art): With the donation of artwork from the Gulf Coast Museum of Art Collection to the Museum by the St. Petersburg College Foundation Inc., LRMA has received a secondary core collection

that has required a rethinking of mission and direction. In 2009, the oldest art institution in Pinellas County was forced to close its doors due to financial constraints. To keep the collection intact, St. Petersburg College successfully lobbied to acquire the entire collection for the purposes of facilitating its accessibility to the public while allowing the collection to remain as a cultural asset in Pinellas County.

The Gulf Coast Museum of Art (formerly the Florida Gulf Coast Art Center) had been in existence for 73 years, mostly in the Belleair area of Pinellas County. Its collection, which dates to 1956, remained a loosely defined group of objects (mostly gifts of a benefactor and art work by the center's faculty) until 1991 when they began to encourage acquisition. In 1994, the art center began purchasing art related to organized art and fine art craft biennial exhibitions, as well as seeking donations in anticipation of transitioning the institution from an art center to a new museum facility, which opened in 1999 in the Pinewood Cultural Center (a complex owned by Pinellas County). More than two-thirds of the Gulf Coast collection of 420 objects reflects contemporary Florida art and southeastern United State fine art crafts amassed between 1995 and 2008.

There are some non-contextual pieces within the Gulf Coast collection that are also worthy of note, including two important paintings by 19th century American tonalist painter George Inness, Sr., several other landscape paintings from the late 19th and early 20th century, an interesting group of prints from the first half of the 20th century, and some collective holdings of individual artists who had an association with the art center during its early history.

c. LRMA COLLECTIONS: Over the years, LRMA has received several art collections, as well as numerous individual gifts through a variety of donors and sources. In the years before the Museum opened some donations were brokered through the SPC Foundation, Inc. The majority of the other donations have come directly as gifts to the LRMA, Inc. In both cases, collecting has been at the largesse of the donors and their offered works accepted or rejected through a Museum review process for appropriateness to the mission of the Museum by the LRMA Collections Committee and taken to the LRMA Board of Directors for final approval. At present, over 1,500 accessioned objects have entered the collection of LRMA, Inc. since 2000.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Describing the collections of LRMA is best understood by dividing the collection into five main collecting areas.

COLLECTING AREAS:

Leepa/Rattner/Gentle (L-R-G) and their Contemporaries – this includes paintings, prints, works on paper, sculpture and related art work, mostly created between 1920-1980 that reflect movements of modern art, most specifically figurative expressionism and abstraction, created in France and the United States by the family of

artists, Abraham Rattner, Esther Gentle, Allen Leepa and contemporaries. While most of the contemporaries are represented by prints, there are a few paintings, drawings and one sculpture.

Prints – more than 1,017 prints are currently in the collection of the Museum (with an additional group of approximately 300 works to be added from the Gulf Coast Collection and Uhl gift). The strength of the collection is late 20th century American printmaking, including works by Robert Indiana, Charles Hewitt, Miriam Schapiro and others. A secondary area focuses on 20th century European modernist prints including works by Pablo Picasso, Joan Miro, Marc Chagall, Georges Rouault and Fernand Léger, among others, including several print portfolios. Works of 20th century American styles is in dramatic need of development, although large holdings of prints by Abraham Rattner, Richard Florsheim and Leonard Baskin allow for studies of these specific artists development as printmakers. Understanding the role of 19th century contributions to modern printmaking history is important in this collecting area and the Museum has a few, but significant examples of 19th century European printmaking beginning with Goya and including Manet, Cezanne, Renoir and other notables. With the Uhl gift of Winslow Homer, the Museum can begin to build in 19th century American. This collecting focus reiterates the dream of Allen Leepa to be able to teach cultural history through prints and should be developed with thoughtful purpose.

Artist Repositories – the Museum has received groupings of artwork by certain artists that form repositories that chronicle their artistic careers. Retrospectives of Richard Florsheim, Vladimir Yoffe, David Anderson, plus graphics by Tomás Marias (from the Gulf Coast collection), Winslow Homer and Leonard Baskin (from the Uhl gift), as well as the core artists Allen Leepa, Abraham Rattner and Esther Gentle make up this category. While there is not an active intent to grow these artists' holdings, except through donations received by association, the works of David Anderson may continue to be offered through estates over the next ten years based upon work established by the SPC Foundation.

Contemporary Fine Art Craft / Mixed Media – with the acquisition of the Gulf Coast Museum of Art (GCMA) Collection and their focus on collecting fine art craft created in the southeastern United States, combined with objects donated to the Museum over the years, this may become an area to grow the LRMA collection.

Contemporary Florida Art – the Gulf Coast Museum of Art in its last fifteen years concentrated on collecting art created by contemporary Florida artists. This stellar collection was attained through a supportive acquisitions budget with purchases made at museum-organized biennial exhibitions and at area arts and crafts shows. This collection remains stellar as long as it can continue to grow with the same level of focus and quality and should be a focused area of growth in the LRMA collection.

C. ANALYSIS OF COLLECTION STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

To analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the LRMA collection, it is perhaps best seen through a chronological view by media.

a. Painting

1830-1920 There are 10 pieces from the Gulf Coast collection. Several are significant works including two important paintings by American tonalist painter George Inness, Sr., a landscape by Danish artist Emil Carlsen, several other interesting landscape paintings. While expanding this collection is impractical, utilizing the paintings for exhibitions, particularly the Inness pieces because of their relevancy to Tarpon Springs, is important.

1920-1980 Most of the core L-R-G collection dates to this timeframe, as well as the Richard Florsheim collection of paintings. Currently 150 paintings are included in the L-R-G collection. There are additional 51 paintings in the Gulf Coast collection by artists including Arnold Blanch, University of Florida educator Hiram Williams, and noted Florida artists William Pachner and Syd Solomon that enhance some of the modernist aesthetics in the L-R-G collection. A possible gift from the Jean Gollay estate would broaden the collection with good representations of artists associated with Rattner who worked in the Hamptons in the 1960s and 1970s. If this area were to be explored through either acquisition or exhibition planning, it should focus on American figurative expressionist painters of the pre-Abstract Expressionist era, including such artists as Balcomb Greene, Carl Holte, O. Louis Guglielmi, Rico LeBrun, Walter Quirt, Jack Levine, Karl Zerbe, and/or focus on Florida modernist artists during this time, such as William Pachner, Syd Solomon. Additionally there are representative works by Florida educators in the Gulf Coast collection who were art educators at Florida universities: Hiram Williams, Grady Kimsey, Mernet Larson, Leslie Lerner to name a few. Their work and their influence on generations of Florida artists is an interesting area of study for collecting or exhibition development.

1980-Present In the LRMA and L-R-G collections there are only 25 paintings (mostly by Allen Leepa or David Anderson). However, amongst the Gulf Coast collection there are 50 impressive and visual stimulating works that represent a survey of recognized artists working in Florida in the 1990s: Theo Wujcik, Mark Messersmith, Bruce March, etc.. Hopefully this collection will not be allowed to stagnate, however to continue the focus will require donations or a revenue line for acquisition. Encouraging gifts of important works by these artists from private donors is also possible as well as the establishment of a Collector's Group on contemporary Florida art. One of the primary challenges in developing in this area is storage and exhibition space.

b. Works on Paper

The collection of drawings, pen & ink, watercolor, and other works on paper (not including prints) represents more of a study than a focused collection. Removing the Rattner works on paper, the collection includes a few notable pieces, a frottage by Max Ernst, two drawings by Picabia and a gouache by Auguste Herbin, but little else. In the Gulf Coast Collection there are a few interesting drawings, both historical and larger contemporary pieces, but nothing that constitutes an area of collecting pursuit. One exception would be to develop an exhibition based on the pen & ink drawings and watercolors of Rattner in 1940 during his travels with Henry Miller. A donation of 96 Rattner drawings from the Jewish Museum in New York enhances this opportunity.

c. Prints

1800-1920 A group of approximately 27 prints by recognized 19th century European artists, including Francesco Goya, Edouard Manet, Auguste Renoir, Paul Cezanne, etc., that were purchased by Allen Leepa for the purpose of establishing a print collection for educational use. Some of these prints are original and a few are restrikes. This collection has been enhanced by a few donations, 10 prints in the Gulf Coast Collection and the promised gift of 75 wood engravings by the American artist Winslow Homer. While this may not become a collecting focus, there are several potential donors who have expressed an interest in donating in this area. Also the educational aspect, and wish of Allen Leepa, might be considered in maintaining this area of collecting.

1920-1980 Within the print collection, this timeframe has been enhanced by the addition of 25 some works in the Gulf Coast collection, which includes mostly American printmaking whereas the L-R-G collection is mostly European, with interesting print portfolios by Fernand Léger, Marc Chagall and Georges Rouault, as well as a sampling of prints by Bonnard, Derain, Picasso, Braque, Miro, Grosz, Hayter, Dali, and others. Within the American grouping there are a number of prints by lesser known artists, but also some good examples of recognized artists including Chaim Gross, Rafael Soyer, Ben Shahn, George Biddle, Hans Hofmann, Alexander Calder, Richard Anuskiewicz, Pat Stier, and Donald Saff, in addition to the large holdings of prints by Leonard Baskin, Richard Florsheim and Abraham Rattner. On a secondary note, there are many reproductions in this portion of the collection that were done by the Esther Gentle Workshop. While interesting, and some were actually commissioned by the noted artists, these works, if shown, need to be identified as such. There are approximately 574 prints in the 1920-1980 timeframe, an impressive number. Again, this is an area of collecting that potential donors have expressed an interest in donating to the Museum and this should be encouraged, as well as begin to purchase in the areas of this timeframe that need development.

1980-Present The 270 contemporary prints are the most visually impressive part of the print collection. All the works were received through donation, either as collections or through individual donors. The collection represents a cross section of

artists who have been involved in the experimental print workshop movement that revived printmaking in the United States. Prints include a wide stylistic variety by noted artists such as Robert Indiana, Mark Tobey, Charles Hewitt, Allison Saar, Komar and Melamid, Robert Stock, and Miriam Schapiro, to the Cuban-born collaborative Los Carpentieros. The recent addition of European contemporary prints has provided a counter-point to the American collection. In the Tampa Bay area, interest and quality in printmaking has remained strong through Berghoff-Cowden (now closed), Studio-F (UT), Bleu Acier (private), and most notably Graphicstudio (USF) print studios. While it would be nice for a print collectors group of the Museum be able to have a print subscription, there may be opportunities for donations of this work from collectors in the area in the future.

d. Photography

1950-present The Museum has amassed a small collection of 74 black and white and color photography acquired mostly through donations from photographers. With the addition of the Gulf Coast collection 21 fine pieces of contemporary photography also enhances the collection. Photography is a desired medium to have in the collection, but difficult without an acquisition budget. At present a primary focus is to document various photographic processes (infrared, *cliché verre*, Polaroid color transfer, C-prints, digital) that represent the variety of technological advancements and changes in the photographic medium in the past sixty years.

e. Sculpture

1950-present In the L-R-G collection there are 46 sculptural objects including six stained glass pieces and two bronzes by Rattner, a metal sculpture by Leepa, 35 found objects, metal and assemblage sculptures by Esther Gentle and an important bronze head by Henry Moore. Donations to the collection have added 44 objects including an important Rattner bronze, several Gentles, a repository of sculpture by Vladimir Yoffe and works by Lin Emery, Volf Roitman, Paolo Soleri, Chaim Gross, Anthony Forgione and a few others, plus an installed outdoor piece by Mic Knight.

Within the Gulf Coast collection there are 83 pieces that will be entered into the Leepa-Rattner Collection under the sculpture category because they are three-dimensional. Most are part of the Gulf Coast's collecting focus on fine art craft (ceramics, wood, glass, fiber arts, jewelry, and metal) or mixed-media work created in the 1990s (Note: outdoor pieces from Gulf Coast collection have been retained by the College for display as public art pieces on various campuses and are not included in this number).

With the addition of the Gulf Coast collection, a rethinking of collecting in three-dimensional work is in order. Some of these contemporary objects are large, are installations, and often require special consideration for storage and display. Despite this issue, contemporary sculpture, installations and mixed media work should continue to be acquired in order for this collection to remain relevant and important. There are many private collectors in the area and the Museum should encourage the selective

donation of best examples of individual artists' works. Likewise a collectors group might want to pursue this area for acquisitions to the collection.

III. VISION FOR THE COLLECTION

The desire of the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art is to develop a permanent collection that is unique, focused on quality, and positioned so that it can be collaborative and non-competitive with other area museums. The collection of the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art is unique in that the two core holdings, the L-R-G collection and the contemporary aspects of the Gulf Coast collection, are not replicated by any other area museums. The Rattner holdings, like the Salvador Dalí Museum in St. Petersburg, present a single artist overview that overlaps within the same timeframe. This is a unique situation to have within the same community. The contemporary Florida and fine art craft aspects of the Gulf Coast collection are currently not in the mission of any other Tampa Bay area art museum, although a few art centers provide this focus, but not with dedicated exhibition space. The extent to which the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art provides access to its permanent collection through semi-permanent exhibition space also allows for identity with its collecting areas. Hopefully some of the more unique, historical or significant holdings within the overall collection will assist the Museum in gaining collaborative status as a lender, as has taken place in the past with exhibition exchanges with the Jewish Museum of Florida, Miami Beach, and the Museum of Florida Art, DeLand.

The vision for the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art collection is: 1) to continue advancing the collecting strengths of the Gulf Coast collection in Florida and contemporary art by encouraging donations, acquisitions and loans; 2) to strengthen the print collection as an important educational tool to present cultural history over the past two hundred years with a focus on 20th century American printmaking; and, 3) to support and expand areas of the existing collections and artist repositories.