

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: 2018 CCL FELLOWSHIP WRAPS UP IN HOUSTON

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FINAL WEEKLONG INTENSIVE OF THE CENTER FOR CURATORIAL LEADERSHIP

Houston, May 24, 2018 — The 2018 Center for Curatorial Leadership (CCL) Fellowship concluded this May with a weeklong intensive in Houston, Texas. Over the course of the final convening, the Fellows expanded on their lessons from the five-month period of the program and explored various models of museum leadership. Through Houston's rich cultural landscape and attention to issues of community organizing, social justice, and civic engagement, the conclusion of the Fellowship inspired an examination of the curators' own approaches to leadership.

Highlights from the May program of the Fellowship include:

EXPLORING INSTITUTIONAL MODELS

The Fellows met with directors and senior leadership at The Menil Collection, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Project Row Houses, and the University Museum at Texas Southern University for full-day sessions on the institutions' activities, challenges, and successes. At each host venue, the group had the opportunity to discuss different organizational frameworks, strategic visions, and relationships to community and the city of Houston at large. Time with Dr. Alvia J. Wardlaw, Director and Curator at the University Museum at Texas Southern University, encouraged dialogue around continued engagement between CCL, the museum, and students at the university.

On the final evening, a roundtable brought together seven Texas-area museum directors for sustained dialogue around their professional trajectories and views on leadership. The panel included four alumni of the CCL Fellowship: Rich Aste (CCL 2016) from the McNay Art Museum, Toby Kamps (CCL 2015) from the Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston, Rebecca Rabinow (CCL 2013) from The Menil Collection, and Gary Tinterow (CCL 2008) from the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Having transitioned from curatorial to director roles, and for some in the last two years alone, the alumni spoke intimately to the process of transitioning to a position of greater leadership and visibility and the new set of opportunities for effecting visionary change.

UNDERSTANDING HOUSTON'S CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

By spending the week in Houston, the Fellows had the chance to learn more about the cultural fabric of the area and discover tools and strategies

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for better understanding their own cities as well. Dr. Stephen L. Klineberg, Founding Director of the Kinder Institute for Urban Research, shared his decades' worth of findings on the demographic evolution and value shifts of residents of Harris County, Texas—one of the most racially diverse areas in the country. Dr. Klineberg's research addressed generational patterns and the responsibility of cultural institutions to envision new models for civic belonging.

The group also spoke with Dr. Ruth J. Simmons, President of Prairie View A&M University, about university leadership, approaches to fundraising, and the imperative of the arts and humanities. Her perspective on leading a historically black college near her hometown after serving as the president of Brown University and Smith College demonstrated a purposeful engagement with multiple academic contexts.

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP AND EFFECTING CHANGE

The curriculum included a two-part course on creative leadership with Dr. Jing Zhou, Houston Endowment Professor of Management at the Jones Graduate School of Business at Rice University. Through case studies, theory, and workshops, the Fellows explored the ways in which leadership impacts the outcomes of innovation and considered strategies for creative problem-solving.

With the guidance of CCL alumni Elyse A. Gonzales (CCL 2017) and Kristina Van Dyke (CCL 2010), who served as advisors for the week, the Fellows also reflected on their residencies with museum directors, Organizational Impact Plans, and Diversity Mentoring Initiatives. Throughout the five-month Fellowship, these key program components allowed each curator to experience and enact tenets of leadership on various scales and timelines. The concluding intensive provided moments for the Fellows to consider their progress and successes thus far while identifying ways to stay involved with the development of their personal, professional, and institutional goals in the future.

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As the culmination of the 2018 CCL Fellowship, the final week in Houston prepared the cohort to apply their lessons from the program to their work moving forward. These newest alumni of the CCL possess the skills, confidence, and tools to drive their teams and institutions with a greater degree of intent and self-knowledge. We look forward to learning of their progress in the years to come and sharing updates along the way.

Congratulations to the class of 2018 CCL Fellows!