

May 5, 2010

To: The Faculty and Staff

From: Thomas Schwarz, President  
Damian Fernandez, Provost

Re: Task Force on Arts Producing and Presenting at Purchase

Our Strategic Plan and conditions in the economy and the arts demand that we address the relationship between the Performing Arts Center, the Neuberger Museum, and the School of the Arts. Like arts organizations across the globe, our arts producing and performing entities at the College face challenges in fulfilling their objectives. Performing arts institutions are reconsidering their missions; museums are expanding by incorporating new forms of artistic expression. The time is right for us to devise a new paradigm for arts producing and presenting that emphasizes quality, collaboration, and sustainability.

In keeping with our commitment to foster a learning centered institution that: leverages the valuable educational resources of the Neuberger Museum of Art and the Performing Arts Center; considers the multi-disciplinary nature of the College's presenting organizations; incorporates facilities as part of the learning environment; and envisions a "Greater Purchase" for learning across borders, the President and I have decided to establish a Task Force to recommend a new model for the PAC and the other arts presenting and producing components of the College. The overarching purpose is to articulate a vision for an "arts center" for the Twenty First Century that will place Purchase College at the vanguard of the arts while serving the College's educational and outreach interests. We must do so guided by educational, cultural, and economic imperatives.

#### Educational Imperatives

Our new Strategic Plan calls for greater alignment of the PAC and Museum with the academic mission of the college—including the School of the Arts. Such alignment should address:

1. opportunities for the School of the Arts to partner with the PAC and the Museum to foster the professional production and presentation of faculty and student work;
2. opportunities for students and faculty to engage directly in a meaningful, critical fashion with progressive artists and their work in on-campus exhibitions and performances;
3. opportunities for students and faculty to partner with guest artists in the production and presentation of *new* art and performance (workshops, commissions, premieres), especially art created with local assistance at the intersection of the arts and the letters and sciences;
4. opportunities for supervised professional development of arts management students;
5. opportunities for students and faculty to reach community audiences as artists and teachers;
6. the creating, producing and presenting programs of the college should be an engine to facilitate meaningful engagement between students, faculty and local, regional, national and international audiences.

#### Economic Imperatives

Our Strategic Plan calls for sustainability and organizational effectiveness, and we will be mindful of the current realities as we look to the future. We must consider the following questions:

1. How can we administer our creating, producing, and presenting programs as efficiently and cost effectively as possible?
2. What integrative and collaborative mechanisms are possible and desirable?
3. How do we leverage our assets—human, financial, and physical—to generate optimal results?
4. How do we deal with aging facilities, competing demand for space, costly technology, and the advent of a new or repurposed building for several of our arts programs?

### Cultural

Our Strategic Plan calls for engagement and partnerships to create a "Greater Purchase." With that end in sight, we must:

1. consider a multi-disciplinary use of facilities and multi-arts approach to programming;
2. undertake market research of our audiences and non-patrons across many constituencies;
3. continue to contribute to arts in education and the development of new audiences, and
4. achieve the visibility for Purchase College through a new paradigm that does not exist on other university campuses with presenting and arts producing entities.

### The Charge

The Task Force on Arts Producing and Presenting at Purchase College will

1. investigate and articulate current challenges to non-profit arts producing and presenting entities, both in general and by examining the PAC, Museum, conservatories and Maas Gallery;
2. propose a progressive paradigm that addresses these challenges, is responsive to the new strategic plan for Purchase College, and anticipates future cultural shifts and material needs; and
3. produce detailed strategic and business plans that will lead Purchase College to the implementation of this new paradigm in the next three to five years.

I have asked Thom Collins, Director of the Neuberger Museum, to chair the Task Force. I am delighted that the following faculty and staff have agreed to serve: Wiley Hausam, Laura Kaminsky, Chris Persico, Greg Taylor, Louise Yelin, Nellie Van Bommel, Kate Gilmore, Barbara Hauptman, Christy Havard, Harry McFadden, and the new SoA dean. We will ask for involvement from the Boards of the PAC and Museum as well as students and alums with expertise in this area. The Task Force will conduct extensive interviews of stakeholders both on and off campus and should consider securing the services of a consultant to assist in this endeavor. I have asked the Task Force to report to me by October 31, 2010.

I thank all members of the Task Force in advance for their work and contribution to the future of Purchase.