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While many art museums continue to fare well in today's unfamiliar and rapidly changing environment, none can afford to ignore its effects. As AAMD's members adapt to uncertain circumstances, innovations are emerging. We have an opportunity to explore new ideas within our own field and learn from other fields. At the same time, art museums need better information to inform their choices. Directors need the tools to understand current business and organizational models—and to create new ones. This is a moment for more and better advocacy, both inside and outside the field.

AAMD's Midwinter meeting in San Francisco will provide directors with a forum to address some of these challenges and opportunities. Aaron Gurwitz, lead economist at Barclays Capital, will offer a view of the economic forces facing the field. Beth Tuttle and Martha Tilyard will lead a workshop on methods of inspiring staff in the midst of these changes.

Given the heightened need to strengthen the civic stature of art museums, I am particularly excited about our keynote speaker, Margy Waller. She is an advocate for building community through the arts, and is currently special advisor at ArtsWave and Senior Fellow at Topos Partnership. Previously she was Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution and a Senior Advisor on domestic policy in the Clinton-Gore White House. Since one of the goals of AAMD's strategic plan is to articulate clear, coherent, coordinated messages on the public value of art and art museums, I look forward to hearing her perspectives on how we can begin to shape a new discourse in our field.

Museums have a unique role as the stewards of culture and heritage. With this role comes an enormous responsibility for ensuring that future generations have continued access to these works. How museums can best fulfill these roles and encourage public engagement with art is a topic currently being discussed within our membership. A member-wide conversation, facilitated by AAM's Center for the Future of Museums, will help us unpack some of these issues—particularly significant shifts in demographics, community infrastructure, and technology. These discussions will without a doubt continue to alter the ways museums define themselves, and in turn how they are viewed by their communities.

I hope both new and senior members of this association will join us in San Francisco this January to hear these thinkers from inside the museum field and beyond — and be a part of dynamic conversations about leading a sustainable art museum community.

Chris Anagnos
Executive Director