

UALBANY APPOINTS CORINNA RIPPS SCHAMING AS DIRECTOR, CHIEF CURATOR FOR THE UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM

Schaming Brings Nearly 20 Years of Experience in Museum Leadership

ALBANY, N.Y. (Sept. 17, 2019) – Corinna Ripps Schaming is constantly on the lookout to make the University Art Museum a vital part of every student’s university experience through programming, curriculum and events.

The University appointed Schaming as director and chief curator for the museum over this summer.

Schaming brings nearly 20 years of experience in museum leadership and has organized more than one hundred exhibitions during her tenure at the University.

In the years ahead, Schaming said that she hopes to continue to build the museum’s reputation as “a nimble institution committed to presenting ambitious, eclectic and experimental exhibitions” comprising the work of renowned and emerging contemporary artists both regionally and nationally.

“Each day, I am reenergized by our solid museum team and the possibilities of making contemporary art exhibitions with the boundless resources of a comprehensive, public research university at our fingertips,” said Schaming, who joined the museum staff in 1994 as an assistant to the director.

Prior to her most recent appointment, Schaming served as interim director and chief curator for the museum for two years, and was associate director for 15 years.

William B. Hedberg, the University’s senior vice provost and associate vice president for academic affairs, said that Schaming’s efforts to strengthen relationships with academic departments and other arts-related units have propelled significant growth for the museum in its reach of audiences.

Her “highly effective leadership” and collaborative approach for program development involving regional academic museums also contributed to the success of a number of fundraising initiatives spearheaded by Schaming, including for the University Art Collection, according to Hedberg.

“We are confident that under Schaming’s leadership, the museum will continue to thrive and become an even greater asset for promoting exhibitions and educational opportunities related to the contemporary visual arts at our institution and in the Capital Region,” Hedberg said.



Corinna Ripps Schaming has organized more than one hundred exhibitions so far for the University Art Museum. (Photo by Patrick Dodson)

Students First

This fall, Schaming is teaching a freshman seminar called “Why Museums Matter” in conjunction with Danny Goodwin, a photographer and an associate professor of art, and Ed Schwarzschild, an associate professor of English.

Goodwin described Schaming’s commitment to deepening and broadening students’ experiences with contemporary art as “sincere and steadfast.” He said her vision of the establishment of a Collections Study Space transformed the University’s ability to teach with museum objects.

“The rigor with which Corinna approaches her curatorial projects raises the level of discourse and serves to remind us that cultural production, art-making as well as curatorial practice, are in and of themselves research,” said Goodwin, director of the Studio Art Program at UAlbany.

Edward Schwarzschild, an associate professor of English and a fellow of the New York State Writers Institute, said Schaming’s “contagious energy and enthusiasm” and her deep knowledge of the contemporary art world has made her an inspiring colleague to work with over the years.

“Corinna always finds a way to lead faculty and students toward a deeper appreciation and understanding, not only of our museum, but also of the powerful art it contains,” said Schwarzschild, who said that in addition to teaching, he’s collaborated with Schaming on exhibition catalogues, event programming and grant reporting.

Plans are also underway to collaborate with UAlbany Athletics this semester for teaching and learning opportunities related to the museum’s exhibition, “ACE: Art on Sports, Promise, and Selfhood.”

Schaming received her undergraduate degree in Studio Art and History as well as a Master of Fine Arts from the University.

Mark Greenwold, a professor emeritus of painting and drawing from UAlbany, said Schaming brings a “passion, knowledge and empathetic nuance” to the campus community and greater public.

“The shows Corinna did were often challenging and difficult and smart, rather than empty or decorative – ones that were meant to just please certain people,” said Greenwold, who taught Schaming during both her undergraduate and graduate program. “She cares just as much about the art as the artists, and never compromises her standards with the students, colleagues or institutions she works with.”

Greenwold, whose artwork is now represented by the Garth Greenan Gallery in New York City, said Schaming also demonstrated a talent for discovering lesser-known artists and a creative astuteness in knowing the best way to share and present their work.

“Corinna put Albany, N.Y. on the map in terms of the art world; she was always thinking about the bigger picture,” he said.

Expanding Partnerships

Another focus for Schaming has been on sharing collections and other resources with area colleges and universities to strengthen academic partnerships.

In 2016, the museum collaborated with the Department of Art and Art History and the Department of English to develop a series of interdisciplinary special topics courses based on the exhibitions: “Race, Love and Labor,” “Future Perfect: Picturing the Anthropocene” and “This Place.”

A special project grant from the Teagle Foundation, awarded in 2015, supported the creation of a series of teaching initiatives that drew on the pedagogical potential of a single exhibition through accompanying events and workshops, as well as student trips, exhibitions and publications in conjunction with Skidmore College, Colgate University and Hamilton College, according to Schaming.

“UAlbany is uniquely positioned to engage our students at the highest level of art discourse, and we’re able to have important

conversations with other institutions about the transformative power of contemporary art, all of which are so central to building a better civic society,” said Schaming.

Schaming has also organized shows for artists including Nicole Cherubini, Steve DiBenedetto, Keith Edmier, Keltie Ferris, Phil Frost, Rachel Foullon, Gerard & Kelly, Kate Gilmore, Oded Hirsch, William Lamson, Judith Linhares, Dave McKenzie, Cameron Martin, Suzanne McClelland, Jennifer & Kevin McCoy, Jason Middlebrook, Lamar Peterson, William Pope. L, Michelle Segre, Jean Shin, James Siena, Hank Willis Thomas and Brian Tolle.

Serving, Challenging Audiences

Dana Hoey, a Hudson-Valley based photographer, said that working with Schaming on her solo exhibition, “The Phantom Sex” (2012) as well as for “Future Perfect,” helped clarify her artistic focus.

“Corinna could look at each individual body of my work and make connections between them,” said Hoey, who is represented by the Petzel Gallery in New York City. “She helped me wade through my entire career and make sense of it in a way that I had never been able to do before.”

Multimedia artist Sara Greenberger Rafferty said that Schaming has always been facile in curating exhibitions that appeal to a diverse array of audiences while remaining true to the artist’s vision.

“One of the most salient details about working with Corinna is that she is really hands-on in a both generous and generative way,” said Rafferty, who collaborated with the University Art Museum in 2017 for her exhibition “Gloves Off.” “She is interested in both serving and challenging the audience, as she does with the artists, too.”

Tschabalala Self, a New Haven-based painter, said that Schaming was instrumental in introducing her work to the Capital Region. She said the curator demonstrates a unique ability and dedication to bringing “dynamic and innovative” programming to Upstate New York.

New York gallerist Jack Shainman said that Schaming always “challenges the status quo” through the exhibitions she brings to the campus community.

“I look forward to following Corinna’s future programming that exposes students to work of the highest quality, and pushes them to consider the possibilities of art,” said Shainman, founder of the Jack Shainman Gallery.

Other exhibitions that Schaming has organized include: “When We Were Young: Rethinking Abstraction from the University at Albany Art Collections:1967-present” (2017); “The Space Between Us” (2006); “Mr. President” (2007); “Uncharted” (2009); “Courier” (2011); “Material Occupation” (2012); “Day After Day: The Diaristic Impulse” (2013); “American Playlist: Selections from the University at Albany Art Collections” (2014), and “The Ties That Bind: Artists and Archives” (2015).

About the University at Albany:

A comprehensive public research university, the University at Albany offers more than 120 undergraduate majors and minors and 125 master’s,doctoral, and graduate certificate programs. UAlbany is a leader among all New York State colleges and universities in such diverse fields as atmospheric and environmental sciences, business, engineering and applied sciences, informatics, public administration social welfare, and sociology taught by an extensive roster of faculty experts. It also offers expanded academic and research opportunities for students through an affiliation with Albany Law School. With a curriculum enhanced by 600 study-abroad opportunities, UAlbany launches great careers.

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