

Here are a few ideas for the future of Everson Museum and a chance to add your suggestions



The Urban Video Project, a multi-media public art initiative of Light Work and Syracuse University, has been mentioned as an example of Everson Museum of Art's effort in community engagement. *(Photo by Anneka Herre/Courtesy of Urban Video Project)*

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By [Melinda Johnson | mjohanson@syracuse.com](#)

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SYRACUSE, N.Y. -- [Everson Museum](#) of Art enters a new era of leadership in 2014. Last week, [Steven Kern](#) resigned from his post as executive director to become director and CEO of the Newark Museum in New Jersey. As with any change of command, there are opportunities to reorder priorities, redefine an organization's mission and rethink everything. The museum board

of trustees will begin a search for the next director, the 10th since it was founded in 1897, this month.

Several arts and culture leaders were canvassed for their thoughts and wish lists for the next museum director and new goals. Community input is just as important. **Here is an invitation to add your comments below.**

And here are the suggestions from an informal survey:

Norma Tippett, president of the board of [Civic Morning Musicals](#). CMM presents its free Wednesday Recital Series in the museum's 300-seat Hosmer Auditorium. For the CMM and other presenters, Tippett said an upgrade in the auditorium's facilities is needed. She would welcome continued collaboration with the museum administrators. CMM always is interested in programming its season to feature music to complement the museum's special exhibitions, if it receives advance notice. Tippett believes both groups can expand their audiences by working together.

Joe Monkofsky, co-chair [Public Arts Task Force](#). He hopes new leadership will continue to offer exhibitions that broaden and attract new visitors like the current "The Art of Video Games" and to welcome community involvement, such as the [Funky Flea Market](#) (a PATF fundraiser) on its community plaza. His final suggestion is for the museum to serve local aspiring artists by showcasing and possibly selling their work.

Gregg Tripoli, executive director of [Onondaga Historical Association](#). "The Everson is the jewel in the crown of the art and cultural community," said Tripoli. He emphasized an incoming museum director should have realistic expectations. The ideal candidate is someone who loves the region and understands it tends to be blue-collar rather than cosmopolitan. Our community's very nature makes it more "neighborly and friendly," he said. Listening to the community's needs and delivering on those suggestions make a difference.

He said filling the post with an arts administrator isn't as important as hiring someone who possesses a creative, business mind necessary for survival in these financially challenging times for arts organizations.

Jeffrey Hoone, executive director of [Coalition of Museums and Art Centers at Syracuse University](#) and executive director of Light Work. He would like to see the Everson develop a consistent vision for what it wants to be and that may involve reflecting on its past and looking to the future. Hoone said Everson should take "pride in ownership" and celebrate its world-class ceramics collection and one-time role at the forefront of video art. He urged new leadership to refocus on individual artists to bring creativity and urgency to the museum and continue its role in the community. He points to the [Urban Video Project](#), an public art initiative of Light Work, as an example of community engagement.

Hoone wants the Everson to be a destination. "That it's a place you just want to be, you want to go there because there's always going to be something exciting, something that's new and

something that's thoughtful and something you can count on. Anytime you go there it's going to be an important experience and right here in Syracuse. You don't have to travel far away. "

Brendan Rose, Syracuse's first [public artist-in-residence](#), from 2011 to 2012. "For me, it's about being a place that is not just a place where art is shown but a site for art, a place that is actually a place of experimentation and a place where people are actually exploring ideas through working with the museum." He cites as an example ["TONY: 2012."](#)

Rose would encourage outreach efforts as has occurred when Funky Flea Market set up in the museum's community plaza. He finds the museum has created a social environment for the community and was not just "a storage vault for art." He added the museum could press forward and become a place of "art criticism, not just art promotion."

Besides the sculpture around the museum's perimeter, Rose would like to see the addition of Pop Art, work more relatable to a general audience. (Think Jeff Koons' ["Balloon Dog."](#)) Urban Video Project has been a move in that direction, he said.