###### PROFILE

*Art museum professional with over thirty years’ international experience in the museum and curatorial fields. Significant strengths in strategic planning, major exhibition development, fundraising, and museum visioning and leadership.*

###### EXPERIENCE

**PRINCIPAL AND CO-FOUNDER, ART MUSEUM STRATEGIES LLC 2020 -Present**

In association with NYC-based fund-raising consultancy, Hudson Ferris, and former art museum director and co-Principal, Terrie Sultan, established a boutique art museum consultancy in 2020. The unique value proposition is two art museum directors with combined experience of over forty years in the field working with a successful, established, fund-raiser for non-profits. Current AMS clients include the Honolulu Museum of Art, the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, the Artistic Freedom Initiative, NY, the Studio Pottery, London, and the Poster House Museum, NY.

Principal strengths include:

* Strategic framework infrastructure and long-term visioning.
* Board relations and organizational structure.
* Identifying new fundraising opportunities and ensuring long-term financial viability.

**ART MUSEUM CONSULTANT, FREEMAN’S AUCTIONEERS, (Philadelphia, PA) 2020-Present**

Part of the Museum Services team at the oldest auctioneer in North America, offering advice on art museum strategy.

* Identifying art museums undergoing major collections evaluation and deaccessioning considerations.
* Offering peer-led advice and assistance with museum boards and collection committees.
* Assisting curators, directors, and board members to the best options for realizing collection expectations.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR and CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER 2019-2020**

**TELFAIR MUSEUMS (Savannah, GA)**

* Led a unique museum in America with a combination of contemporary and historic buildings, 50 FTE staff, an operating budget of $5 million, and annual visitation of 250,000.
* Within a year completed a $6 million challenge grant to remove debt from the Moshe Safdie-designed Jepson Center (opened 2008) and position the museum for the future.
* Developed the next major strategic plan for the museum to lead it into the mid-21st century.
* Positioned the Telfair as a leader in interpreting the troubled history of slavery in the south and promoted DEIA initiatives in the institution.
* Managed responses to the first wave of the Covid-19 crisis, March-May 2020.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 2014 - 2019**

**THE FRICK PITTSBURGH (Pennsylvania, PA)**

Executive Director of a six-acre museum in the heart of Pittsburgh that includes one of the best-preserved Gilded Age mansions in America, a car and carriage museum, and an art museum with exceptional examples of Renaissance to 19th century European paintings and decorative arts, Chinese ceramics, and contemporary art.

* Reporting to a board of 30 Trustees, oversaw all aspects of operations of a 28-year old museum with an operating budget of $7 million, an endowment of $75 million, over 120 FT and PT staff, and annual visitation of 125,000.
* Completed a $15 million capital campaign (2016) including three new buildings, collections storage, and endowment ($6m raised in first year as director; project finished on schedule and over $1m in excess of budget).
* Initiated and directed a two-year strategic planning and visioning exercise, resulting in the first comprehensive strategic plan for the museum (Frick 2017-2022 and Beyond).
* Initiated an ambitious program of fashion-based exhibitions and programming that delivered record-breaking attendance and raised over $1m in foundation support (the largest non-capital gifts in the Frick’s history).
* Secured and oversaw the most successful exhibition in the museum’s history - *Van Gogh, Monet, Degas* (2018) - with record visitation and $1m in corporate, foundation, and individual sponsorship.
* Activated outreach efforts to disadvantaged communities bordering the Frick campus and led PR efforts to pitch a museum “for all”.

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ART AND EDUCATION 2006-2014**

**VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS (Richmond, VA)**

Senior staff member, head of art, education, and exhibitions division, at the premier art museum of the southeast USA

(operating budget in FY 2014: $33m).

* Received direct reports from chief educator, chief curator, director of marketing, director of audience development, director of library and resources, head of exhibitions, and head of statewide partnerships, who in turn managed a total of 80 staff, 50 faculty, and over 300 volunteers in the art and education division, with a combined budget of $8m.
* Oversaw exhibition fundraising, significant art acquisitions, new programming and new technologies, and audience development.
* Played a key role in two major strategic planning exercises (2010, 2014).
* Developed and project-managed several of the most important exhibitions in the museum’s history with multi-million-dollar budgets including *Picasso* (2011), *Chihuly* (2012), *Hollywood Costume* (2013) and *Forbidden City* (2014).
* Initiated and managed international collaborations with museums in Canada, UK, France, Russia, Norway, Italy, and China.
* Provided leadership for the artistic and educational mission of the museum.

**CURATOR OF COLLECTIONS AND EXHIBITIONS 1992-2006**

**THE DRAMBUIE COLLECTION, (Edinburgh, Scotland)**

Directed curatorial, acquisitions, and exhibition programs for major corporate art collection based in Edinburgh, London, and Miami. In 2005 oversaw the deaccessioning of the Scottish painting collection, with 11 world auction records.

* Single-handedly established the most important collection of Stuart and Jacobite art in the UK.
* Published catalogues, books, papers and other scholarly works on the collection.
* Organized traveling exhibition of the collection to eight art museums in the US and London

**GALLERY MANAGER, THE FINE ART SOCIETY, EDINBURGH 1990-1992**

**EDUCATION**

2008 GETTY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE, Los Angeles, Summer residential museum leadership program

1990 UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, England, MA History of Art

1987 UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, England, BA History of Art

1983-84 QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY, Ontario, Canada

**EXHIBITIONS (**selection**)**

***Van Gogh, Monet, Degas: The Mellon Collection of French Art from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts***

March – July 2018, The Frick Pittsburgh (Frick project director)

***Undressed: A History of Fashion in Underwear***

October 2017 – January 2018, The Frick Pittsburgh (Frick project director)

***Killer Heels: The Art of the High-Heeled Shoe***

June-September 2016, The Frick Pittsburgh (Frick project director)

***Forbidden City: Imperial Treasures from the Palace Museum, Beijing***

October 2014-January 2015, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA project director)

***Hollywood Costume***

October 2013-February 2014, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA project director and co-curator)

***Pop Art and Beyond: Tom Wesselmann***

April – July 2013, Virginian Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA project director)

***Chihuly at VMFA***

October 2012 – February 2013, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA project director)

***Picasso: Masterpieces from the Musée Picasso National, Paris***

February-May 2011, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA project director)

***Tiffany: Color and Light***

May-August 2010, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA project director)

***Mystery***

October-November 2007, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond (co-curator)

***Loyalty & Exile: The Jacobites and America***

April-June 2004, Ellis Island Immigration Museum, New York (curator, organizer, coordinator)

***Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Royal House of Stuart, 1688-1788: Works of Art from The Drambuie Collection***, February 2003-December 2005, Society of the Four Arts, Palm Beach, FL; Telfair Museums, Savannah, GA; Headley-Whitney Museum, Lexington, KY; Albany Institute for History and Art, NY; Winterthur Museum, DE; University of Richmond Museums, VA; Dixon Gallery, Memphis, TN; The Fleming Collection, London, UK (curator, organizer, coordinator)

#### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Present South East Art Museum Directors Group;

 Board Member, Studio Pottery, London, England:

 American Federation of Arts, National Exhibitions Review Committee;

 International Committee, Jacobite Studies Trust.

2014-2022 Association of Art Museum Directors.

2010-14 Director of Art, Council of the Virginia Association of Museums;

 Affiliate Graduate Faculty, Department of Art History, Virginia Commonwealth University.

2009 Bilateral Presidential Commission on US-Russia Relations, Working Sub-Group – Visual Arts.

2008 Museum Leadership Program at the Getty Leadership Institute, Los Angeles: one of only 31 participants awarded a place on this highly competitive annual residential program for museum directors and senior staff.

2004-2006 UK Program Committee, International Association for Professional Art Advisors.

2003-2006 Chairman, Scottish Society for Art History.

**ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS (selection)**

‘Scottish Artists in North America, 1714-1945’, *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History*, 2021

“Lochaber No More: Landscape, Emigration and the Scottish Artist 1849-95”, *Nineteenth Century Art Worldwide*, spring 2008

“From Ramsay’s Flora MacDonald to Raeburn’s MacNab: the use of tartan as a symbol of identity”, *Textile History*, 36.2, 2005

 “’From Fever to Fresh Air’: *The Evergreen*, *The Yellow Book* and the Threat of Decadence”, *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History*, Vol 9, 2004

 “Highland Habits: the iconography of the Sobieski Stuarts”, *Scottish Studies Review*, vol 4, no 2, Autumn 2003

*Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Making of a Myth: A Study in Portraiture, 1720-1892*, (Bucknell University Press: Lewisburg/Associated University Presses: London, 2002)

 “The Tartan Portraits of Prince Charles Edward Stuart: Identity and Iconography”, *British Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 21, 1998

 “Portraiture and Patronage of the Exiled Stuarts”, *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History*, Vol. 3, 1998

###### RECENT CONFERENCES / PANELS / LECTURES

*Board Engagement: Navigating the challenges,* SEAMD annual conference, Asheville, NC, May 2022;

*Deaccessioning: Myths, Misconceptions, and Missed Opportunities,* SEAMD/SEMC Panel (virtual), February, 2021;

*Scottish Artists in North America, 1714-1945*, Scottish Society for Art History/Hunterian Museum, Glasgow, keynote speaker, February, 2020;

*How to Cancel Popular Programs and Still Make Friends and Money*, Presenter, American Alliance of Museums Annual Conference, St Louis, 2019;

*Titans in Tandem: J. Pierpont Morgan and Henry Clay Frick* (with Colin Bailey), The Frick Pittsburgh, 2017;

*Photography and the Femme Fatale*, The Frick Pittsburgh, 2016;

Juror, *Carol R. Brown Creative Achievement Awards*, The Pittsburgh Foundation, 2015;

*Rain & Romance: Two Themes in British Art*, The Frick Pittsburgh, 2015;

Panel Moderator, *Meeting the West: Exhibitions from American Museums*, Nanjing Museum, China, 2014;

*Exhibition Planning*, Association of Art Museum Curators Annual Meeting, MoMA, New York City, 2009;

*Audiences, Identity and Controversy*, Museum of the Confederacy, Richmond, 2008;

*Creating a Strategic Plan for Exhibitions*, ArtWorks for Virginia Annual Conference, 2007;

Chair and Organizer, *What’s on at the Museum Right Now? Exhibition Strategies in the 21st Century* Special Symposium (with Richard Armstrong and Arthur Cohen), Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 2006;

Conference Chair and Organizer, *Art & Scotland: The Last 21 Years*, National Gallery of Scotland/Scottish Society for Art History, 2005.

**RECENT MEDIA PROFILES & FEATURES**

* <https://www.freemansauction.com/news/what-deaccessioning-and-why-does-it-matter/?pc=29>
* <https://artdaily.com/news/134830/Freeman-s-appoints-Robin-Nicholson-as-Art-Museum-Consultant#.YUECVp1Kj4Y>
* <https://www.artfixdaily.com/artwire/release/4783-consulting-firm-with-two-experienced-museum-directors-launches-to>
* *[A stronger Frick: Under Robin Nicholson, the museum prospered](https://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/editorials/2018/12/22/A-stronger-Frick-Under-Robin-Nicholson-the-museum-prospered/stories/201812220027)*

*[Little wonder another museum wants him](https://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/editorials/2018/12/22/A-stronger-Frick-Under-Robin-Nicholson-the-museum-prospered/stories/201812220027);* <https://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/editorials/2018/12/22/A-stronger-Frick-Under-Robin-Nicholson-the-museum-prospered/stories/201812220027>

* *Enriching a Regional Cultural Gem*, Richard King Mellon Foundation Annual Report, 2018,

pp.35-6, <https://www.rkmf.org/pages/robin-nicholson>

* <https://richmond.com/entertainment/blockbusters-to-become-virginia-museum-s-driving-force/article_56237019-79d0-5e4d-934e-282ce630052b.html>