Smart Museum of Art announces new Deputy Director, Curator

Marcus E. Margerum appointed as Deputy Director and Galina Mardilovich appointed as Curator

May 20, 2024—Vanja V. Malloy, the Dana Feitler Director of the Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago, announced today the appointment of two key positions.

Marcus E. Margerum joins the Smart as Deputy Director. A native of Chicago, Margerum was most recently the Deputy Director & Chief Business Officer at the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC), Cincinnati. At the Smart, Margerum assumes a significant scope of responsibilities overseeing museum operations and administration, leading the collections and registration, exhibition production and management, publications, communications, facilities and security management, and guest services teams. As a member of the senior leadership staff, Margerum serves as a collaborator and advisor to the Dana Feitler Director to achieve strategic goals and implement organizational initiatives.

“Marcus brings an array of skills and experience to this critical leadership position, and I am looking forward to partnering with him as the Smart enters our 50th anniversary season and continues building toward a bright future,” said Malloy.

In addition, Malloy announced that Galina Mardilovich has been appointed as Curator. In this role, Mardilovich will work closely with senior leadership to develop a dynamic schedule of exhibitions and build the Smart’s collection, while also implementing the artistic identity and vision for the Museum.

“Galina is a skilled curator who brings to the Smart a breadth of experience developing research strategies that embrace both historic and contemporary collections, and organizing exhibitions that enable interdisciplinary collaboration. I’m thrilled to welcome her to the team.”

Marcus E. Margerum, Deputy Director

Margerum joins the Smart from the Contemporary Art Center (CAC), Cincinnati, where he had been Deputy Director & Chief Business Officer since 2021. In this role, Margerum oversaw all of the organization’s operational departments, including 23 full-time and 35 part-time staff in Development, Human Resources, Accounting, PR/Communications, Facilities, Venue Rentals, Retail, and the Café. From summer 2021 to spring 2023, he also served as the CAC’s Interim Director. He has extensive experience in leadership positions within the attractions and hospitality industry. Prior to joining the CAC, he was Vice President, Government & Community Affairs at the
Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau. Earlier in his career, as Vice President of Marketing and Communications, he was part of the executive team that opened the new Chick-fil-A College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta. As Vice President of Marketing & Sales at Zoo Atlanta, he led the marketing department and helped establish and manage several strategic partnerships, including with the Georgia Aquarium, City Pass, and Georgia Public Library Services.

“I’m looking forward to returning to Chicago and I’m excited to join such a great organization at a pivotal moment when the Smart is looking ahead to its 50th anniversary and beyond,” said Margerum.

Margerum grew up on the South Side in the Roseland community, attended Whitney M. Young High School, has a BS in Business Management from Hampton University, and an MBA in Marketing from Clark Atlanta University.

Galina Mardilovich, Curator

Mardilovich specializes in works on paper, the nineteenth century, and Russian art. Prior to the Smart, Mardilovich has held teaching and curatorial positions, including at the University of Cambridge, SUNY Purchase College, and the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College. She has curated exhibitions on topics such as collage, Russian modernism during World War I, and the Edward C. Crossett collection of European and American prints. Most recently, she was Manager of Foundation and Government Relations at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Her research has been supported by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Getty Research Institute, and the American Philosophical Society, among others, and has been published in Print Quarterly, Art History, and The Burlington Magazine, as well as in several edited volumes. She is the co-editor of and contributor to New Narratives of Russian and East European Art: Between Traditions and Revolutions (with Maria Taroutina; Routledge 2020). She is currently developing her book manuscript Prints, Modernity, and Modernism in Russian Art, 1870–1916. Mardilovich received her PhD in History of Art at the University of Cambridge, where she was a Gates Cambridge Scholar. She also holds an MA in Humanities and Social Thought from New York University; and a BA in International Studies from the University of Oregon. She currently serves as President of the Association of Print Scholars.

“I’m excited about the opportunity to return to a university art museum and to think through the storied collection as the Smart continues to build on its 50-year history. University museums like the Smart present inspiring possibilities to organize exhibitions that push disciplinary boundaries and invite broad audiences to engage with art in meaningful ways,” said Mardilovich.
About the Smart Museum of Art
The Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago is a site for rigorous inquiry and exchange that encourages the examination of complex issues through the lens of art objects and artistic practice. Through strong community and scholarly partnerships, the Museum incorporates diverse ideas, identities, and experiences into its exhibitions and collections, academic initiatives, and public programming. The Smart Museum will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2024. Admission is always free.

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