

THE CASE FOR THE ARTS MARCH 2007

Whoever neglects the arts when young has lost the past and is dead to the future – Sophocles

INTRODUCTION

Place of the Arts at the College of William and Mary

The College of William and Mary justly prides itself on over three hundred years of commitment to the *good arts and sciences* as our Ancient and Royal Charter of 1693 describes them. From early roots to the present day, this College, unique among public universities in America, has hewn to the path of high quality liberal arts education for all undergraduate students. This dedication redounds to our benefit allowing us unabashedly to say that our graduates have the opportunity to partake of the best undergraduate experience possible in a public university. A bold, but defensible claim.

The underpinnings of this success are many: a very strong faculty equally dedicated to creative and intellectual work at the forefronts of knowledge and teaching and mentoring in the classroom, laboratory and studio; exceptional students; traditional investment in liberal arts education *sensu stricto*; and a deep commitment at all levels to engaged teaching, research, and independent learning.

All of these resources are brought to the daily life of our students via a thoughtful and philosophically grounded curriculum. Teaching and learning are central to our tasks, but the framework in which this occurs is neither haphazard nor parochial. It is intentional, carefully crafted, and continually monitored to assure that our graduates have maximized their opportunities while at the College to become young women and men deep in their knowledge of their chosen fields, yet broad in their exposure to seminal ideas and skilled in the craft of the intellect.

In the often too-pragmatic tradition of American post-secondary education and in the increasingly pre-professional and consumerist atmosphere in higher education today, one of the areas of the *good arts and sciences* that is, oddly enough, often forgotten or given short shrift are the creative arts themselves. The College of William and Mary has committed itself over the years to bridge this intellectual lacuna, to keep the creative and performing arts at the center of what we do. We have accomplished this by building strong programs – in studio art and art history, in music, in theater and dance, and in creative writing. We take justifiable pride in faculty and student productions, in solo and ensemble performance, in gallery shows and programs by visiting artists and writers. Our revitalized Muscarelle Museum of Art has become a center for artistic events of all kinds. Many of these events are critical to our engagement with the greater Williamsburg community.

Students may major or double major in Art and Art History, in Music, or in Theater. They can minor in these fields as well as in Dance and Film Study, major in Film Studies through the Literary and Cultural Studies Program, or do Honors work in Creative

Writing. It is not uncommon to find students with majors in business, the social or natural sciences, or elsewhere in the humanities who also seek out a second major or minor in the arts as the essential ingredient to round out their education and personal development. In addition, and unusual in higher education today, all William and Mary students, as part of their general education requirement, must take a minimum of two credit hours in the same creative or performing art. The result is more than seventy-five courses a year that accommodate more than 1400 students in visual and theatrical arts, dance, creative writing, speech, or music.

The predictable, yet pleasing outcome is an increasingly vibrant and dynamic arts community – one in which all students are engaged, not just those with significant talent, background, or placement into conservatory settings. That interest expands daily into new media, into applied music lessons taken for the sheer love of the playing, into literary magazines and *a capella* singing groups, into student volunteers by the dozens at the Muscarelle, into student directed, produced, and performed theatricals and impromptu performances, into students by the hundreds at the Media Center in Swem recording their own music and making their own videos.

It is our hope, indeed our fervent expectation that this emphasis and vitality in the arts attracts a certain type of young person to the College -- one who is intellectually adventurous, more willing to excel or at least risk failure in multiple kinds of endeavors, and one who will carry from this place a deep and abiding love and respect for the creative experience. We know already that 85% of our students report that they participated in the arts before matriculating at the College or expect to continue to do so while here. Clearly, it is our responsibility to meet them where they are and allow them every opportunity to continue this personal growth and development.

State of the Arts

About forty-five, full-time faculty are responsible for the arts curriculum in four departments: Art and Art History; Creative Writing and Film Studies in English, Modern Languages and Literatures, and Literary and Cultural Studies (an increasingly popular major that is being revamped in response to demand and new capabilities coming on line in the Media Center in Swem); Music; and Theater, Speech and Dance. Many, many more practitioners and professional artists teach courses in such areas as applied music or studio art. And, behind these many individuals, is a dedicated staff of technicians, curators, librarians, administrators, and others who provide the critical support to art studios, recital and performance spaces, costumes shops, media centers, collections, scheduling, etc.

In fact, this broad network in support of the arts exists not only in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences where we might predict, but in the Provost's Office through the Muscarelle Museum and the resources and support of the Vice-Provost for Research, in Student Affairs through numerous student arts organizations and publications and the Office of Student Activities which sponsors innumerable arts events through the year, in the Virginia Shakespeare Festival, in Swem Library's state-of-the art Media Center as well as

the Music Library, and in venues as diverse as Phi Beta Kappa Hall, the new Lake Matoaoka Amphitheater, the Andrews Gallery, Ewell Recital Hall, or the Studio Theater.

New resources and programs have been provided and developed in response to increasing demand. The Dean of the Faculty has, in the past several years, made permanent the position of Music Director in the Department of Theater, Speech, and Dance to support growing interest in musical theater and to integrate dance and music into the performing arts. With the support of the Sumner Rand Foundation, the Dean has also created a new, professional box office to support the myriad performances on campus. New programs in African American and Asian art, music, and theater arts are being developed in many cases in response to the interests of creative new faculty. A memorandum of understanding has recently been executed between the Department of Music and the Virginia Symphony whereby the new Associate Director the Symphony will have a joint appointment as the Director of the William and Mary Orchestra.

And our many alumni and friends have come forward as well to support the arts at the College. The Vivian and Scott Donaldson Writer-in-Residence Program, the George Clayman Concert series created by Carol Woody in memory of her father which this spring will support a performance of Haydn's oratorio *Die Schöpfung*, the generous bequest of Ralph and Doris Lamberson in support of the Muscarelle Museum, and an anonymous gift of \$9.6M in support of the visual arts are all testimony to the support the arts have in this community.

In short, there are many signs of our vibrant arts community -- several hundred majors in the arts, nearly 15,000 student credit hours and about 12.3% of our yearly undergraduate course enrollments in the arts disciplines, tens of thousands of tickets sold to arts events and as many if not more visitors to exhibitions and other events at the Muscarelle and Andrews Galleries, the arts suffuse and permeate all we do at the College. The arts are often our public, non-athletic face to our neighbors, to the local elementary and secondary schools, to the extensive and growing community of retirees who have sought out the creative and intellectual riches of a lively university town.

We witness the impact of these programs every evening and every weekend of the year as arts events fill our calendar. The Friends of the Muscarelle, the Christopher Wren Association, the alumni of Theater, Orchestis, and musical groups, attendees at the Lively Arts Series, the Ewell Concert Series, or Sinfonicron (student produced, directed, and performed) are all brought on campus by the excitement generated by the arts.

But, as we will see in greater detail below, the physical facilities for the arts on the William and Mary campus are woefully ill-suited for our needs, standards, and ambitions. Many are old, shabby, decrepit, or obsolete. We often lack facilities for such basic activities as rehearsal space for the full orchestra, safe and adequate dance practice rooms, or storage for sets and costumes. Faculty in several departments are physically separated and, overall, because of the lack of adjacency of arts programs, there is very little opportunity for faculty in different disciplines to interact regularly and informally.

Students in the arts have no common space either, space where they can learn from one another and exercise their creative spirits.

By the end of the current decade, we will have provided or have under construction modern and appropriate facilities for all of our schools and most programs in A&S. New space released by the moves of Education and Business will provide long-awaited growth opportunities for the social sciences, the humanities, and many interdisciplinary programs. Only the arts will then be left in marginally adequate to inadequate facilities most of which will be verging on twenty-five to fifty years in age. It is time to turn the College's attention in this direction and much of the remainder of this document will detail these needs and some possible solutions.

Case for the Arts: It cannot be better said than this:

The creative and performing arts are at the center of a meaningful education for a healthy society. Art museums, plays, and concerts enrich our students' lives and join us with the wider community. Art exhibits, theater and musical performances, and films bring together a campus community, welcome alumni and other visitors, and make a campus a stimulating place for students. Aaron De Groft, Carl Strikwerda, and David Brashear, 2005.

With the same zeal that schools and communities across the United States have embraced athletics and fitness, they now need to embrace creativity. Richard Florida, 2003.

It is, thus, incumbent upon us to assure that all possible resources are mobilized in support of the arts so they may thrive and succeed at the College of William and Mary. This is essential so that our students may be successful, so that we may hire and retain the most creative arts faculty and staff, so that artistic excellence becomes part of the common William and Mary experience of all students, faculty, and staff, and so that we may serve our alumni and local community in ways that are essential to community health and well-being. We must be certain that our arts facilities are not just the equal, but in fact exceed the facilities that our students had in their secondary schools. Embarrassingly, that is not so today.

When we scan the arts horizon at the College, we find the interest, the qualified faculty and staff, the student and community enthusiasm. What we find dangerously lacking are facilities worthy of our students and their aspirations.

CURRENT FACILITIES

Below we describe the current space assigned to each of the arts units that, in total, constitute the creative and performing arts programs at the College of William and Mary. Two areas, film (new media) and creative writing, are not broken out as they are integral parts of the Departments of English and Modern Languages and Literatures and the Literary and Cultural Studies Program at the College. Their relationship to any future arts facilities is unclear at present.

In general, all the spaces which are described below are in poor to substandard condition. Only the Muscarelle Museum and the Arts Studio Building at Lake Matoaka could be said not to require major renovation of mechanical and other basic systems as well as general renovation and enhancement of teaching, office, and other spaces. Many are in embarrassing condition made only worse by the insufficiency of space that results in incompatible multiple uses of many facilities. In many cases, the spaces were not designed for their current uses and these inadequacies of design are major impediments to the quality of the creative work of our students.

Art and Art History

The Department of Art and Art History is currently housed in three, widely separated facilities. They are:

1. Andrews Hall (27,000 sf) built in 1967 as an addition to Phi Beta Kappa Hall. There has been no significant renovation with the exception of the Andrews Lecture Hall (renovated about five years ago as part of the Classroom Improvement Project). The building is not well-designed, including a large, essentially useless entry lobby. There is a small gallery, the Andrews Gallery, and the rest of the building consists of teaching studios, storage, and faculty/staff offices. Funds are currently available for repair and replacement of critical building mechanical systems, but the funding is insufficient for any structural changes or wholesale renovation. A number of studios would not measure up to modern workplace safety standards.
2. The Art Studio Building at Lake Matoaka (4900 sf). Built in the early 1990s, this is the most modern of all the arts facilities, though it is at a considerable remove from the main campus. There are a number of large teaching studios, primarily for drawing, painting, and print-making, as well as several faculty studios.
3. Ceramics studio (1500 sf). Located behind the Campus Center and adjacent to Facilities Management, this very old space houses the ceramics studios and kilns. It would be viewed as substandard by any evaluation.

Muscarelle Museum

The Muscarelle Museum (10,200 sf) was built in 1983 and expanded only four years later. While many aspects of the building are attractive and functional, the museum, after more than twenty successful years, has outgrown its exhibit, storage, and curatorial spaces. In addition, there are very limited educational spaces in the building for outreach and community programming so essential to a museum's operation and success.

Music

The Department of Music, with the exception of the gamelan ensemble which is housed in a garage adjacent to Sorority Court, is entirely contained within Ewell Hall (29,000 sf). Built as the first Phi Beta Kappa Hall in 1926, this building was reconfigured following a major fire in the mid-1950s from a performance facility to faculty/staff offices, the Music Library, a 142-seat recital hall, rehearsal, classroom, practice and other spaces for the Music Department in the larger southern wing. The northern suite of first floor offices is now the office complex of the Dean of the Faculty (~4000 sf). No renovations have been done to the Music Department space since the mid-fifties reconstruction.

Theater, Speech, and Dance

The Department of Theater, Speech, and Dance gradually came into being via successive mergers of Theater with Speech which had been in the English Department until the early 1990s and with Dance, originally in Women's Physical Education and then in Kinesiology, which joined in 1999. Theater and Speech are in Phi Beta Kappa Hall (43,600 sf), built c1956, with only minor and piecemeal renovations since. This building includes the Phi Beta Kappa Auditorium (seating capacity: 760), the College's largest auditorium. The auditorium is in use over 270 days a year for performance as well as daily as the Theater Department's laboratory/classroom. The auditorium suffers from trying to serve multiple needs as a proscenium theater, as a choral and orchestral concert facility, and as a venue for dance performance. PBK Hall also includes faculty offices, a studio (black box) theater which seats about 110, a much smaller laboratory theater, costume and scene shops, a lighting lab and a design lab, modest storage space, classrooms and rehearsal studios – all, admittedly, inadequate and in very poor condition.

The Dance faculty and program remains in Adair Hall (4200 sf), built in 1963. They occupy what was then the Women's Gym and adjacent spaces. None of these facilities is appropriate for dance practice or performance and the program must make do with embarrassingly substandard facilities.

CURRENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Conceptual Space and Needs Plan

In October 2005, the chairs of the three academic arts departments along with the Director of the Muscarelle Museum and the chair of the Muscarelle Museum Board

prepared a very ambitious conceptual plan for a Fine and Performing Arts Center at the College of William and Mary. They were challenged to document their current and future needs, based on their mission, the many demand factors in the curriculum, in co-curricular areas, and in the community. They were instructed to do so without consideration of cost or location.

This plan tried to marry the multiple requirements of these dynamic and active departments and the museum. Given no restrictions on their aspirations, their vision, predictably, was large and expansive. Trying to meet the many and disparate needs of students for a variety of classroom, practice, and studio spaces, of faculty for offices and studios, for libraries, for technical shops and storage, for gathering spaces, for exhibition areas, for guest parking, and for theatrical, dance, and orchestral/choral performance space, they envisioned, not surprisingly, a very large and undoubtedly very expensive facility in excess of 200,000 square feet of assignable space. This represents a near doubling of their current assigned space of about 116,400 in eight separate buildings spread across campus from behind the Campus Center on the eastern fringe of campus to Adair Hall and the Lake Matoaka Studio on the western edge.

It is noted that this large increase in assignable space might seem overly ambitious, yet these programs have seen significant increases in enrollment, size of faculty and staff, and aspirations since they last saw any significant space. The median age of the eight buildings assigned to the arts is about 1960. The only new arts facilities to come on line in the last forty years have been the Muscarelle Museum (1983) and the Art Studio Building (early 1990s). Both were important and needed, but the former did not add to the inventory of instructional space and the latter serves only one of the creative arts programs. William and Mary's enrollment in the early sixties was less than a third what it is today and the number of faculty was less than one half. All the buildings predate the new general education requirements which have, as we have noted, greatly increased enrollments in the creative arts placing new demands on studios, the lab theater, practice facilities, and ensemble rehearsal space. To address this demand, we have increased the numbers of tenure-eligible faculty and fixed-term, artists in residence with no concomitant increase in office, studio, or lab space.

In making the general case in this document, it was neither our goal nor our intent to conduct a detailed evaluation or critique of the 2005 concept plan; nor is it our present task to describe the final product. The 2005 plan may have the scope of needs right, or it may be over-ambitious. The goal of this Case Statement is to demonstrate that the needs in the arts are genuine and that we should be prepared to seek professional input into crafting a creative, affordable, and appropriate solution.

Critical current and future needs in the arts

The basis upon which current and future needs are defined has been, first and foremost, an attempt to answer the question: what do our students and faculty need to order to achieve at the high level they deserve in the creative and performing arts? In general, we have not given high priority to community expressions of interest, e.g., in a performing

arts center, as this is not the primary mission of the College. A confluence of community and College interests, along with identified resources, would amount to a significant opportunity; but, at present, we assume that this would be a project of and for the College community primarily.

The list of needs that follows is abstracted from the 2005 Conceptual Plan alluded to above. Continuing analysis and refinement of this list of needs will continue.

- Double the size of Lamberson Hall at the Muscarelle Museum
- A 200 seat auditorium for lectures, films, and small ensemble events
- A 600 seat main stage theater, 150 seat lab theater, and a 600 seat recital hall for choral and orchestral performance*
- Informal spaces for student music groups, poetry slams, student art and performance that would create a social venue for the gathering of art students and faculty at all hours
- Practice and performance space for Dance
- Sufficient parking
- Sufficient classrooms, studios, solo and ensemble practice halls, and technical support space to support the current program and current enrollments and size of faculty/staff

In addition, it is imperative that any planning utilize maximum shared facilities for instructional, administrative, and support facilities. Given the likely proximity of these facilities to Swem Library and the increasingly digital environment in which all academic enterprises now operate, it is doubtful that library facilities will be included in the facility.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

There are only two reasonable solutions to the problem of inadequate and outdated facilities for the arts. They are: 1) major renovation and expansion of existing facilities with some relocation of units into expanded facilities or 2) wholesale new construction of an Arts Complex. Each has its advantages and challenges as outlined below.

Renovation and Expansion of Existing Arts Facilities

This model would require extensive renovations of existing buildings (PBK, Andrews, Muscarelle) as well as construction of several new (expanded) facilities to accommodate, in particular, Music and Dance in order that they be brought into proximity with the other three arts activities – Theater, Art and Art History, and the Museum.

Advantages: The principle advantage of this solution is that it is piecemeal and could be staged over a period of time, which would not be dependent on success of a “major” private and public fund-raising exercise. This is the model that was floated with no

* This is clearly not the only conceivable option for creating the needed performance space. It may be possible to meet these needs with alternative configurations of modestly larger and smaller facilities and/or multi-use designs.

success during the Campaign for William and Mary. In at least one case, we would preserve a quality space -- the PBK Auditorium, a well-designed and proportioned facility which at least Maestro JoAnn Falletta describes as a wonderful concert hall.

Disadvantages: The disadvantages of the renovation/expansion scenario are.

- It is always more difficult to retrofit an older building to other or more modern uses and the result is typically less desirable. Furthermore, experience dictates that it is likely to be at least as expensive and the resulting facility may embody compromises that negatively impact the programs.
- PBK and Andrews are likely to have major lead paint and asbestos abatement issues (though the latter may well be abated by the Andrews renovation now scheduled)
- It is not entirely clear that sufficient space, at least consistent with the Campus Master Plan, is available for some of the significant expansions that would be required to house Music and Dance if we were constrained to additions to existing buildings.
- Private fund-raising for capital projects (likely to be a not insignificant fraction of this project's financing) is challenge enough without having to raise money for renovations, always more difficult.
- Staging such a lengthy project would not only be more expensive in its own right, but highly disruptive for the units being displaced during renovations. It is not clear how some highly specialized arts programs could function in alternative space not expressly designed for their purposes.
- There is less room for creative solutions or to making a bold architectural statement in this proposed solution.
- The resulting renovated buildings, at least, are unlikely to assist the College in meeting its goals in the realm of energy efficiency.

A New Arts Complex

Construction of William and Mary's first-ever Fine and Performing Arts Complex would be the alternative to renovation/expansion of existing facilities. While it is unclear where this would be sited, there does seem to be space for such a facility in the area of the current PBK and Muscarelle Museum, perhaps expanding into the Morton Hall parking lot.

Advantages: The advantages of a new Arts Complex are:

- The opportunity to make a bold statement about the importance and centrality of the Arts in the William and Mary experience
- The possibility to make a powerful architectural statement that will tie the Jamestown Residence halls to the new Miller Hall at the Mason School of Business.

- The ability to bring all the Arts under “one roof” with the resulting synergies of common space and purpose and the profound creative and intellectual benefits of inter-, multi-, and intra-disciplinary cross-fertilization
- Private fund-raising is likely more readily done with a new, bold structure than as series or retrofitted and jury-rigged ones.
- We can position a fund-raising drive in support of the Arts in the broadest sense as opposed to one-at-a-time development projects on behalf of Theater, or Music, or the Museum alone.
- Such a major new structure has the ability to be transformational and definitional with respect to the College’s aspirations and vision.
- The ability to create and define an “arts precinct.”
- Creative design solutions are more feasible for such questions as how to combine the needs of dance with those of theater, how to cluster different performance spaces to create shared opportunities, e.g. green rooms, dressing rooms, practice and storage facilities, or how to create communities of artists and integration of creative endeavors
- Issue of accessibility are more readily solved in this model
- Common box office functions are more feasible
- Opportunities for energy efficiencies that will, over the life of the facility, return significant financial benefit to the College

Disadvantages: The disadvantages of a new, “from the bottom up” Arts Complex are:

- The scale is so large that the fund-raising challenge is significantly greater.
- Managing unit aspirations without the physical constraints of existing facilities is a greater challenge.

NEXT STEPS:

Should this Case for the Arts prove compelling, the next steps are several:

1. The Provost and Dean of the Faculty should present this Case to the Board of Visitors and to the many other critical constituencies whose commitment to such a project is essential.
2. The Dean working with his faculty and the Director of the Muscarelle should begin the difficult process of refining the program for a new arts center. This will be done with careful attention to shared facilities where appropriate, to future as well as current needs, to co-locations and adjacencies that build interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary interactions, to maximizing the flexibility of the facility, and to elimination of duplication or unnecessary functions. This is obviously an iterative process that will go on for an extended period as we better understand the interplay between resources and requirements.
3. The Provost and Dean working with Facilities Management and professional consultants should conduct a feasibility study to look at existing facilities in light

of the programmatic needs analysis in #2 above, to consider the costs and benefits of new construction or some combination of new/expanded and renovated facilities, and to understand the limitations placed on us by the Campus Master Plan and any infrastructure limitations.

4. The Provost and Dean working with the Vice-President for Development and the Vice-President for Finance will begin to analysis the College's donor base and other potential sources of private and public support for this initiative and address the critical timing issues.

CONCLUSION

It is inescapable that the Arts are and will remain central to the William and Mary experience. It is clear as well that this aspect of our curriculum and this segment of our students, faculty, and staff are woefully underserved by the facilities in which they are presently housed. New facilities are urgently required and the most prudent course would appear to be construction of a new William and Mary Fine and Performing Arts Complex that physically symbolizes our commitment to educating the whole person and enriching the creative life of the College community and the communities we serve.

The challenge is great. Any new Art Complex that merges the creative and performing arts with our art museum will be a design and a fund-raising challenge. Hard decisions will need to be made. Reigning in the ambitions and expectations of faculty who are justified in their sense of urgent and demonstrable need will require effort and compromise. A perusal of the 2005 Conceptual Space and Needs Plan quickly convinces one that there are significant needs and that at least some of these perceived needs are unlikely to be fully addressed by this project alone. Academic and other units historically independent and separate will have to unite around a common purpose and may even have to make what will feel like significant sacrifices in the common interests of all our arts programs.

Nonetheless, this is a project whose time has come. It is the College's logical next step in its continual efforts to upgrade facilities to match our reputation and promise. It is worthy of William and Mary's past and essential to our future as the leader in public undergraduate education. Broad community support is essential. We must begin to build that support, to gather momentum, and to identify the key champions and supporters of this critical next project for the College of William and Mary.