



Search for the Paul Mellon Director
Yale University, Center for British Art
New Haven, CT

THE SEARCH

Housed within Yale University (Yale or University), the Yale Center for British Art (YCBA) seeks a visionary, collaborative, and passionate leader to serve as the next Paul Mellon Director.

Founded by Paul Mellon (Yale College, Class of 1929), the Yale Center for British Art is home to the largest collection devoted to British art outside the United Kingdom. Its collections include more than 2,000 paintings, 250 sculptures, 20,000 drawings and watercolors, 40,000 prints, and 35,000 rare books and manuscripts dating from the fifteenth century to the present. More than 40,000 volumes supporting research in British art and related fields are available in the Reference Library. As an academic museum and research center, the YCBA encourages both scholarly and popular engagement with the collection and seeks to provide exceptional teaching and learning experiences along with maintaining an active public programming and publication schedule. Located in the final building designed by Louis I. Kahn and opened in 1977, the building is a focal point for modernist architecture. The YCBA is free and open to all. To learn more about the YCBA, please visit <https://britishart.yale.edu/>.

The next Paul Mellon Director will have a unique opportunity to strategically lead the YCBA as it approaches its fiftieth anniversary in 2027. Currently, the YCBA is closed for conservation, focusing on exterior improvements, including the replacement of the museum's roof and skylights, as well as significant upgrades to the gallery lighting system. Slated to open in spring 2025, the Paul Mellon Director will play a significant role in a reconceived installation of its collection.

An inspirational leader and seasoned manager, the Paul Mellon Director is responsible for the artistic vision and fiscal management of the institution and will inspire, support, and develop the staff. The next Paul Mellon Director will champion the Center's dual identities as both a museum and a center for research and teaching and continue to promote understanding and appreciation of British Art worldwide. Recognizing that the YCBA is nested within a university, they will partner and connect with all constituents,

including faculty, staff, and students, across the Yale ecosystem. Located in New Haven, CT, the YCBA has a deep commitment to its surrounding community as a core audience and fulfills this commitment through a range of partnerships.

While the YCBA is in downtown New Haven, its sister organization, the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, is based in London, and the next Paul Mellon Director thus will understand the importance of engaging locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. To engage with faculty, visiting researchers, and leaders from comparable global institutions, the Director should have significant academic and scholarly achievements, including publications, in the field of British art and material culture, or a closely related field such as the arts of the United States, the former British colonies, or the current British Commonwealth. In short, the successful candidate should demonstrate knowledge of British art's relation to its global context. They should have recognized distinction in the field of art history, significant standing with peer institutions, and the stature to represent the Center to appropriate stakeholders.

Yale University has retained Isaacson, Miller, an executive search firm, to assist with this recruitment. Inquiries, nominations, and applications, in the form of a CV and cover letter, should be sent in strict confidence to the firm as indicated at the end of this document.

YALE UNIVERSITY

Since its founding in 1701, Yale has been dedicated to expanding and sharing knowledge, inspiring innovation, and preserving cultural and scientific information for future generations. First-hand encounters with Yale's collections are an integral part of teaching and learning across the university and forge creative connections that inspire tomorrow's leaders, including those who lead and curate culture across the world. Local and regional educators at all levels also take advantage of the collections to inspire students of all ages.

The University's 14 schools and college encompass the liberal arts and sciences as well as most professions. The Fall 2023 enrollment of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students was 15,081. Yale provides campus housing to 6,749 undergraduate students in 14 residential colleges. There are over 8,200 graduate and professional students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and 13 professional schools. The campus of Yale University employs 5,499 faculty and more than 11,590 staff.

Yale University is the only American research university with four professional schools devoted to the arts: the School of Art, the School of Architecture, the David Geffen School of Drama, and the School of Music. In addition, the constellation of museums, institutes, and libraries at Yale, including the Yale University Art Gallery, Yale Peabody Museum, Yale Center for British Art, Yale University Library, and the Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage provide a rich cultural heritage community. Yale's network of over 165,000 living alumni is deeply passionate about their alma mater, traveling to campus frequently for athletic, cultural, and academic events. Furthermore, alumni of the University serve in leadership positions at museums and cultural institutions worldwide.

ROLE OF THE PAUL MELLON DIRECTOR

The Paul Mellon Director provides overall leadership, vision, and oversight of the YCBA and its staff in a unique role of serving several critical stakeholders equally well across the campus, city, state, world, and field. They will champion education and scholarship of the highest caliber, position the YCBA as a leader in its field, ensure that it is an active contributor to and catalyst for the breadth of communities it serves, and attend to the operational and financial requirements of the YCBA. The Paul Mellon Director is the representative of the YCBA, an advocate to the campus community, a thought partner to the University's academic, art, and cultural heritage leadership, and an ambassador to supporters and the broader arts community.

The Paul Mellon Director is appointed by Yale's president, reports to the provost, and works most directly with the vice provost for collections and scholarly communication. The Paul Mellon Director is responsible for overseeing an annual operating budget of \$30 million and an endowment of \$672 million as of March 2024. They lead a staff of 126 full-time and 25 part-time employees, both union and non-union, and 80 student employees and interns. The six direct reports reporting to the Paul Mellon Director are the deputy director and chief curator, deputy director and chief conservator, deputy director for research, deputy director for advancement and external affairs, deputy director for finance and administration, and the executive assistant to the Paul Mellon Director.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Building upon the strong foundation that already exists, the Paul Mellon Director will address the following challenges and strive to use them as opportunities to propel the Yale Center for British Art to greater prominence:

Lead with a vision and champion the YCBA's dual identities as a museum and research center

The YCBA plays a dual role as a museum and a center for research and teaching; the next Paul Mellon Director will understand and unite both strands and set and communicate a clear strategic vision from the start. Embedded within a world-class university, the Paul Mellon Director will channel the vast resources and collections of the YCBA to support research and teaching. At the same time, they will promote Paul Mellon's mission and collection to the world. The Paul Mellon Director will build upon the YCBA's recent innovations and think about how its collection relates to Britain and the world today, establishing its ongoing relevancy and connection to the contemporary world.

Collaborate effectively within the Yale ecosystem

The YCBA is an integral part of many academic programs, and Yale faculty, staff, and students frequently engage with the YCBA. The Paul Mellon Director will connect with and strive for an unmatched synergy

between Yale and the YCBA to leverage this unique and distinctive strength in new ways. Many faculty use the YCBA's collections and exhibits to teach their courses and students benefit from their transformative experiences with the YCBA's resources, collection, and building. Nested in a premier university, the Paul Mellon Director acknowledges and commits to the primacy of partnership, scholarship, rigor, and access that the YCBA must uphold.

In addition, the YCBA joins the Yale University Art Gallery, Yale Peabody Museum, Yale Library, and the Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage in a dynamic and active cultural heritage collaboration. Under the leadership of the vice provost for collections and scholarly communication, this collaboration develops and executes shared initiatives in the areas of technology, conservation and preservation, provenance and ethical stewardship, teaching with collections, and collections storage. Recent successful projects of the collaboration include the cross-collection discovery system, [LUX](#), and the design and construction of shared collections storage at Yale's West Campus.

Engage both local and global communities

Located in downtown New Haven, the YCBA has a deep commitment to its residents and neighbors in the area. The Paul Mellon Director will support its ongoing efforts to authentically engage its diverse constituencies and consequently enhance the cultural abundance of New Haven. The YCBA will strive to be a community partner and resource for the benefit of the region and the state while remaining committed to programming worthy of international recognition.

Stewarding the largest collection devoted to British art outside of the United Kingdom, the YCBA's productive relationships with global institutions are critical. The current successful partnership with the Paul Mellon Centre in London has supported great programming and initiatives, including the Yale in London study abroad program, the Paul Mellon Lectures, and the digital publication of [British Art Studies](#), now in its 25th issue. As a significant lender for British art worldwide, the YCBA plays an important role in promoting British art on a global stage and has an international advisory committee to also engage and deploy on behalf of its multifaceted mission.

Partner with and support museum staff

The YCBA's professional and talented staff are vital to the operation and success of the Center. The Paul Mellon Director will inspire, nurture, build, and mentor the diverse staff made up of both union and non-union employees. They will communicate across all levels and promote a collegial, supportive, transparent, and respectful climate where the team can flourish. The Paul Mellon Director will also be a seasoned leader and manager who will promote best practices in the field and set staff expectations.

Sustain financial and operational resources

The YCBA enjoys an enviably healthy financial position the next Paul Mellon Director will sustain, as well as identify new opportunities to support programming, storage needs, and collection care. They will also manage the day-to-day operations of the YCBA and have the managerial expertise and acumen to build effective teams. In recent years, certain functions, such as publications, have been brought in-house for YCBA's benefit. The Paul Mellon Director ensures that staff and visitors experience the YCBA as an administratively streamlined and welcoming operation.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will possess many, if not all, of the following qualifications, skills, and experiences:

- The knowledge and expertise of British art and its related fields; passion and respect to credibly and creatively lead the Yale Center for British Art;
- A deep commitment to the mission and values of the YCBA, and the ability to identify, champion, and communicate a passion for the visual arts, an appreciation of the historical and contemporary, and the institution;
- A track record as an effective champion of diversity, equity, and inclusion in and throughout an organization;
- Proven ability to work with faculty, staff, and students and sophistication in promoting teaching, research, and scholarship;
- Demonstrated ability to develop innovative ideas and effectively implement them;
- Exceptional communication skills, including the ability to actively listen to, connect with, and inspire staff, faculty, students, community partners, and leaders in British art;
- Extensive experience with financial management and administration and understanding of financial operations; an ability to facilitate both short- and long-term strategic decisions with financial ramifications;
- Familiarity with a unionized workforce is welcomed;
- Demonstrated success in leading and motivating a team, fostering cross-departmental collaboration, communication, and collective and individual accountability;
- A desire and ability to embrace the New Haven and global community, build partnerships, identify opportunities, and expand the Museum's reach within the region and globe;
- An advanced degree in an art-related field is required; a PhD is expected.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller

website for the search: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/yale-university-center-british-art/paul-mellon-director>.

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The University is committed to basing judgments concerning the admission, education, and employment of individuals upon their qualifications and abilities and affirmatively seeks to attract to its faculty, staff, and student body qualified persons of diverse backgrounds. In accordance with this policy and as delineated by federal and Connecticut law, Yale does not discriminate in admissions, educational programs, or employment against any individual on account of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, disability, status as a special disabled veteran, veteran of the Vietnam era or other covered veteran.

University policy is committed to affirmative action under law in employment of women, minority group members, individuals with disabilities, special disabled veterans, veterans of the Vietnam era, and other covered veterans.