A Master Plan, A Bold Vision

The University of Virginia is bringing the arts to center stage. Following the recommendations of a long-range planning process known as Virginia 2020, the University has mounted an effort to expand and elevate its arts programs, ensuring that they become an integral part of every student's experience and making them accessible to wider audiences. To realize this vision, the University is creating an environment in which the arts will thrive.

The arts at Virginia have long suffered from inadequate facilities. Insufficient teaching and rehearsal space, makeshift studios, limited performance venues, outdated climate-control systems that endanger fragile works of art and delicate musical instruments—these and other sub-par conditions severely constrain what our arts programs can achieve. To address these problems, the University has developed a master plan for the Arts Grounds, encompassing new, renovated, and expanded facilities for all of the fine and performing arts. The Arts Grounds will do more than overcome current shortcomings; it will create a vibrant new hub of intellectual and imaginative activity near the historic heart of the University.

The master plan borrows concepts from Mr. Jefferson's Academical Village, clustering buildings around an "open square of grass and trees" and incorporating walkways and public spaces that will foster a spirit of community among students, faculty, and visitors. On any given evening, they will be able to attend an exhibition opening in the new University Art Museum, a concert in the new Performing Arts Center, a play in the expanded Drama Building, a gallery talk in the new studio art building, an art history lecture in the restored Fayerweather Hall, or a display of design work in the refurbished School of Architecture. Between events or during intermissions, they can stroll through the Arts Common, an ideal location for outdoor performances and art shows.

In this setting, students will develop their aural and visual sensibilities, their understanding of both past and present artistic achievements, and their appreciation of world cultures. Guided by faculty who are themselves accomplished artists, they will learn that creating art involves taking risks, thinking critically, and confronting themes and ideas of profound importance. And by making the arts not simply a part of their coursework but a part of their lives, they will always recognize the power of artistic expression to raise challenging questions and to illuminate the world around them.

With upgraded facilities, the University's arts programs will become a magnet for talent, attracting students and faculty whose creative abilities are matched by their passion for intellectual exploration and artistic innovation. It will also become a model of interdisciplinary collaboration in the arts, a leader in the study of diverse cultures, and a pioneer in the use of new technology for creative work.

Completing the Arts Grounds will require the support of alumni, parents, and friends who recognize the power of this vision to transform the University and the lives of all who work and study there. We invite your participation in this effort and extend to you the opportunity to reshape the cultural landscape of the University of Virginia.

Following an Ideal Model

Without attempting to replicate Mr. Jefferson's buildings, the plan for the Arts Grounds incorporates a number of Jeffersonian design and planning principles, including

- Harmonious integration of buildings with landscape
- A lively network of memorable open spaces
- A rhythm of smaller and larger structures, as seen on the Lawn
• Pathways through the Arts Grounds, similar to the east-west passageways that traverse the Lawn
• Accessible and beautiful paths between Arts Grounds and the rest of the University
• Spaces that promote student-faculty interaction
• A sense of transparency in the buildings through large windows and other features used in the buildings on the Lawn