

To begin, I want to express my concern that many of you experienced considerable difficulty in conjunction with the government shutdown. It is extremely unfortunate that such a crisis occurred. I am relieved that it has finally come to an end, and I wish all of you a smooth road as you return to normal operations.

Now on to some better, non-government-related news! The Corcoran's fiscal year is off to a strong start. Our August 2013 visitor rate alone had a 30 percent increase in attendance over last year. This was in part due to our Free Summer Saturday program almost doubling its attendance in 2013 over 2012. Even more impressive is that our overall attendance rate to date is already three times what it was this time last year. This strong showing, coupled with exciting fundraisers, positive press, and some great anticipation around two of our upcoming exhibitions, all encourage our continuing efforts to re-envision the Corcoran on behalf of its community and supporters.

These exhibitions, both opening in November, are quite exciting when concept, social concern and visual culture mix for an unusual view of today's issues. [Mia Feuer](#) and [Alex Prager](#) are two artists who continue to impress in the Washington area and beyond. Both of these young artists make strong statements about the pathways in society through dynamic and bold presentations perfectly situated in the Corcoran's beautiful 19th century building. So do come to explore their vision and meaning.

The Corcoran College of Art + Design will also be engaged with Alex and Mia. Mia will work with many of our fine art students to create impressive sculptural installations, and Alex will be visiting our classrooms speaking with photography students, one on one, about her work, her career, and her exhibitions here and abroad. This unique opportunity to work with and learn from some of the world's most exciting, up and coming young artists is what sets CCAD apart from other art and design institutions. It is a differential advantage on which the Corcoran prides itself, and we know our students value this aspect of intersection between Gallery and classroom, year after year.

This "creative exchange" is highlighted in our new [Corcoran College of Art + Design view book](#), jointly designed and organized with the University of Maryland (UMD). As we continue our conversations with UMD, we are gratified that their staff, faculty, and leadership have all been incredibly supportive of our ongoing efforts, embracing several opportunities to collaborate. This anticipates an exciting pathway ahead as we complete the terms of our agreement to bring our two institutions closer together.

Please know that the Board of Trustees, and all of us at the Corcoran who have contributed to the various aspects of our developing relationship with the University continue to work to further define it. I am reminded of what recently awarded Nobel winner and writer, Alice Munro, once observed: "The complexity of things — the things within things — just seems to be endless. I mean nothing is easy, nothing is simple."

But stay with us. We'll get there. I know it.

All the best,

Peggy Loar

Interim Director and President, Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design