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His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain enjoying a conversation with museum director Mimi Gates during his visit to SAM. Photo: Team Photogenic

BUILDING A NEW SAM

The Seattle Art Museum is playing an ever more important role as a central building block in this great, livable city. Momentum builds as construction moves at a rapid pace on both the Olympic Sculpture Park (opening fall 2006) and the downtown expansion (opening late spring 2007). These two ambitious projects will have significant impact on our region and transform entire sections of the city. I am very excited about the fresh installations our curatorial staff is planning, which you will experience when these projects open. Our educators are also contributing substantially to designing the new visitor experience—a true myriad of arts experiences, reaching a wide range of audiences. Our goal is to have every visitor in the community take ownership and celebrate art as a strong positive force in each of our lives.

We envision SAM to be a place where people come to see artistic beauty indoors and outdoors, a place that is a window on history and cultures different from the one we know, and even more importantly, a place where meaningful issues are discussed, a place for thought-provoking dialogue and debate about big issues affecting our world. SAM takes seriously its civic responsibility to contribute to the vitality and livability of our community.

Throughout this report, you will find highlights of SAM's goals for the future. We are not just building bricks and mortar, we are building on all fronts—dramatically broadening our audiences, substantially enriching our artistic and cultural programming with first-rate special exhibitions and permanent collections, engaging our community, honoring our history and fostering our partnerships.

As SAM transforms, you are more important than ever before in sustaining our museum. On behalf of the Seattle Art Museum, heartfelt thanks to you—the many donors, members and volunteers who enable us to pursue our vision to establish dynamic civic spaces as we boldly strive to build a forward-looking institution to benefit our city and region.

Mimi Gardner Gates
The Illsley Ball Nordstrom Director