



# The Gibbes Museum of Art **Sets the Standard** for Application-Based Programming Results with SlideRoom

## The Challenge

### Upgrading the Stakeholder Experience

Recognized among the oldest arts organizations in the United States, the Gibbes Museum of Art celebrates artistic works that tell the complex story of Charleston, South Carolina, the fourth largest — and the richest — American city in 1790.

The Gibbes strives to make its exhibits more meaningful to guests with its Visiting Artist Program, which features selected artists creating within the museum space for visitors to experience firsthand.

The Gibbes is also committed to supporting artists throughout the entire South with its annual 1858 Prize for Contemporary Southern Art. The 1858 Prize of \$10,000 identifies and supports one artist each year “whose work contributes to a new understanding of art in the South.”

Driven to make its application-based program offerings professional and user-friendly for all parties, the Gibbes adopted SlideRoom in 2014 for its 1858 Prize program.

“For our jurors, SlideRoom is the most efficient and professional way to review materials,” advised Erin Glaze, Director of Contemporary Initiatives and Public Engagement. What’s more, suddenly then Exhibitions Consultant Pam Wall was freed up from spending much of her workday helping artists apply and even uploading their materials for them. “With SlideRoom, Pam was able to reclaim her workday,” Glaze shared.

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**Erin Glaze**  
*Director of Contemporary  
Initiatives and Public Engagement*

**the  
Gibbes  
museum  
of art**



## The Gibbes Programs Benefit from Staff Expertise (and a SlideRoom Power User)

The Gibbes' Director of Contemporary Initiatives and Public Engagement, Erin Glaze, joined the museum in 2018. With extensive organizational experience in the art world, Glaze's skill set has enabled the museum to refine its practices around making connections both with visitors and up-and-coming artists.

Glaze's role of making these connections is inextricably linked with the museum's formally stated mission, which reads: "The Gibbes Museum enhances lives through art by engaging people of every background and experience with art and artists of enduring quality, by collecting and preserving art that touches Charleston, and by providing opportunities to learn, to discover, to enjoy, and to be inspired by the creative process."

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Erin Glaze

To engage effectively with, and to showcase more artists, Glaze relies on the Gibbes' application-based Visiting Artist and 1858 Prize Programs. And she brings a lot of experience and know-how about how to run their application cycles most effectively, to attract the diverse types of artists throughout the South that they seek — and the visitors who will then come to experience them.

In her decades of professional arts curation, Glaze has consistently relied on SlideRoom as the vehicle of choice for her application-based programs. She remembers well the days of paper applications and photo slides as daunting requirements both for artists' applications and juror reviews.

To her, the availability of SlideRoom to do her job has become a positive harbinger that helps all of her stakeholders succeed.

"When I started with the Gibbes, I was really happy to find out that they were using SlideRoom for their calls," Glaze said. "I was already using SlideRoom before working with the Gibbes."

Indeed, Glaze used SlideRoom when worked for the City of Charleston, the Redux Contemporary Art Center, and ArtFields' annual competition festival. Perhaps the most telling endorsement of all was that Glaze chose SlideRoom for certain initiatives when she had her own gallery.



2020 Prize Winner Stephen L. Hayes, 1858 Prize for Contemporary Southern Art. Photo by MCG Photography

## Results

With SlideRoom, the Gibbes Museum of Art found:

**A ubiquitous and professional platform** that other museums, galleries, competitions and non-profits in the arts community all rely upon

**Substantial time savings in processing applications** thanks to a robust and intuitive design and form customization options

**Powerful reach for geographically dispersed applicants and jurors** with an "anytime, anywhere" online application, submission and review process

**A streamlined and more universally accessible application** for artist applicants that removes barriers to maximize participation

**Next-level ease of use for reviewers** that eliminates the need for physical submissions



Gibbes Building, founding year 1905. Photo by Detroit Photographic Co



# The Solution

## Eye on a More Accessible Prize

How does Glaze support the museum’s mission in her role? For the 1858 Prize, which seeks to identify, spotlight and provide financial support to one world-class artist each year, the benefits of offering a robust application platform in the cloud have been mission-critical for artist engagement.

“In regard to our mission, what I do is engage with living artists, especially in the region. It’s hard to be able to connect with artists that are not in your immediate city. I find that doing calls for submissions in which you’re able to use a platform like SlideRoom — which a lot of artists are familiar with — just makes it easier for them so that they’re not deterred from applying.”

“SlideRoom made applying to our 1858 Prize much more accessible and inclusive,” Glaze stated.

“Each year for the 1858 Prize we are seeking out artists creating work that really defines and spotlights what is currently happening in the Southern United States,” Glaze shared. “Without being able to accept applications via SlideRoom, we probably would not be exposed to art that’s being created in states as far away as Louisiana and Mississippi.”

## Gilding the Lily with SlideRoom Customization

With so many years of hands-on experience with arts applications for applicants and reviewers alike, Glaze is well-versed in optimizing the platform for each of the organizations she has served. She demurs when called a “power user,” but is enthusiastic to share what she has learned about leveraging SlideRoom to its full effect.

“When I first started looking at Gibbes’ application forms for both programs, I used what I knew about the power of the SlideRoom platform to do even more optimizations!” Glaze shared.

Glaze said that something as simple as how you label your fields has an impact on the ability to move applications through the process as quickly and efficiently as possible.

“Leveraging SlideRoom’s robust platform has always brought tremendous efficiency to my application-based programs in all of my former positions, and what it has done for the Gibbes is no exception. The ability to customize our SlideRoom forms gives us picture-perfect data, has eliminated the need to incorporate Excel, and has saved us an average of 12 hours per application cycle,” Glaze reported.

Glaze goes into the SlideRoom applications forms each year with the goal of making them ever more efficient and optimized for the Gibbes’ needs. This has enabled her to bring the organization’s data-gathering to the next level every year.

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## Jurying Without Limits is Accomplished

The Gibbes Museum of Art was initially motivated to adopt SlideRoom to provide a more convenient format for the judging process, according to Glaze. SlideRoom’s “anytime, anywhere” cloud-based platform enables the team to assemble their finest review panel with ease, because they can include arts professionals that are outside of their local area. In addition, SlideRoom’s digital format means that the museum can then create an archive of past submissions.

“We have a review panel, and we always ask different curators from museums across the southeast, as well as other arts professionals, to go into the platform and rate submissions,” Glaze explained. “And then we do a virtual panel discussion, in which we go through everyone’s top-rated artists, and then we look at the combined top-rated artists.”

“SlideRoom serves a huge purpose in that way,” Glaze said, “because it just makes review so efficient for us.”

“Then also there’s the ease of our review panel being able to go in at their own leisure and take their time and be able to go back and forth between applications and change their ratings,” Glaze added. “The conveniences it creates for our reviewers are numerous.”

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Erin Glaze

# The Museum's Outcome



Gibbes Visiting Artist Camela Guevara interacting with a museum visitor, May 2021. Photo by MCG Photography

## Empowering More Deserving Artists While Driving Results

Glaze is delighted by the quality of applicants that the museum is seeing for both the 1858 Prize and the Visiting Artist Program. In addition, even as the pandemic and its precautions persist, for the 2022 VAP cycle the Gibbes has received over double the usual applications, now up to 45.

“With SlideRoom’s barrier-busting application platform, even during the pandemic we watched our Visiting Artist Program applications for 2022 soar to 225% of the typical count,” Glaze said.

Thanks to the Gibbes’ results-oriented programming approach, this circa-1905 teaching museum continues to amplify the unique history of Charleston for rapt audiences while engaging and empowering more up-and-coming Southern artists than ever before.



*Gibbes Visiting Artist Arianne King Comer, April 2021. Photo by MCG Photography*

## About the Gibbes Museum of Art

The Gibbes Museum of Art is recognized among the oldest arts organizations in the United States. Home to the Carolina Art Association, established in 1858, the Gibbes has played a significant role in both enriching the aesthetic and cultural lives of its visitors and shaping the careers of American artists for over a century.

The Gibbes Museum enhances lives through art by engaging people of every background and experience with art and artists of enduring quality, by collecting and preserving art that touches Charleston, and by providing opportunities to learn, to discover, to enjoy, and to be inspired by the creative process.

**Learn how SlideRoom can set a new standard for *your* application-based program results at [slideroom.com](https://slideroom.com).**