

# BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART

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**Blanton Museum of Art Names Koven Smith  
Director of Digital Adaptation**



AUSTIN, Texas – October 23, 2014 – The Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin announces the appointment of Koven Smith as Director of Digital Adaptation. In this role, Smith will oversee the creation and implementation of a comprehensive digital strategy for the museum, including the development of a new website and the integration of technology in the Blanton’s galleries, among other initiatives.

Smith’s position is made possible by a bequest from the museum’s namesake, the late Jack S. Blanton, Sr., to support a key priority identified by the director. In recent years, the Blanton has enjoyed a growing reputation for its scholarship, collecting, and public engagement efforts. The long-term goal

of the plan for digital adaption is to build upon those successes to position the museum as a leader amongst university art museums in using digital tools to further its mission.

“We are thrilled to welcome Koven to the Blanton team,” remarks Blanton Director Simone Wicha. “Koven is counted among the very best in the field of museum technology, and will bring to this position a fresh and distinctive vision. Our new digital strategy will enable us to promote scholarship and public access, and provide innovative experiences with our collection. I am deeply grateful to Jack Blanton, Sr. and his children Jack, Elizabeth, and Eddy for helping us realize this important initiative.”

Smith served most recently as Director of Technology for the Denver Art Museum where he oversaw all public-facing interpretive media, as well as technology strategy and implementation. Prior to that, he was Manager of Interpretive Technology at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and Museum Systems Architect at the Indianapolis Museum of Art.

A respected leader in the field, Smith has also held teaching positions including adjunct professorships in museum studies and arts administration at New York University, Johns Hopkins University, and the University College of London in Qatar. He has been a featured speaker at conferences including Museums and the Web, Museum Computer Network, and the American Alliance of Museums, and was a keynote presenter at the MuseumNext 2014 conference in England.

Smith was as an advisory board member and co-principal investigator for the New Media Consortium's Horizon Report (Museum Edition) 2011—2013, and served on the Board of Directors for the Museum Computer Network from 2010-2013. In 2011 he founded the popular "Drinking About Museums" program—an international "meet-up" group for museum professionals with thirty chapters around the world.

"I'm incredibly excited to begin working at the Blanton," remarked Smith. "Over the next few years, the museum will implement a comprehensive digital strategy that encompasses web, mobile, social media, and public-facing technologies, and I look forward to leading that effort—particularly in Austin, a celebrated hub for technology. I've been impressed with the dynamism of the Blanton staff, and feel fortunate to join one of the city's most distinguished institutions."

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**About the Blanton Museum of Art:**

Founded in 1963, the Blanton Museum of Art is one of the foremost university art museums in the country and holds the largest public collection in Central Texas. Recognized for its modern and contemporary American and Latin American art, Italian Renaissance and baroque paintings, and encyclopedic collection of prints and drawings, the Blanton offers thought provoking, visually arresting, and personally moving encounters with art.

The museum is located at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Congress Avenue and is open Tuesday through Friday from 10 - 5, Saturday from 11-5, and Sunday from 1-5. Thursdays are free admission days and every third Thursday the museum is open until 9. Admission Prices: Adults \$9, Kids 12 and under FREE, Seniors (65+) \$7, Youth/College Students (13-21) \$5. Admission is free to members, all current UT ID-holders. For additional information call (512) 471-7324 or visit [www.blantonmuseum.org](http://www.blantonmuseum.org).

Photo of Koven Smith courtesy the Swedish Exhibition Agency