



**Missoula Art Museum
Collection Development Plan**

July 2019 – June 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) requires accredited member museums to meet core standards in collection stewardship, including the “regular assessment of, and planning for, collection needs.” MAM’s comprehensive approach to stewardship includes a Collection Management Policy to guide collection care and use and this Collection Development Plan to describe the intellectual framework of the collections and recommend their strategic development.

MAM’s mission, vision, institutional strategic plan, and indigenous land and culture statement, provide this plan’s inspiration to balance the museum’s work of collecting, education, and outreach. Using this plan will help MAM to develop the collection as a meaningful resource to achieve the mission **“to serve the public by engaging audiences and artists in the exploration of contemporary art relevant to the community, state and region.”** Following this proactive roadmap will ensure that the collections remain relevant to MAM’s aspirations, stabilize rapid growth, increase confidence in decision making, and help MAM use limited resources effectively.

Planning allows MAM to reflect on the current collection and clarify why a collection is needed to engage the public. This document questions and suggests new directions for the collection, such as:

- How do MAM’s mission and values and interpretive strategy relate to the collection?
- What areas need to grow to meet the mission and strategic goals?
- What items, if any, should be considered for deaccession?

The plan calls for enhanced collecting initiatives in the following areas:

- Montana Modernism: Deepen relationships with collectors and potential donors.
- Contemporary American Indian Art: Develop alliances and conduct curatorial outreach on the seven reservations in Montana.
- Challenging, contemporary, regional art: Establish goals in conversation with artists.

It calls for slower or refocused collecting in areas including:

- Career-spanning representations of individual artists
- Works that serve Art in Public Places loan more than mission-driven gallery exhibitions
- Artist books, portfolios, sketchbooks, and archival materials

The plan lays the groundwork for thoughtful deaccessioning of collections that are not related to the museum’s mission or are duplicative. These efforts may focus on production and pre-WWII ceramics and works that have fulfilled their material life.

This plan also compiles conservation issues for the first time, and proposes MAM’s first research plan that will link program development with collections in effective ways.

Taken together, these efforts will establish a baseline by which to measure success in achieving institutional strategic goals.

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Vision for the Collection	4
Impact of MAM Programs	5
Art in Public Places Loan Program	6
CARE Center	6
Scope of Collections, Assessments & Priorities	
Missoula County Art Collection managed by MAM	7
MAM Collection	9
Montana Modernism	10
Contemporary American Indian Art Collection	11
Challenging, Contemporary, Regional Art	12
Other Recommendations	13
Conservation & Preservation Plan	13
Research Plan	15

INTRODUCTION

1. MAM Mission and Vision

- a. **MAM Mission:** Missoula Art Museum (MAM) serves the public by engaging audiences and artists in the exploration of contemporary art relevant to the community, state, and region. (Adopted by MAM Board of Directors, September 2004)
- b. **MAM Vision:** Free Expression//Free Admission

2. Overview of the MAM Collections:

The Missoula Art Museum opened to the public in 1975 as the Missoula Museum of the Arts, a grassroots effort originating with a citywide summer arts festival. The museum began as a Missoula County agency housed within a City-owned, former Carnegie Library building. Policy-making, governance, and programming decisions were divided between a Board of Trustees appointed by the County Commissioners and the Missoula Area Arts Council Board of Directors (later the Missoula Museum of the Arts Foundation Board), which represented the community-based group driving the founding of the museum. A women's auxiliary within the Foundation Board later formed their own private non-profit organization, the Art Associates of Missoula, which is affiliated with the museum to this day. An interlocal agreement between the City of Missoula and Missoula County was signed in 1984 to define the roles and responsibilities of the two local governments. The County was to provide operating support to the museum, while the City was to make major improvements to the building as needed and to make annual funds available for minor maintenance projects. The broad support structure nurtured the museum's growth, but also placed the institution in the middle of an ill-defined power structure.

During the 1980s, under the guidance of Director Mary Cummings, the institution established a Permanent Art Collection, Permanent Collection Gallery, and Museum Library, and achieved AAM Accreditation. But the bifurcated governing structure was too often at odds. In 1989, the situation reached a crisis point. Museum Trustees resigned, the Director left, and two interim directors followed. Laura Millin was hired as Director in 1990. Guided by outreach and service philosophies in the landmark AAM report, *Excellence and Equity: Education and the Public Dimension of Museums*, Millin quickly brought community focus back to the museum.

The invigorated direction helped the museum grow support from foundations and private sources to equal Missoula County funding. In 1993, a serious threat to County mill levy funding for museums occurred. This crisis, coupled with the will to continue expanding programming, outreach, professionalism, and private support, led the museum to redefine itself as a private non-profit. The Art Museum of Missoula emerged in 1995 after an amicable separation from County governance.

However, ownership of the collection came into question during the shift. The County was bound to stringent property rules preventing it from transferring ownership of artworks to MAM, but all agreed that the collection should remain intact to reflect the cultural legacy of Missoula and to receive the professional care of the museum. An ownership agreement distinguished works that would continue to be owned by the County and those owned by the museum.

While the ownership agreement demarcated a "before" and "after" moment, MAM has never treated the collection as "ours" and "theirs." County-owned artworks at MAM represent the museum's history. The MAM Collection developed seamlessly under the same guiding principles. Taken as one, the collection reflects the continuous growth of our community and public-private partnerships that make Missoula a remarkable place to live and work.

The museum hired its first full-time Registrar in 1998 and soon after earned AAM reaccreditation. Over the next three decades, the collection grew by 500%. Funding for acquisitions increased through the creation of the Contemporary Collectors Circle and grants. Construction of a new storage vault dramatically enhanced care. Annual collections strategic planning strengthened focus areas and programming, particularly through the Contemporary American Indian Art Collection.

Key trends, acquisitions, and focus areas are detailed under Scope of Collections.

3. **Purpose of the plan:** This plan provides a roadmap for the collection to develop as a meaningful tool to fulfill the mission of the museum. The growth of the collection will support objectives of the institutional strategic plan detailed in the following section, Vision for the Collection, while remaining flexible and responsive to opportunities. Acquisitions and MAM's approach to collecting are opportunities for staff and volunteers to demonstrate the museum's values in the areas of artistic innovation, community connection, and organizational excellence. Following the intellectual framework of this plan will help staff better serve the needs of diverse artists and audiences, clarify programming, and use resources more sustainably.

VISION FOR THE COLLECTION

1. **Vision statement:** MAM shapes the collection to record important conversations in contemporary art, especially among American Indian and notable regional artists, and to preserve the unique legacy of Montana Modernism. The collection evolves to reflect the identity of the museum and our diverse community and to remain a meaningful tool in service of the mission. MAM activates the collection to foster artistic innovation, enliven education, encourage equity, and strengthen alliances. The collection engages audiences with current issues, local needs, and the living narrative of art history.

In addition, MAM manages nearly 200 artworks in the Missoula County Art Collection that represent the first 15 years of collecting activity at the Missoula Museum of the Arts. MAM oversees the care and use of these works to maintain the museum's legacy and community partnerships.

With this plan, MAM adopts an "active collections" philosophy to ensure that collections serve the mission of the museum. MAM recognizes the value of tiering the collection to meet objectives in diverse programs ranging from gallery exhibitions to educational events to displays in non-museum environments. Increasing access through the Art in Public Places loan program can help MAM broaden its community impact and better support the well-being of employees and residents of Missoula County and the City of Missoula. Conversely, limiting access to rare, high-value, or fragile works will help MAM protect artistic legacies and sustain resources for the future.

2. **Collecting criteria:** All works acquired for the collection must fit within the mission of the museum, be of museum quality relative to artist and type, enhance and diversify the collection in terms of work, style, or media, and have free and clear title. Acquisitions should be of significant audience interest, have high potential for applications in research and programming, not burden the museum beyond its financial means for transportation, installation, storage and conservation and be unencumbered by restrictions.

IMPACT OF MAM'S PROGRAM

1. **Acquisitions:** MAM's exhibitions are a major source of acquisitions, with many artists making gifts after the close of the exhibit. A few exhibits were designed with purchase awards. Juror awards at the 1974 Festival of the Arts provided the first-ever acquisitions. Four works were purchased from 1989's *Facing Our State*. The last purchase award was made in 1999's *An Argument for Drawing*. MAM also uses exhibits to explore an artist's practice to make more informed purchase decisions. Acquisitions of work by Lela Autio, Peter Kurinsky, Sheila Miles, and Jerry Rankin in 2003 exemplify this approach. Annual benefit auctions have influenced the collection, as well. In the early to mid-1990s, the museum acquired several works as discounted purchases or no-sale donations; these practices have ceased. Several auction buyers have offered to donate or re-sell their purchases to the museum, and auction purchases are included more frequently in promised gift collections. These works are subject to the same acquisition criteria and committee review process.

Exhibition-based acquisitions document the history of issues important to this community and are often supported with research and publications. MAM will continue to look to the exhibit schedule for inspiration, priorities, and opportunities. However, it is understood that while exhibits are ideal for taking risks and introducing emerging ideas, short-term programming does not necessarily serve to fill gaps, address significant, well-defined moments in regional art history, or support the long-term goals of the collection.

2. **Use:** In the late 1980s, the Missoula Museum of the Arts designated one of three galleries the "permanent collection gallery" and used it to feature collections and borrowed work relevant to collection-themed exhibits. Since renovating that space into the Goldberg Family Foundation Library in 2006, MAM does not have a gallery dedicated to the collection. Rather, MAM is committed to having at least one work from the collection on view at all times. MAM creates in-depth gallery exhibitions supported by research, programming, and communications, as well as more modest displays, such as "featured acquisition" presentations in the lobby or library cases.

Trends: Notably, 32% of the collection (675 works) has no exhibit history in the museum. Another 8% (176 works) haven't been shown since acquisition, and nearly half (988 works) has only been displayed once or twice, including in off-site loans. Since 2006, 113 of the remaining 258 works have been used only in the Art in Public Places loan program. Less than 7% of the collections (145 works) demonstrated repeated, long-term relevance to MAM's exhibit and education program.

Active Collections: Given this analysis, sea changes in the collection management field, and limited resources for growth, MAM is adopting an active collections approach. Active collections are developed and used to advance the mission. Going forward, MAM seeks acquisitions of the type or quality that support the mission *to educate through contemporary art* and help achieve strategic goals to demonstrate artistic innovation, connect to community, or attain excellence. Works that do not have this significance generally will not be considered for acquisition, and current collections may be considered for deaccessioning following best practices and MAM policy.

Tiering is critical for creating active collections and allocating staff time, storage space, and funding. This plan will be updated as MAM identifies tiering categories that support the mission. Examples of factors to be evaluated are provenance, uniqueness, sensory or emotional impact, and cultural meaning—especially as these relate to MAM, Montana, or the region—and condition.

Art in Public Places: Existing and new acquisitions may be tiered to allow the Art in Public Places (APP) loan program to continue. This plan supports MAM’s APP guidelines and helps to integrate APP with the goals of the museum to sustain resources, broaden public access to original contemporary art, and support the well-being of Missoula City-County employees.

The museum has placed collection works in Missoula City-County offices at various times throughout its history. Early efforts were not well-documented, and at least one print may have been lost as a result. In the late 1990s, MAM began regular rotations of artwork in the Missoula County Commissioners’ office. MAM gradually extended the opportunity to the Mayor’s Office, Partnership Health Center, Office of Planning and Grants, and others.

Requests for artworks increased. In 2007, MAM installed a themed exhibition across multiple public spaces, and the Commissioners adopted the Missoula County Policy on Displaying Art (2014-01). However, enthusiasm outpaced resources. The program grew without sufficient planning, which increased risk to the collection.

MAM is committed to the concept of providing quality access to exceptional art. We believe that great communities have great art museums, and civic partnerships help us use our distinguished collection to enhance the quality of life for the public. To sustain APP, MAM developed guidelines in 2019 to identify more secure display spaces, limit exposure of vulnerable works, and better educate borrows and the public. MAM is communicating the new guidelines and formally announcing the APP opportunity to City and County partners. MAM will use tiering in response to two critical factors related to APP:

- *MAM and civic sites have different goals for displaying art.* Challenging artworks that support the MAM mission might not support the needs of an office providing health care, legal counsel, or other services. To accommodate varied needs, staff and the collection committee may tier existing and new acquisitions to perform their most valuable service through APP, rather than in on-site gallery exhibits and curatorial research.
- *APP shortens the lifespan of artworks.* APP must function in less secure, non-museum environments with high light and UV levels. Through careful evaluation, MAM may determine that high-impact use of sensitive works may be justified to achieve high-impact outreach, and adjust environmental standards. Conversely, MAM may limit the types of spaces where art can be displayed or the number of works available for loan, or require that loaned works are more durable and better protected than works shown at MAM, where conditions are controlled.

3. **Conservation & preservation:** This plan compiles standards and needs for the first time in MAM’s history. MAM will commit staff time to increase the frequency of conditioning, which will allow annual updates to reflect more accurate priorities.

Long-term preservation goals were examined in 2018, where MAM hosted a series of community design charrettes and professional development workshops funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The program helped MAM create a vision for the MAM Collection Access, Research, and Education (CARE) Center that will be pursued during the next three to five years.

CARE Vision Statement

CARE provides free access to the MAM collections and resources that help preserve cultural collections in western Montana. CARE helps to fulfill the museum’s goals to encourage artistic innovation, connect with community, and strive for excellence and sustainability in collection care.

The CARE facility has dynamic spaces dedicated to the storage, care, and use of more than 2,000 artworks in the MAM Collections and the Missoula County Art Collection managed by MAM. In the Study Center, educators, scholars, students, and museum colleagues examine original artworks, explore archives, and delve into MAM’s art research library, a non-circulating branch of the Missoula City-County Public Library. In the Teaching Gallery, interns and guest curators, including artists and interns, use the collections to create changing exhibitions that promote curiosity, critical thinking, and bold conversations about the current issues in contemporary art. Classrooms facilitate professional gatherings and trainings in stewardship, and workshops allow for safe preservation, photography, and fabrication. A climate-controlled storage vault protects the collections and allows for sustainable growth.

Believing in the power of inclusive alliances and unexpected solutions, MAM CARE seeks to function as a spirited point of connection between diverse partners, including K-12 schools, colleges and universities, civic and tribal agencies, and social organizations. Building on decades of outreach in the region, MAM CARE focuses on catalyzing collaborations in Missoula, Ravalli, Lake, Granite and Sanders counties.

4. **Strategic themes:** MAM’s 2015-2020 Institutional Strategic Plan seeks to strengthen the museum for the next 40 years of operations. Following three years of conversations between staff and board, MAM organized its objectives under three themes. This Collection Development Plan articulates and seeks to fulfill the vision for each theme.
 - Artistic Innovation: We believe that art has the power to transform lives, that creativity sparks engagement, and risk-taking fosters growth. We strive to create an environment where both staff and artists can explore new ideas and where audiences can interact and learn from artists.
 - Community Connection: Our community is strengthened when people of all abilities and backgrounds have access to art experiences. A “radical welcome” seeks to remove barriers, encourage diversity, and invite dialogue with artists, audiences and neighbors. Long-term partnerships increase our capacity to contribute to the well-being of our community.
 - Organizational Excellence: Striving for excellence generates dialogue that builds our capacity to advance the mission. Achieving best practices and sustainability in collection care protects our region’s artistic legacies and promotes trust among our supporters. Preparing our staff to achieve these goals results in a healthy, respectful and productive workplace.
5. **Goals:** MAM seeks to grow the collection without compromising the safety of works. We will identify and fill gaps in the representation of Montana Modernists and contemporary American Indian artists from reservations in Montana, and leverage the CCC to purchase one work annually. We anticipate slowing in the total number of acquisitions. Our primary goal is to gain control of exponential growth and reclaim our ability to provide direct oversight of the entire collection. Works moved to offsite spaces will be returned to a MAM facility within five years. To achieve this goal, this plan includes opportunities for thoughtful deaccession reviews. MAM will compose a Collection Procedure Manual to detail systems of documentation, records management, and inventory.

SCOPE OF COLLECTIONS, ASSESSMENTS & PRIORITIES

1. **Missoula County Art Collection managed by MAM:** The Missoula County Art Collection managed by MAM was established by agreement in 1998 and consists of 191 artworks collected by the Missoula Museum of the Arts from 1973 to December 31, 1994. The designation and management agreement do not apply to works acquired by other County agencies. The County collection was not designed or

intended to receive new acquisitions, as additions now enter MAM collections. Other than minor corrections to reflect more accurate inventories, the County collection has not changed significantly.

The museum purchased and accepted gifts of artwork since its inception, but it formalized a collection in the mid-1980s as part of national accreditation from the American Association of Museums. It appears that at the time, the museum accessioned all works that were assumed to be museum property at that time. Many of these accessions lack documentation, and a great deal of research must be completed to establish clear title and provenance.

The first accessions were three Juror's Award purchases made from the Missoula Festival of the Arts *prior* to the museum's opening in 1975. These works by Gennie DeWeese, Walter Hook, and Jessie Wilber ground the commitment to exceptional works by regional contemporary artists that continues to this day. Other early acquisitions included a watercolor by E.S. Paxson, carvings by E.W. Riley and Russell Childers, and a video by James Luna. These works demonstrate MAM's long-standing interest in Missoula's unique art history, folk art, and American Indian art. The collection preserved institutional activities, including commissions for membership promotions, state-wide programs, such as the Montana Arts Council's edition of Jessie Wilber's *Blackfeet Indian Tipis: Design and Legend*, and true workhorses, such as Tom Schultz's punch bowl that served the public at receptions for more than 20 years.

Many gifts, purchases, and commissions were made from the exhibition program, which in early years included traditional Western art and international artists that were the particular interest of Director Mary Cummings. Several works were acquired via the museum's benefit auction, but those practices ended in the mid-1990s. Later, the collection acquired work by artists-in-residence Kioko Mwitiki and Italo Scanga.

The museum also recognized the importance of diversity and innovation within our community and preserved the work of Hmong embroiders relocated from Thai refugee camps. Other key acquisitions that foreshadowed future program priorities include soft sculpture by Nancy Erickson, George Gogas's seminal *Judith Basin Encounter*, geometric abstraction by Miriam Schapiro, and works by Montana artists, such as Winnie Lloyd, Ernie Pepion, David Shaner, and many others.

The final County-owned accession is a sculpture by Lorna Simpson received from the Norton Family Foundation holiday gift project. This work may be the first acquired by an artist of national renown with no direct connection to the local community or museum programming.

The collection is well-used and well-managed. More than 125 MAM exhibits have included County-owned works, helping MAM to fulfill its commitment to always having collection work on view. MAM has shown works in the galleries, APP, at the Missoula Public Library, and in 10 Hooked on Art events at Bonner School. 100% of County-owned works are inventoried, 86% are photographed, 27% have been published in print or digitally, and 24% are available in MAM's online database.

Media

86	Prints
33	Sculptures (including 9 ceramic ware, 1 installation)
26	Needlework/textiles
32	Paintings
16	Drawings
5	Photographs
1	Collage

- 2 Installations
- 1 Enamel
- 1 Video

Geographical representation of artists (# works, at time of acquisition)

- 130 Montana (77 represent Missoula County, including 12 Hmong)
- 13 Regional (WA, OR, ID, WY, ND)
- 31 National
- 12 International (Mexico, Kenya, Switzerland)

Focus areas (# works)

- 50 Montana Modernism
- 6 Folk Art
- 3 Contemporary American Indian Artists (Blackfeet, La Jolla Luiseño-Ipi-Mexican-American, and Luiseño/American)

2. **MAM Collection:** The MAM Collection consists of work collected by the Art Museum of Missoula and Missoula Art Museum since January 1, 1995. Approximately 2,000 artworks document how the museum matured into a contemporary, regionally-focused identity with interests in artists from the national and international scenes.

The MAM Collection has four sub-collections. Only the Gilbert Millikan Art Collection (GMAC) has a legal designation. These 136 works are contractually co-owned by the Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts, The Holter Museum of Art, Missoula Art Museum, and the Montana Museum of Art and Culture. MAM is responsible for the care and management of 43 works and is bound to provide co-owners with access. In exchange, MAM has access to other GMAC works each institution maintains.

In 2017, while revising the Collection Management Policy, MAM staff determined that other sub-collections were programmatic, not contractual, named to serve MAM’s commitment to long-standing themes and milestones in our institutional development. These collections are the Contemporary American Indian Art Collection, Joyce Folsom Collection, and Willem and Dianne Volkorsz Contemporary American Folk Art Collection.

Media

- 664 Prints
- 394 Paintings
- 284 Needlework/textiles
- 226 Sculptures (including 61 ceramics, 8 Hmong cultural objects)
- 231 Drawings
- 180 Photographs
- 33 Collage and mixed media on paper
- 8 Books
- 5 Installations and time-based works

Geographical representation of artists (# works, at time of acquisition)

1,544	Montana connections (740 works represent Missoula County, including 272 Hmong)
301	National
188	Regional (WA, OR, ID, WY, ND)
116	International works (Australia, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Laos, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden)

Focus areas (# works)

239	Contemporary American Indian Artworks
284	Montana Modernism
36	Folk Art

Based on the combined contents of the Missoula County Art Collection and Missoula Art Museum Collection, MAM has identified development goals for the following three major collecting areas.

- **Montana Modernism**

Relevance: Montana Modernism is primarily work that experiments with materials and expression made by artists who returned to or moved to Montana in the post-war period. Exceptions include those who worked continuously in Montana, like Isabelle Johnson, and “tourists” who arrived then left, like Winold Reiss. Montana’s modernist history is more specific and has a tighter frame than the national movement. Montana Modernists found community and support especially within the Montana Institute of the Arts. Montana modernists’ students and the artists who followed are “contemporary” artists.

Scope: MAM’s collection contains 284 works by 21 artists. This collection is best understood through the artists who are represented. The ratio of male to female artists is 2:1 and number of works by each gender only slightly closer. The imbalance may represent the broader culture that privileged the careers of men. Overwhelmingly, the collection represents the Missoula (8 artists/110 works) and Bozeman areas (5 artists/105 works). Only Edith Freeman (2 works) and Bill Stockton (3 works) hail from the eastern side of the state, and a smattering of artists and works represent Great Falls, Helena, and Kalispell. Lela Autio, Freeman Butts, Gennie and Robert DeWeese, and Walter Hook are well represented across their careers.

Audience engagement: MAM incorporates Modernist works into ongoing displays and at least one annual, thematic exhibit in the museum. Works are presented off-site via loans to the Art in Public Places program and exhibits at other museums. In the coming years, MAM will seek to engage the public in meaning-making activities, such as identifying new interpretations and keywords for Modernist works. This information will be incorporated into catalog records. Catalogued works are accessible through MAM’s online database. The Education program has used Rudy Autio’s collection work in an NEA-funded effort to develop research and K-12 curriculum, which is distributed through MAM’s website. Reproductions of works enhance MAM’s publications and marketing materials.

Future plans: MAM envisions growing the collection in order to tell the story of the proliferation of Modernism in Montana and the ways in which Modernism inspired and continues to be relevant to generations of contemporary artists. An ideal collection would have at least one significant work by each of the artists who played a role in bringing Modernist ideas to the state or who worked as educators and active members of the arts community. It is appropriate that MAM collects Missoula

and western Montana artists in-depth, but broadly, taking steps to represent stages across the artists' careers rather than focusing on single eras or bodies of work.

Factors: Collecting works by Modernists is a challenging prospect. Several museums are already the sole repositories for key artists. Other artists are still held in significant private collections. The significant later works of Peter Voulkos, one of the lynchpins of Montana Modernism, are largely out of state and priced well beyond MAM's reach. For these reasons, MAM recommends the collection grow by filling gaps and acquiring at least one significant work by artists not yet deeply collected at other museums.

For artists already well-represented in the MAM Collection or other regional collections, MAM recommends acquiring only gifts of exceptional original works requiring little to no conservation.

- **Contemporary American Indian Art Collection**

Relevance: MAM is situated on the traditional, ancestral territories of the Séliš (Salish or "Flathead") and Qlispé (upper Kalispel or Pend d'Oreille) peoples. Their rich cultures are fundamental to artistic life in Montana and to the work of MAM. Out of respect for the indigenous stewards of the land it occupies, MAM established the Contemporary American Indian Art Collection (CAIAC) in 1997 with a gift of two prints by Jaune Quick-to-See Smith from the Rutgers Center for Innovative Print and Paper. The CAIAC has grown to more than 240 works, reputedly one of the largest collections of its kind in the northern Plains. In addition to the named collection owned by MAM, the museum cares for three works by James Luna (La Jolla Luiseño-Ipi-Mexican-American), Ernie Pepion (Blackfeet), and Fritz Scholder (Luiseño/American) held in the Missoula County Art Collection.

Scope: At the core of the CAIAC are artists from tribes in Montana. The CAIAC holds 65 works by six Salish or Salish-Kootenai artists, 32 works by five Blackfeet artists, and nine works by five Crow artists. MAM has made notable programming commitments with Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (Salish-Kootenai, Métis-Cree, Shoshone-Bannock) and Corwin Clairmont (Salish-Kootenai); they are well-represented with 41 and 19 works, respectively. But MAM has little to no representation of seven other tribes representing four reservations in Montana.

In terms of where artists are living and working, the CAIAC contains 82 works by 16 artists living in Montana (only one of these is not from a local tribe). There are 67 works by 32 artists from Oregon and Washington, and 44 works by 19 artists living in 12 other states around the country.

Through gifts and partnerships, MAM has acquired more than 100 works from regional and national artists. Joe Feddersen (Colville), Chris Pappan (Osage, Kaw, Cheyenne River Sioux), Sara Siestroom (Hanis Coos), Melanie Yazzie (Navajo), and many others represent MAM's expanding commitment to indigenous artists in the central and western United States.

The representation of media in the CAIAC is unlike the rest of the MAM Collection. The collection as a whole consists of 31% print media, but within the CAIAC, this figure jumps to 69%. The collection consists of 14% sculptural works, but in the CAIAC, only 2% of works (six objects) represent three-dimensional visual art.

Audience engagement: The CAIAC is the most active body of work at MAM. Works in this collection are exhibited, photographed, catalogued, published, loaned, and researched at a slightly higher rate than the general collection. These activities support MAM's strategic commitments to feature Native artists in exhibitions and develop partnerships with organizations and education programs.

Montana’s Indian Education for All legislation presents MAM with opportunities to develop CAIAC-inspired resources for educators.

Future plans: Growth will focus on researching artists affiliated with tribes based in Montana. Achieving this goal will require time and funding to support curatorial outreach into other parts of the state. Staff will need to create relationships among Pend d’Oreille and Little Shell artists and with artists on the Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Northern Cheyenne, and Rocky Boy’s reservations.

Factors: Growth will come slowly. Developing personal relationships and becoming familiar with artists’ careers, especially in state as expansive as Montana, will take time and funding for travel and outreach. However, artists, donors, and private foundations have demonstrated an interest in supporting acquisition efforts.

- **Challenging, Regional, Contemporary Art**

Relevance: Since opening as the Missoula Museum of the Arts with the exhibit *Native Funk and Flash*, MAM has placed challenging, contemporary, regional art at the heart of public programming. The museum reinforced this focus when the collection was established with the works of Montana artists Walter Hook, Jessie Wilber, and Gennie DeWeese. MAM has remained consistent in its vision for the collection to reflect the evolving interests of artists working in the region and to support the changing educational needs of the regional community.

Scope: Excluding Montana Modernist and contemporary American Indian art, the remaining 1,557 works—nearly 75%—relate to challenging, contemporary, or regional art, even though these terms are subject to interpretation over time. Acquisitions will consider nuances in these terms. For example, it is impossible to predict what content will be challenging half-a-century from now. Though specific subjects or techniques may evolve, some genres, such as polemical works, are consistently provocative, and certain themes, such as land use and environment activism, are characteristic of this region. MAM defines “emerging” works by their ability to invigorate important conversations in art and culture, rather than by artists’ ages or accomplishments. A “challenging” approach can lose its charge, but gain sophistication and significance. Inevitably, groundbreaking contemporary art becomes historical, and there is no agreed-upon definition of what constitutes a “Montana” or “regional” artist. Regionally-relevant works can inject vitality into education and outreach, even when they are no longer considered challenging or contemporary.

Audience engagement: The broadness of this category makes it most prominent in programming. The Art in Public Places program draws heavily on this area.

Future plans: Collecting resources will focus on acquiring significant examples of work by artists who have an established role in contemporary art relevant to this region. MAM will take pro-active steps to represent stages across artists’ careers rather than single eras or bodies of work.

Factors: To maintain professional standards, follow policy, and achieve strategic goals for sustainability, MAM’s staff and collection committee must demonstrate greater restraint in collecting work defined as challenging, contemporary, or regional. Slowing the acquisition process will allow for more thoughtful evaluation, research, and cultivation of relationships with artists and donors. Though difficult in the short term, declining a greater proportion of donations will allow MAM to make more achievable commitments to long-term research, preservation, and access.

3. Additional Recommendations

Strategies for acquiring work: In all areas, MAM may budget annual acquisition funds. MAM may use Contemporary Collectors Circle funds and seek private grants to support acquisitions of any type. Funds from the Estate of Bill and Helga Hosford may be used to purchase contemporary American Indian art. The Terry Karson Memorial Acquisition Fund for Emerging Contemporary Art may be used to purchase challenging, contemporary, regional art.

MAM will cultivate donations from artists, collectors, and estates and document planned gifts.

When MAM receives an invitation to collect work, it will respond in a timely manner and consider allocating resources needed for travel, packing, shipping, or other related activities.

MAM will foster relationships with artists and collectors of interest, and, regarding contemporary American Indian art, with tribes and cultural leaders. MAM will meet with elder artists to discuss how to preserve individual legacies. MAM will budget for regional travel to support cultivation.

Program partnerships with organizations, museums, and higher education have been fruitful. When designing exhibition and education programs, MAM will consider the potential for collaborations that cultivate donor relationships and grow the collection.

MAM will investigate opportunities for exchanges and co-ownership with other institutions.

Critical criteria or exceptions: In all acquisitions, MAM should pursue only the most excellent examples of quality, type, and condition, focus on filling gaps, and avoid duplication and incurring expenses beyond MAM's means.

Works requiring professional conservation treatment are discouraged, unless they present an exceptionally rare collecting opportunity. MAM may accept works of exceptional cultural value that require archival matting and framing.

Potential deaccessions: Works that are duplicative, in poor condition, or which require a level of care that is beyond MAM's capacity to provide may be considered for deaccessioning following national best practices. MAM's Collection Management Policy provides guidance.

As MAM's representation of artists' careers is strengthened through significant accessions, deaccessions of lesser works may be considered.

Areas recommended for conservative or no growth: MAM does not recommend collecting heavily from a single body of work or series by an individual artist. MAM seeks to take a broader view of artists' careers by sampling works from different eras. Efforts to represent one person's career should follow careful consideration and research aligned with MAM's mission.

MAM recommends limiting acquisitions of large works requiring permanent off-site storage until or unless MAM secures off-site storage that can accommodate large works.

CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION PLAN

MAM's board-approved Code of Ethics commits the museum to abide by ethical standards published by the AAM, AAMD, AIC, AAM Registrar's Committee, and any other codes or guidelines published by the AAM. In short, these codes state:

- Preserving the public trust is MAM’s paramount guiding principle, and the stewardship of collections entails the highest public trust. MAM shall respect and preserve its collections and its reputation as a responsible steward.
- MAM makes collections as accessible as is prudent for the protection of each work. Collections—owned and borrowed—represent humanity’s common wealth. It is incumbent upon museums to preserve this inheritance for posterity.
- As a member of the conservation community, MAM strives to attain the highest possible standards in all aspect of preventative conservation.

MAM’s primary long-range preservation goal is to store all of the MAM Collections in a climate-controlled MAM facility (see CARE Vision Statement, page 6). During the next five years, MAM will explore the potential for fulfilling CARE with civic partners and a capital campaign.

The AAM identifies excellence in collection stewardship through a balance of access and security. Best practices include taking proactive steps to mitigate the effects of UV light, fluctuations in temperature and humidity, air pollution, damage, pests, and natural disasters on collections. More specifically, the AIC community encourages museums to adopt exhibition policies with guidelines for duration and lighting. In lieu of an exhibit policy and in service of the public trust, MAM establishes the following environmental standards for storage and exhibition.

1. **Exhibition Exposure limits:** All visible light causes damage, such as brittleness and irreversible shifts in color. Therefore, MAM will strive to adhere to accepted standards for light levels and UV exposure. Lighting on materials of high to medium sensitivity, including textiles and works on paper, especially watercolors, color prints, and color photographs, will range between 50 and 200 lux. The upper limit for UV is 75 microwatts per lumen.

MAM will monitor both in-house galleries and Art in Public Places sites. City-County offices participating in APP will receive site assessments. When areas exceed acceptable levels, MAM may make recommendations for improvements to meet the levels detailed below, select only works made of the least sensitive materials, find alternate display locations, or decline the loan request.

2. **Temperature, Relative Humidity and Ultraviolet Light controls:** Using a zone system, MAM will strive to maintain a temperature of 70 degrees +/- 3 degrees in the galleries. MAM does not have Rh control beyond setting a minimum, currently set to 35% to correspond with Montana’s native environment in which much of the work is made. MAM is investigating a complete system upgrade that will allow for control at 40%, +/-5%.

MAM uses LED lighting in the galleries, which eliminates UV. MAM will limit exposure in areas without LED lighting, such as offices, collection workroom, and library cases. MAM will investigate dimmers as appropriate. UV filters were applied to all exterior windows in 2006. MAM will monitor the efficacy of the filter and replace as needed.

3. **Minimum storage requirements:** MAM collections stored on-site will be kept in locked, fire sprinklered, and climate-controlled spaces that are alarmed when the building is unstaffed. Works are kept a minimum of 3” off the floor.
4. **Conservation priorities:** MAM will condition objects regularly and maintain a list of works requiring conservation. More detailed surveys and treatment proposals will be developed as needed.
2008.08.01: Gennie DeWeese, *Still Life with Fruit and Lemons*, conserve white paint drip

RESEARCH PLAN

1. **Relevance:** MAM collects information on artists and artworks to preserve the legacy of visual art in Montana. This information has value to staff for exhibition development and to outside scholars, including students. MAM makes information available to the public on request, in the course of commissioned projects, such as essays for exhibit publications, and during internships.
2. **Scope:** Generally, staff do not research individual collection works. The temporary exhibit program drives curatorial research, which, by necessity, focuses on artists' careers or significant bodies of work in order to generate broad interpretation and publications within limited means. Often, the schedule for developing collection exhibits and space required to document works conflicts with the time needed to establish relationships, prepare research, and assemble records and other materials suitable for publication.
3. **Future Plans:** MAM will strive to research the relationship between collections and communities, and seek to overcome cultural misunderstandings and barriers. The approach will follow the interpretive strategy MAM developed in 2018, which preferences:
 - Self-engagement and a culture of self-discovery
 - Accessible content
 - Common language
 - Empowering people to engage with art without intimidation
4. **Goals:** In 2020-2021, wherever collection works are displayed, MAM will invite the public to interpret and catalog the works. MAM will host events and create tools to gather information about how the public understands and values collection works. Motivated by the concept of active collections, MAM will use this information to design resources that make the collections more accessible and relevant. Examples currently on MAM's website include Montana Connections, exhibit microsites, intern scholarship, and Past Perfect database records.
5. **Priority areas and themes**
 - Montana Modernism: MAM will conduct research and create or commission original scholarship as needed for an annual Modernist-themed exhibition. The focus area for 2019 is post-war craft. 2020 will focus on community cataloging.
 - Contemporary American Indian Art: MAM will research artists affiliated with reservations in Montana to identify potential acquisitions and ongoing exhibit opportunities. The priority will be on tribes underrepresented or missing from the collection: Assiniboine, Chippewa-Cree, Gros Ventre, Little Shell/Metis, Northern Cheyenne, Pend d'Oreille, and Sioux. Existing collections will be shown in 2020 and focus on community cataloging
 - Challenging, contemporary, regional art: MAM will research and create or commission original scholarship for exhibitions that include collection works or that feature artists already in the collection.

Recommended by the MAM Collection Committee and approved by the Board of Directors, July 23, 2019