





Fitchburg Art Museum Board President Susan M. Roetzer and Director Nick Capasso.

From the President of FAM

Welcome to the Fitchburg Art Museum Annual Report for 2021.

It is with great pleasure that I am able to report FY21 was a successful year for the Fitchburg Art Museum. In spite of the many challenges facing all of us and the Museum, FAM was able to continue its long standing practice of completing the year with a balanced operating budget. Thanks to the magic of Zoom, business management continued unabated, with committees completing their respective agendas for the year. Additionally, strong market performance coupled with the continued growth of our investment in the development effort has allowed the museum to expand a number of the programs we use to support art and also more general community needs. As you read about the accomplishments of the Museum in this most difficult of years, I hope you will join us in taking pride in our Museum and our community.

None of this would have been possible without the extraordinary effort and leadership of our director, Nick Capasso, and the hard work of our staff. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our employees, members, and Museum supporters. In a year that had challenged us all, it is this hard work that has allowed the Museum to continue to prosper, using our resources to enhance the experience of art in Fitchburg and greater New England and the wellbeing of the people in the communities we serve.

On behalf of the Trustees of the Fitchburg Art Museum,

Susan M. Roetzer, Board President

Our Mission

The Fitchburg Art Museum is a catalyst for learning, creativity, and community building. We accomplish this mission with art historical collections and exhibitions, special exhibitions of contemporary New England art, education programs, public art projects, community partnerships, and creative economy initiatives.

Our Vision

All decisions, initiatives, projects, and programs at the Fitchburg Art Museum reflect our commitment to education and the greater community.

2021

Board of Trustees

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Ingrid Wheeler
Rink Wheeler



Fitchburg Families First bags ready to go in the FAM courtyard.

From the Director of FAM

In leadership trainings, students are reminded of these words from Winston Churchill, uttered during the depths of the Second World War: “Never let a good crisis go to waste!” Here at the Fitchburg Art Museum, this has been our *de facto* motto over the last difficult and sometimes terrifying year.

During the still-ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we have found that our staff is brilliant, nimble, and capable of working just as hard from home. Our donors have been loyal, generous, and visionary. And our community has been resilient, collaborative, and devoted to taking care of each other.

In direct response to the pandemic, we found several silver linings – even though we were closed to the public from March - July 2020, and then again from November 2020 - March 2021. Multiple FAM online programs reached families sheltering at home. With the support of the Cathedral Fund, FAM worked with trusted community partners to organize **Fitchburg Families First**, a local pandemic food security program (see page 8 for details). Thanks in part to a federal Paycheck Protection Program loan (now fully forgiven) all FAM staff have remained fully employed, and we also enjoyed wide participation in a host of professional development activities offered online throughout the non-profit community, both here in New England and nationally. A great deal of this training was focused on racial justice and equity, pressing issues that now inform much of our work. We continue to serve a diverse community in North Central Massachusetts through our programs, and we are now far more intentional about making sure our Board of Trustees and Board of Community Advisors better reflect the demographics of our city.

And despite the pandemic, FAM continued to make significant progress on other fronts. Fitchburg State University President (and FAM Trustee) Richard Lapidus and I signed an updated Memorandum of Agreement that improves and strengthens our institutional partnership. Under the leadership of Fitchburg Superintendent of Schools (and FAM Trustee) Robert Jokela, we are co-creating a wide range of new collaborative programs to serve students, including an arts-based neighborhood after-school program set to open in FAM's studios in the Fall of 2021. We hired our new Curator, Lauren Szumita, formerly the Curatorial Assistant for Prints, Drawings, and Photographs at the Worcester Art Museum. We even put a new roof on our Nester Building, insulated the Merriam Parkway Building attic, and improved ventilation, lighting, and accessibility in our galleries. **Art in Bloom** returned to our galleries, as did the **Regional Exhibition of Art & Craft**, after last year's COVID cancellations.

None of this has been easy, yet all of it has been gratifying. I would like to thank our Boards of Trustees and Community Advisors for their leadership and flexibility, our donors for trusting us to remain creative and relevant, our volunteers for sticking with us, our Members and visitors for patiently waiting for us to reopen (twice!), our staff for their compassion and creativity, and our community partners for truly understanding that an art museum can do far more than collect and exhibit art.

Nick Capasso, Director





FAM Exhibitions

In anticipation of pandemic closures, FAM presented a year of long-term exhibitions drawn from our permanent collection, as we postponed an entire year of planned-for exhibitions. We are fortunate to have built major collections of photography and African art over the last several years, and relied upon them to quickly create new shows to fill our galleries. Many thanks to FAM Trustee and photography collector Dr. Anthony Terrana, and African art collector John Hutchinson. Their generosity made these exhibitions possible. In June of 2021, we were finally able to resume regular FAM exhibition programs.

Opposite, Top

From September 2020 into June 2021, all the galleries in FAM's Harlan K. and Elsie D. Simonds Building were filled by **The BIG Picture: Giant Photographs and Powerful Portfolios**. This expansive exhibition featured recent acquisitions to our permanent collection, shown to our visitors for the first time.

Opposite, Bottom Left

Artist Valerie Imparato discusses her work in her summer 2021 solo exhibition, **Valerie Imparato: Interwoven**.

Opposite, Bottom Right

The **85th Regional Exhibition of Art & Craft** included 102 artworks by 81 artists, representing 47 communities in Central Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire.

Top Left

Painter Nathan Clark Bentley was the winner of the **84th Regional Exhibition of Art & Craft** in 2019. The cancellation of summer exhibitions in 2020 gave this artist two years to prepare a completely new body of work for his solo show in 2021.

Nathan Clark Bentley, **Tomorrow Won't Do (Waiting for the Night)** (detail), 2020, oil on canvas, 40" x 48"

Top Right

Cloth is Money: Textiles from the Sahel accompanied **The BIG Picture**, and was installed in the Zaydee D. and Mason D. Harris Gallery (AKA "The Connector"). This beautiful exhibition featured FAM's extensive and growing collection of African textiles.

2020 - 2021

Exhibitions Opened

The BIG Picture:
Giant Photographs and Powerful Portfolios

Cloth is Money: Textiles from the Sahel

Symbolic Threads:
Among Textiles and the Art of Storytelling

The 85th Regional Exhibition of Art & Craft

Nathan Clark Bentley: Waiting for the Night

Valerie Imparato: Interwoven

Signaling Status:
Paintings from the FAM Collection

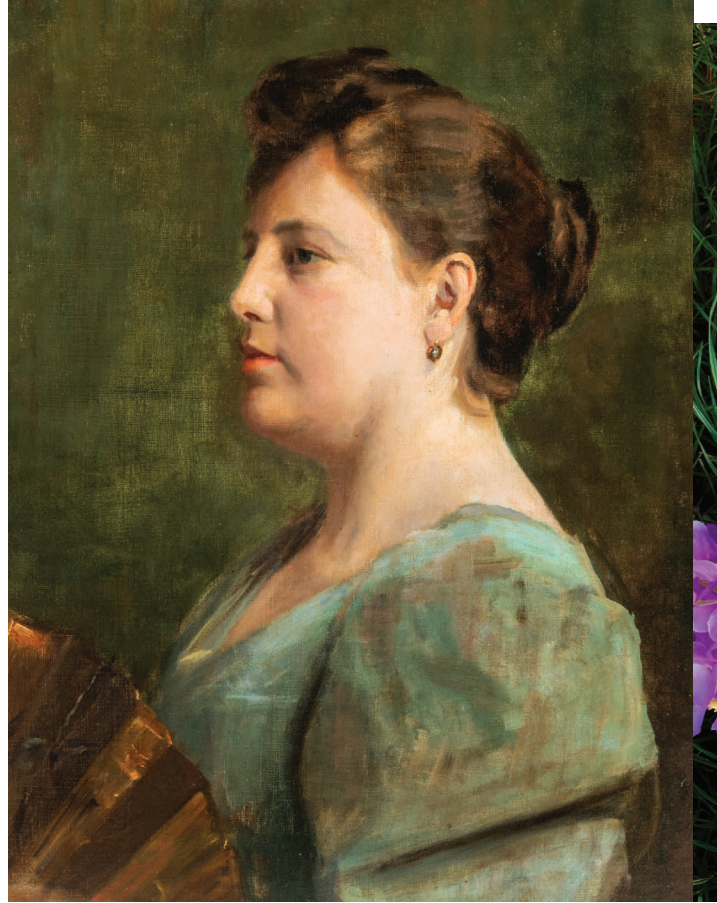
In the Community Gallery

At FAM:

ArtsWorcester
LUK, Inc.
No Evil Project
Material Girls Quilt Guild

Online (during pandemic closures):

LUK, Inc.
Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School
Portrait of a Graduate, North Central MA



FAM Collection

In FY2021, FAM added 1,464 works of art to our core collections of American art, African, Oceanic, and Native American art, and photography. The majority of the year's acquisitions were a group of 1,257 contemporary American photographs by eleven artists, gifted to FAM by a consortium of collectors represented by Summit Art Advisory in New Jersey. We also continued to build our new collection of 21st-Century African Photography, and purchased a print by world-renowned South African photographer Zanele Muholi.

FAM also received a generous gift of thirty-one American works on paper from New York collector Chris Welles Feder, which includes work by prominent artists George Bellows, Reginald Marsh, John Sloan, and James Abbott McNeill Whistler. Finally, we were fortunate to purchase a portrait by FAM's founder, Eleanor Norcross (on eBay!).

Other acquisition highlights include gifts of ten African textiles from John Hutchinson, thirteen Indonesian textiles from Elizabeth Van Gelder, sixteen Inuit stone carvings from Barbara DiRusso, and twenty-four African indigo adire textiles from the personal collection of FAM's own Consulting Curator for African, Oceanic, and Native American Art, Jean Borgatti.



Above

Our new Curator, Lauren Szumita, began work at FAM in January 2021. Lauren now leads our curatorial program and will participate in institutional strategic planning. She will also help us prepare for re-accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums in 2023.

Top Left

Zanele Muholi, **Phumula, Paris, France** (detail), 2019, silver gelatin print, edition 5/8, 27 1/2" x 19" Museum Purchase with funding provided by the Geneviève McMillan-Reba Stewart Foundation, 2020.65

Top Right

Eleanor Norcross (US American, 1854–1923), **Portrait of a Woman** (detail), 1890–1900, oil on canvas, 24" x 18", Simon Collection Fund, 2020.181



FAM Education

In FY2021, FAM Director of Education Laura Howick and her team were largely focused on delivering online content, coordinating **Fitchburg Families First** (see the next page), and developing a broad menu of pilot programs in collaboration with the Fitchburg Public Schools. Most of these initiatives, including a collaborative arts-based neighborhood after-school program, will be launched and evaluated in the 2021-2022 academic year.

Top Left

In the spring of 2021, Fitchburg High School students were invited to participate in an online exhibition and competition that accompanied FAM's gallery show, **The BIG Picture**. For **My BIG Vision**, students were asked to create photographic images that represented the things that they found most important in their lives. Pictured here is Arisa Jordan's scholarship-winning photo, **Field of Euphoria**.

Top Right

In the summer of 2021, the Fitchburg Public Schools launched new summer programs to help re-engage students in person after a long year of remote learning. FAM contributed to the effort by teaching art classes. In the photo, Clementi Family Manager of School Programs Jennifer Sheppard and intern Autumn Hill work with young students at one of the classes.

Right

During periods when the pandemic forced FAM to close to visitors, our Community Gallery moved online. This artwork was created by a program participant at LUK, Inc., a not-for-profit social service agency located in Central Massachusetts dedicated to improving the lives of youth and their families.

Anonymous Artist, LUK, Inc., **Untitled**, 2020, pen and marker. The Community Gallery exhibition was done in conjunction with LUK, Inc.'s **Honoring the Past, Envisioning the Future** art show.





Featured Partner: Inform Fitchburg

From November 2020 to June 2021, the Fitchburg Art Museum partnered with Inform Fitchburg to organize **Fitchburg Families First**, a pandemic relief program designed to aid students and families in the Fitchburg Public Schools. Inform Fitchburg grew out of NewVue Community's Public Education Stewards and works collaboratively with parents, schools, and agencies to inform the community on how we can all meaningfully engage in our children's education to ensure a better tomorrow.

On nine Saturday mornings, **Fitchburg Families First** conducted drive-by and walk-up events in the Museum's Elm Street parking lot to distribute food, personal hygiene products, grocery store and restaurant gift cards, winter clothing, toys for the holidays, school supplies, children's books, art supplies and art activities. Over 2,500 pandemic relief packages were shared over the course of the program.

Fitchburg Families First showed Fitchburg at its collaborative best, and involved in-kind and cash contributions, and hundreds of volunteer hours, from CENTRO, Elite Construction and Design, the Fitchburg Public Schools, Fitchburg State University, the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, Hollis Hills Farm, NewVue Communities, ReImagine North of Main, Staples of Leominster, TDI/ MassDevelopment, and others. Even our elected officials and their teams pitched in: State Senator John Cronin, State Representative Michael Kushmerek, Fitchburg Mayor Stephen DiNatale, and Fitchburg City Councilors Thomas Hughes and Andrew Van Hazinga. Special thanks to the Fitchburg Police Department, especially Lt. Jeffrey Howe and Officer Fred Lake, for helping to make each event run smoothly.

Fitchburg Families First was funded by a major grant from The Cathedral Fund.



Top
Caroline Collins and Luisa Fernandez, leaders of Inform Fitchburg.

Above
FAM staff and community volunteers distribute pandemic relief packages to families on a cold winter morning.

Total Annual Giving

Norcross Society

We are grateful to the members of the Norcross Society, our leadership recognition society for individuals who have contributed \$1,000 or more between July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

\$10,000 and above

Eleanor Briggs
Anna Clementi
Gale Simonds Hurd
Mary Levin Koch
Dr. and Mrs. Roderick Lewin
Dr. Anthony Terrana

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Martha and Peter Hurley
Susan Cunio Salem and James Salem
Albert Stone

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Annette and Thomas Bagley
Carolyn Birmingham
Achla Madan and Ashok Hingorany
Mike Shea and Toni Wilcox
Betty and Joseph Sylvia
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\$1,000 - \$2,499

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Annelisa Addante and Richard Brown, Jr.
Betsey Ansin
Ken Ansin
Holly Elissa Bruno
Linda and Joe Byrne
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Rob and Beth Favini
George and Lynne Fifield
Allen Fletcher
Deborah Hawkins
Eva and Terry Herndon
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Robert and Mary Beth Jokela
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Katy Harrison Ostroff
Nadine T. Price
Barry and Nancy Reinbold
Susan and Ron Roetzer
David and Pam Stone
Jessica Straus and David Berson

\$500-\$999

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Anne Randolph
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\$250-\$499

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Ellen Wetmore and Jeffrey Warmouth
Meg White

\$100-\$249

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George and Kathleen French
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Kristine Geils and William Knuff
Meera Gill and Solomon Marini

Sam Godin
Eben Goldman
John K. Grady
Simon and Nancy Gregory
Donald and Linda Gurney
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Linda and Philip Malone
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Total Annual Giving

\$100-\$249 Cont'd

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Maxwell Zaleski
Peter Zalewski
Melanie Zibit

Thank you also to the many members and friends who made contributions of up to \$99. We are grateful to all of our donors. Your generous support enabled us to achieve all of the great work represented in this report.

Gifts In Honor Of:

Peter Timms

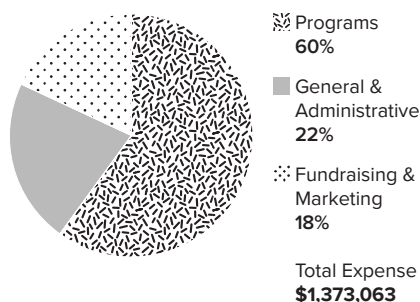
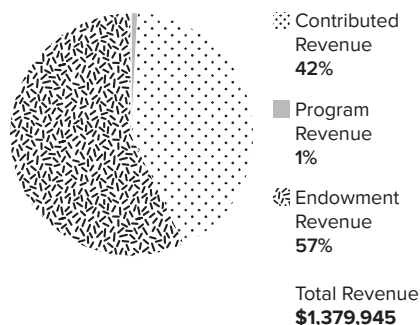
Gifts In Memory Of:

Moon Chin
Michael Dugas
Lea Goff
Maurice J. Toolin

Major Contributed Goods and Services

CENTRO, Inc.
Elite Construction and Design
Fitchburg TDI
Hollis Hills Farm
Ingrid's Gardens
North Bridge Networks
Staples

Operating Revenue and Expense as of June 30, 2021



Institutional Donors and Sponsors

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Bank of America Foundation
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Fitchburg State University
The Goldberg Foundation
The Klarman Family Foundation
Massachusetts Cultural Council
Geneviève McMillan and Reba Stewart Foundation

\$5,000-\$9,999

Douglas & Isabelle Crocker Foundation
Relmagine North of Main, with funding from the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts
Workers Credit Union

\$1,000-\$4,999

Achla Designs
Fitchburg Cultural Council
Gardner Cultural Council
Greater Worcester Community Foundation, Olive I. and Anthony A. Borgatti Jr. Donor Advised Fund
Highland Street Foundation
Omnova Foundation
Shea Family Fund

Up to \$1,000

Local Cultural Councils of Acton-Boxborough, Ashburnham, Auburn, Ayer, Bolton, Boylston, Chelmsford, Groton, Harvard, Hubbardston, Lancaster, Leominster, Littleton, Lunenburg, Paxton, Pepperell, Rutland, Shirley, Shrewsbury, Sterling, Stoneham, Templeton, Townsend, Westminster, and Winchendon.
Market Basket
Spinelli CPA, PC

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TPE Solutions, Inc.
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Winchendon School
Workers Credit Union

*New Members in 2021

Total Annual Giving

2021 Donors of Artworks to FAM's Permanent Collection

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Mary Borgatti
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Kevin Debbs
Shrenik Dedhia
Barbara DiRusso
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Chris Welles Feder
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Christopher Urban
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A. Carter Vaughn
Krishnaswamy Yeleswaram

The accuracy of this list is important to us. If we have printed your name incorrectly or omitted anyone, please notify our office so that we may correct our records.

2021 Staff

Steve Backholm, Facilities Manager
Mel Bailey, Janitor
Jean Borgatti, Consulting Curator for African, Oceanic, and Native American Art
Barbara Callahan, Collection Technician
Nick Capasso, Director
Linda Clicquenois, Assistant Manager, Visitor Services & Security
Aminadab "Charlie" Cruz, Jr., Collection Manager
Sheryl Demers, Business Manager
Ann Descoteaux, Director of Docents
Vanessa de Zorzi*, Marketing Manager
Laura Howick, Director of Education
Stephen Jareckie*, Consulting Curator for Photography
Rachael Kane*, Education Fellow
Jane Keough, Director of Corporate Membership
Mary McQuaid, Visitor Services & Security
Caitlin Mitchell*, Development Assistant and Corporate Program Installer
Jessie Olson, Membership and Events Manager
William (Bill) Parandes, Visitor Services & Security
Marjorie Rawle, Terrana Assistant Curator
Evelina Rodriguez, Bilingual Visitor Services Associate
Alan Saball*, Visitor Services & Security
Dylan Safford, Visitor Services & Security and Corporate Program Installer
Jennifer Sheppard, Clementi Family Manager of School Programs
Meryl Skolnick, Manager, Visitor Services & Security
Lauren Szumita, Curator
Jeannine Vallee*, Visitor Services & Security
Ingrid Wheeler, Visitor Services Associate
Kathryn (Katy) Wickline*, Visitor Services & Security
Rebecca Wright, Director of Development

*former staff

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Linda E. Byrne
Sharon Davi
Barbara Engel
Jane Epstein
Jason Parris Fitz-Gerald
Carol Hicks
Jessica Leger
Susan Leavy
Jane McFadden



2021 Docents Cont'd

Linda Norman
Sally Stone
Cindy Tonrey
Jeannine Vallee

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Evelis Cruz, Development Intern, University of Massachusetts, Lowell
Lauren Dorsey, Curatorial Intern, Dartmouth College
Joe Favini, Curatorial Intern, City University of New York
Jay Troy, Marketing Intern, Fitchburg State University
Heather Walker, Curatorial Intern
Evangeline Welch, Development Intern, Bryn Mawr College
Julia Wohlworth, Collections Intern, Tufts University
Maxwell Zaleski, Marketing Intern

FAM's 2021 Annual Report is made possible by a generous gift from Trustee Gale Simonds Hurd.

On the front cover (from left to right): Egan Wolford, Aniyah Forney, and Abbey Frias. Students from Fitchburg State University in FAM's **Moving Objects** exhibition. Their Document Design class, co-taught by FAM staff and Fitchburg State faculty, was involved in creating a video overview of FAM.

On the back cover: Participants in FAM's online interview program **Art Matters**: Archy LaSalle, Monique Guthrie, Imna Arroyo, Eugene Finney, Candice Ivy, Juan Sánchez, Willie Cole, Steve Locke, and Ruben Natal-San Miguel. **Art Matters**, hosted and produced by Terrana Assistant Curator Marjorie Rawle, was created as an online alternative to in-person gallery talks. This program is now broadcast on Fitchburg Access Television (FATV), has attracted a national audience on YouTube, and will continue post-pandemic. Watch the interview series at: fitchburgartmuseum.org/artmatters

Photography by: Steve Briggs, Norm Eggert, Vanessa De Zorzi, Charles Sternaimolo, Troy B. Thompson, and Maxwell Zaleski.
Design by: Maxwell Zaleski.



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Rachel Lopez
Resource Management, Inc.
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Fitchburg MA 01420-4303

FAM is for everyone. FAM es para todos.



Archy
LaSalle



Monique
Guthrie



Imna
Arroyo



Eugene
Finney



Candice
Ivy



Juan
Sánchez



Willie
Cole



Steve
Locke



Ruben
Natal-San
Miguel

Art Matters

Watch the video interviews at:
fitchburgartmuseum.org/artmatters

Above

Stills from the Art Matters interview
series featuring the voices of artists
and community members.



185 Elm St., Fitchburg, MA
fitchburgartmuseum.org
978.345.4207

Wed–Fri: 12pm–4pm
Sat–Sun: 11am–5pm
1st Thur of the month: 12pm–7pm

