

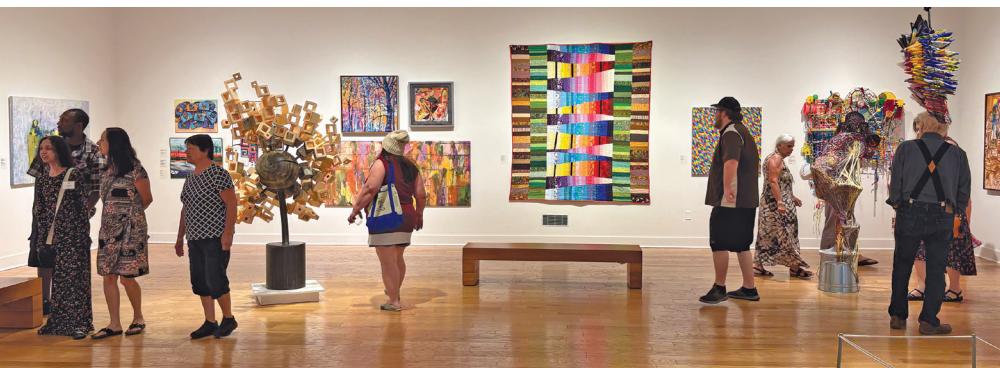
2025 Annual Report
and FAMily Album



Our Mission

The mission of the Fitchburg Art Museum is to inspire creativity and learning, and to contribute to the well-being of our diverse communities in Fitchburg, North Central Massachusetts, and New England.

To accomplish this mission, we organize exhibitions of the work of New England contemporary artists and artworks from our art historical collections, offer programs for learners of all ages, support public art projects, invite community participation and partnerships, and stimulate the creative economy – all in the spirit of inclusivity.



View from the 89th Regional Exhibition of Art & Craft opening reception.

Our Core Institutional Values

We believe in the transformative power of direct, personal engagement with art.

Art is a fundamental form of human intelligence, expression, communication, and the built environment; an essential component in the core development of children and in lifelong learning for adults; and a source of meaning and joy.

The arts are essential for healthy communities. FAM is a strong positive local social determinant of health, through our work in education, and community and economic development.

We believe that partnerships within our community are essential to our success. Working collaboratively with our partners, we share resources and decision-making, and we co-create programs.

FAM's Staff is a primary asset of this institution. We provide our Staff with the support, structure, and training to succeed within a compassionate and equitable workplace.

FAM's collections, exhibitions, and interpretive philosophy present unique educational opportunities to connect people with the past and the present, and to provide multiple cultural perspectives.

We work collaboratively with the artists of our time in New England, who need and deserve an exceptional venue for exhibition and exploration.

Museums provide safe physical, emotional, and cognitive spaces for personal transformation, learning, creativity, self-expression, healing, and connection with self and others.

Museums are essential institutions for promoting and sustaining democracy and a more just and equitable world for all people.

2025

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Ingrid Wheeler
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As of June 30, 2025

From the President of FAM

Welcome to the Fitchburg Art Museum's **2025 Annual Report**. Due to a whirlwind of activity, including welcoming new staff members, building on all the programs that are the hallmarks of our mission, and anticipating our Centennial celebration, this is our first Annual Report in a few years. So, it's time to catch up!

The last few years have witnessed the continued strength and growth of the Museum in every way, including fiscally, programmatically, and in community spirit. We are grateful for the inspired and tireless work of our devoted Staff, and it is all made possible by you - our Members and friends. We thank you for your continued support.

As will be abundantly obvious to anyone visiting the Museum recently, there has been a lot going on at FAM. The beautiful artists' community across Elm Street has opened its doors with great fanfare and is already fully occupied. We have undertaken extensive renewal and upgrade work to our physical campus, and we are eagerly looking forward to the opening of our Centennial exhibition in January 2026. This show promises to be one of the most exciting and spectacular exhibitions ever to have graced our galleries. I hope as you peruse this report you will get a sense of the excitement and buzz that pervades FAM as we get ready to embark upon our celebration of one hundred years of serving our community. We hope you will enjoy many of the events we are planning to mark this incredible milestone as we celebrate our past and look forward to our next century.

This past year also brought its share of sad news. We lost two of our most beloved Trustees with the passing of Toddy Martel and Susan Roetzer. Both were past Presidents who made immeasurable contributions to our institution. Their legacy will be forever cherished, and this **Annual Report** is dedicated to their memory.

On behalf of the Trustees of the Fitchburg Art Museum,

Nadine T. Price, President, Board of Trustees

Courtyard view of Douglas Kornfeld's **Thurston**.



Fitchburg Art Museum Board President Nadine T. Price and Director Nick Capasso.

From the Director of FAM

After a three-year hiatus, FAM is once again presenting our **Annual Report and Family Album**. During this time, we have continued to successfully deliver our mission of art, education, and community health and well-being, with partners from across our region and beyond. Our most significant achievement was the ratification of a new Strategic Plan for 2024–2028, including a revised Mission Statement and, for the first time, our Core Institutional Values (see opposite page). The full Strategic Plan can be found on FAM's website.

In 2023 and 2024, FAM fully replaced antiquated HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) systems throughout the four buildings of our 40,000-square-foot physical plant. The new system provides for greater control, flexibility, comfort, and safety for visitors, staff, and our Permanent Collection of over 8,000 artworks. We are proud to have received a 2024 MassSave Climate Leader Award, for FAM's "efforts in increasing energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the Commonwealth."

Our time and capacity were also spent contributing to the economic and community development of Fitchburg and North Central Massachusetts. In early 2025, the Fitchburg Arts Community opened to tenants (more on this on page 8). And in 2022, FAM was instrumental in winning Fitchburg a Creative Cities Designation from MassDevelopment's Transformative Development Initiative program. For two years, FAM led this effort which invested \$535,000 in local arts and culture infrastructure, programs, training, and leadership development. FAM's partnership work with the City of Fitchburg, NewVue Communities, Fitchburg State University, and others has attracted over \$200 million in arts and culture investment to Fitchburg over the last few years.

Now we begin preparations for the celebration of our Centennial! FAM was incorporated in December, 1925, and opened to the public in 1929, and we have been instrumental to the history, culture, and identity of our community ever since.

Many thanks to everyone who has made all this good work possible: our Staff, Trustees, Community Advisors, Individual and Corporate Members, volunteers, community partners, donors, visitors, and program participants - in short, our FAMILY.

Nick Capasso, Director





FAM Exhibitions

Over the past year, FAM continued to present stellar exhibitions of artworks both from our Permanent Collection, and by New England contemporary artists. All FAM exhibitions are organized in-house by FAM Curatorial Staff - in order to best focus on our collections and our community, we do not host traveling exhibitions.

Opposite, Top

In the summer of 2024, we launched our new season with a solo exhibition of the work of Walter looss, America's greatest living sports photographer. The show included over forty color images of professional athletes - several of which were published in **Sports Illustrated** magazine. The photographs were selected from FAM's extensive holdings of this artist's work.

Walter looss, Kevin Mitchell, San Francisco, CA, 1993 (detail), archival pigment print, Gift of Rajesh B. Patel, 2020.165.28

Opposite, Bottom Left

Contemporary Boston photographer Tara Sellios enjoyed her first museum solo exhibition at FAM, with her show **Ask Now The Beasts**.

Tara Sellios, **Messis No. 2** from the series **Ask Now the Beasts**, 2021, inkjet print from 8" x 10" negative, Courtesy of the Artist

Opposite, Bottom Right

In 2025, FAM organized the career retrospective exhibition of photographer Stephen DiRado, currently the leading contemporary artist in Central Massachusetts and long-time faculty at Clark University.

Stephen DiRado, **Bell Pond: Cheryl, Jamie and Michael, July 3, 1983**, printed 2024, pigment print, Courtesy of the Artist

Top Left

FESTIVAL, our first collection exhibition to celebrate our Centennial, brought together over 200 artworks from FAM's collection of African Art, chosen for their deep cultural and historical significance, as well as for their stunning visual qualities.

Luntu Artist, Bena Musenga Village, DRC, **Helmet Mask (kalengula)**, 20th century, raffia, feathers, Gift from the William E. Teel, 2009.57

Top Right

Rhode Island artist Bob Dilworth talks with families about his paintings during an artist workshop program for his exhibition, **When I Remembered Home**.

2024 - 2025

Exhibitions Opened

G.O.A.T.: The Sports Photography of Walter looss

Bob Dilworth: When I Remembered Home

Stephen DiRado, Better Together: Forty Years of Photographs

Tara Sellios | Ask Now the Beasts

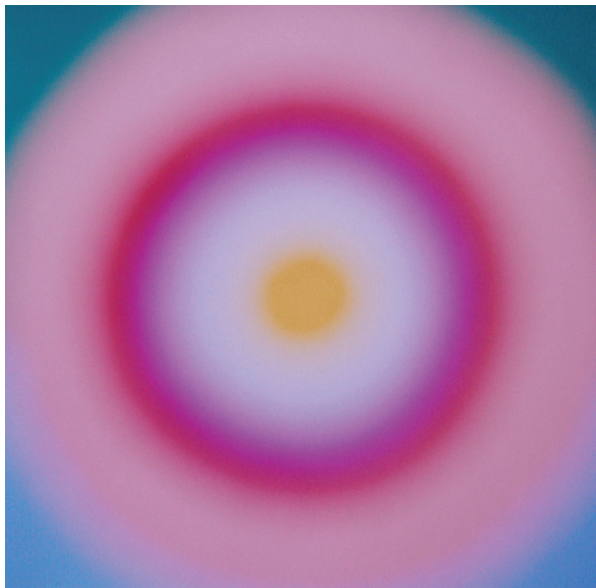
FESTIVAL: A Celebration of African Art at FAM

The 89th Regional Exhibition of Art & Craft

Anne Hopkins: Gathered, and Seaworthy Vessels

In the Community Gallery

The Aldrich Astronomical Society
 Applewild School
 ArtsWorcester
 Boys and Girls Club of Fitchburg and Leominster
 Fitchburg Public Schools
 LUK
 Material Girls Quilt Guild
 North County Land Trust



FAM Collection

In FY2025, FAM added fifty-four artworks to our core collections of American Art, African Art, and photography, with a special emphasis on artworks by African and African-American artists, and contemporary American photographers.

Recent acquisitions of African Art include a collection of African tribal arts, gifted by the late Simon Gregory and Family. Simon was a long-time FAM Community Advisor, and great supporter of our African Art collection. In addition, FAM Community Advisor Dr. Richard Ndi and Dr. Eric Mbunwe donated multiple objects from the ceremonial royal regalia of the Mbum People in their native Cameroon, and FAM Trustee Nadine “Toddy” Martel gifted several traditional Egyptian pictorial applique textiles. FAM also added to our collection of 21st-century African photography with the purchase of works by Rahima Gambo (Nigeria), Miora Rajaonary (Madagascar), and Ibrahima Thiam (Senegal).

In 2025, FAM acquired artworks by George Annan, bashexo, Lou Jones, and Fitchburg artist Digi Chivetta, all of whom participated in the group exhibition **Dialogues, Diasporas, and Detours through Africa**. This 2023 show was a collaboration with WHERE ARE ALL THE BLACK PEOPLE AT, a Boston-based collective of artists, educators, and activists devoted to increasing the representation of Black artists in museum collections.

FAM also received gifts of work by contemporary photographers Bill Armstrong, Stephen DiRado, Carlota Duarte, Yoav Horesh, and Richard Misrach.

Top Left
bashexo, **Egungun Masquerade**, 2023, fabric, natural fibers (mariwo/raffia), dimensions variable, Poppel Family Collection Fund
Image modified from a photo by Norm Eggert

Top Center
Bill Armstrong, **Mandala #463**, 2007, ed. 3/10, C-print, 10” x 10”, Gift of the Artist

Top Right
Yaure Artist (Ivory Coast), Face Mask, late 20th Century, wood, paint, fiber, 11 ¼” x 4 ¼” x 2 ½”, Gift of Simon Gregory and Family



Above
In 2015-16, Emily Mazzola served as FAM’s first Koch Curatorial Fellow. After completing her Ph.D. in Art History at the University of Pittsburgh, where she studied American Art and Museology, she returned to become our new Curator in early 2024.



FAM Education

In 2025, FAM Director of Education Susan Diachisin and Manager of Programs Suzanne Hauerstein focused on strengthening our institutional partnerships and co-creating high-impact programs with the Fitchburg Public Schools (FPS) and Fitchburg State University (FSU). FPS programs included our Arts-Based After-School Program for middle-school students, Summer Camp at FAM, and exhibition tours for all 4th- and 7th-grade students, and professional development sessions for teachers. At FSU, FAM educators worked with students in the Education Program, and hosted a capstone intern. FAM curators co-taught Communications/Media classes in which FSU students created and published exhibition catalogues and marketing collateral for the Museum as part of a twelve-year ongoing collaboration. And, in 2025, FSU's new President, Dr. Donna Hodge, joined FAM's governing Board of Trustees.

In addition to this partnership work, our Education Department conducted tours and educational activities for students from Clark University, Mount Wachusett Community College, the Rhode Island School of Design, the Audre Lorde Transformative Arts School, St. Bernard's Elementary School, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, and several homeschool groups. FAM educators also coordinated our Community Gallery shows, Learning Lounges, artist and curator talks, family programs, Creative Discoveries (art therapy for people in recovery, with the Worcester County Sheriff's Department), and Hidden Treasures, a special program for people with memory loss and their caregivers.

Top Left

During a professional development program, Fitchburg Public Schools art faculty and Fitchburg State University education students watch a demonstration by FAM exhibiting artist Tara Sellios.

Top Right

Fitchburg Public Schools 21st Century Program students make art in the FAM After School Program in our Art Place on Elm Studio, with guest artist Heather Barros.

Right

Participants in the Hidden Treasures program for seniors with memory loss enjoy the **89th Regional Exhibition of Art & Craft** with FAM Museum Guide Katy Ostroff.





Featured Partner: NewVue Communities

On January 11, 2013, barely a month after Nick Capasso became Director of the Fitchburg Art Museum, Marc Dohan, Executive Director of NewVue Communities (then, the Twin Cities Community Development Corporation) came to FAM to pitch the idea of forming a partnership to create artist preference affordable housing in three buildings across the street from FAM: the B.F. Brown Middle School (1923), the Fitchburg City Stable (1889), and the Fitchburg Academy - more recently, "The Annex" (1869) – where FAM founder Eleanor Norcross had both attended and taught high school.

Twelve years later, the Fitchburg Arts Community is complete, as tenants began moving into one, two, and three-bedroom units in early 2025. Together, FAM and NewVue rescued three beautiful historical buildings from demolition, provided sixty-eight units of high-quality housing during a national housing crisis, put three buildings on the municipal tax rolls for the first time, stabilized the Elm Street neighborhood and its property values, and planted a big flag in Fitchburg that proclaims: "Creative Economy Welcome Here!"

NewVue took the lead on this project as developer, and did all the heavy lifting: property acquisition, fundraising, financing, hiring architects, contractors, and property managers, and attending to a host of real estate and construction details that no museum could manage. FAM played a supporting role, assisting with local education and advocacy, research, design of workspaces and artist amenities, marketing, and fundraising. And the Museum is now committed to working with tenants to help strengthen the creative community that they are now building.

Thanks to our strategic partnership, NewVue Communities and the Fitchburg Art Museum have made a major contribution to our community. The creation of the Fitchburg Arts Community would have been utterly impossible without our strong, cooperative relationship, and without the help of other partners including the City of Fitchburg, Fitchburg State University, the Working Cities Challenge of the Federal Reserve Bank in Boston, ReImagine North of Main, The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, MassDevelopment's Transformative District Initiative, the Barr Foundation, the Klarman Family Foundation, and many others.



Above

Marc Dohan, Executive Director of NewVue Communities

Top Left

Fitchburg Arts Community, with the former B.F. Brown Middle School and Fitchburg City Stable

Top Right

Fitchburg Arts Community, interior, former B.F. Brown Middle School

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, 2024 - June 30, 2025.

\$10,000 and above

Eleanor Briggs
Gale Simonds Hurd
Mary Levin Koch
Anthony Terrana

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Anonymous
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Linda and Joe Byrnes
Anna Clementi
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Thomas and Ellen DiConza
George Duncan
Allen Fletcher and Dolly Vasquez
Eva Herndon
William B. Hurd
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Meera Gill
Donna and Dustin Hodge
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Peter Laytin and Paula Callanan
Nancy Rossi Moses
Kathleen O'Hara
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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.

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.



Total Annual Giving

Gifts In Memory Of

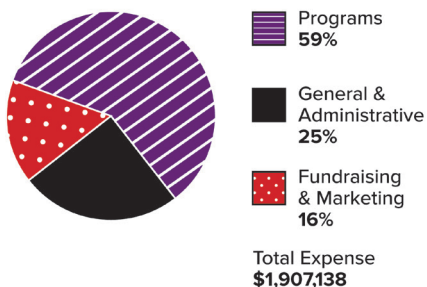
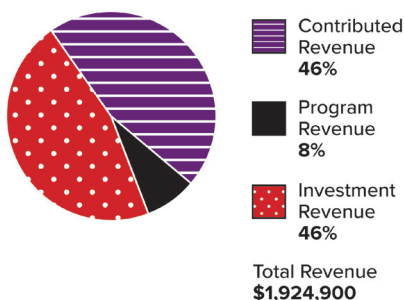
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Nadine "Toddy" Martel
Susan Roetzer

Major Contributed Goods and Services

Lucy Abisalih
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Gallery at 759 Main
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Research Results, Inc.
Rockland Trust
Joseph Sylvia
Ingrid's Gardens
Worcester Red Sox



Operating Revenue and Expense as of June 30, 2025



Institutional Donors, Sponsors, and Special Gifts

\$10,000 and above

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\$5,000-\$9,999

Shea Family Charitable Fund
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North Central MA Chamber of Commerce
North County Land Trust
OPCO Laboratory, Inc.
Open Sky Community Services
Phoenix Park Lexvest Group
Protective Services, Inc.



Total Annual Giving

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2025 Donors of Artworks to FAM's Permanent Collection

Bill Armstrong
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Stephen DiRado
Helen Donis-Keller
Kate Ezra
Simon Gregory and Family
Yoav Horesh
Nadine Martel
Dr. Richard Ndi and Dr. Eric Mbunwe
Ari and Emily Press
Dylan Safford
Elizabeth Van Gelder

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.



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Colleen Chambers, Visitor Services Lead
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Susan Diachisin, Director of Education
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Eugene Finney, Interim Facilities Manager*
Wendy Ham, Visitor Services & Security
Sarah Harper, Terry and Eva Herndon Assistant Curator
Suzanne Hauerstein, Manager of Education Programs
Jade Kendrick, Assistant Manager, Visitor Services & Security
Jay Knox, Business Manager
Rose Liang, Visitor Services & Security
Emily Mazzola, Curator
Mary McQuaid, Visitor Services & Security
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Dylan Safford, Preparator*
Meryl Skolnick, Manager, Visitor Services & Security*
Ingrid Wheeler, Visitor Services Associate
Rebecca Wright, Deputy Director for Advancement and Administration
Maxwell Zaleski, Marketing Associate

*Former Staff

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Shengzhirui Cui, Development Intern, Boston University
Heather Barros, Education Volunteer

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Grace Teng*
Cindy Tonrey

*Former Museum Guides



FAM's **2025 Annual Report** is made possible by a generous gift from Trustee Gale Simonds Hurd.

On the front cover:

Artist Stephen DiRado and attendees at the opening reception for **Stephen DiRado: Better Together: Forty Years of Photographs**

Cover photograph: Steven King / Clark University
Photography by: Susan Diachisin, Norm Eggert, Sarah Harper, Suzanne Hauerstein, Andrea Seward, and Rebecca Wright
Design by: Maxwell Zaleski / Fitchburg Art Museum



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In Memoriam



Nadine "Toddy" Martel and Susan Roetzer

The Fitchburg Art Museum **2025 Annual Report and FAMily Album** is dedicated to the memory of two beloved FAMily members who passed away this year. Nadine "Toddy" Martel served on the Museum's Board of Trustees for over sixty years, chaired our Collection Committee for decades, and held the office of President twice, once during the campaign that built the Harlan K. and Elsie D. Simonds Building. Susan Roetzer served on the Board for over twenty years, and attended more FAM committee meetings than anyone could count. During her unprecedented five-year term as President, she successfully steered FAM through the COVID-19 pandemic and was a champion for equity and racial justice at FAM.

FAM es para todos. **FAM** is for everyone.



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

