



STRATEGIC PLAN 2024

N M S U **ART
MUSEUM**



NMSU Land Acknowledgement Statement

New Mexico State University honors Native American knowledges and worldviews based on intimate relationships to the natural world. The genesis of the Southwest Indigenous Peoples, including the Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache, established their guardianship of the lands now occupied by New Mexico State University. As the State's Land-Grant University, we acknowledge and respect the sovereign Indian Nations and Indigenous Peoples. We pledge to have a meaningful and respectful relationship with the sovereign Indian Nations, Indigenous communities, and Native American Peoples within the institution.

Sponsor Credit

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Cover Image Credit

Top (left to right): 1. Celia Álvarez Munoz: Breaking the Binding. Installation view at NMSU Art Museum. Image courtesy of Jesus Hernandez Ramirez; 2. Cara Despain: Specter New Mexico. Installation view at NMSU Art Museum. Image Courtesy of Byron Flesher; 3. Joey Fauerso: Wait for It. Installation view at NMSU Art Museum. Image courtesy of Marcus Chormicle; 4. Yvette Mayorga. Image courtesy of Mercedes Zapata.

Bottom (left to right): 1. Xochi Solis, A tourist in a dream, 2022, Gouache, acrylic, house latex paint, colored pencil, Dura-lar film, digitally printed Epson paper, hand-marbled paper, colored paper, handmade paper, found images from books and magazines, artist tape, brad nails, and rosary nylon cord. Courtesy of the artist. Image courtesy of Marcus Chormicle; 2. Video Still from Stages of Tectonic Blackness: Blackdom, Conceived and Performed by Miles Tokunow with collaborators Nikesha Breeze, Lazarus Nance Letcher, and MK, 2021. Courtesy of the NMSU Permanent Art Collection; 3. Contemporary Ex-Votos: Devotion Beyond Medium. Installation view at NMSU Art Museum. Image Courtesy of Marcus Chormicle.

SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New Mexico State University Art Museum (UAM) in Las Cruces, New Mexico, is proud to present this Strategic Plan, affirming its deep commitment to being a valuable asset in service to the NMSU campus community, including students, staff and faculty, as well as the broader regional communities of Las Cruces and beyond.

Originating as a gallery in 1974, the UAM has undergone significant development over past decades, culminating in its current status as a state-of-the-art museum strategically positioned on University Avenue at the entrance to the NMSU campus. Welcoming all through its doors, the placement of the UAM symbolizes its dedication to bridging connections between the University and the wider community.

Under the leadership of Director Marisa Sage, who assumed her role in 2014, she and her team have expanded the UAM significantly, marked by a dedicated effort to amplify the voices of marginalized artists and those often underrepresented in the art landscape. Nationally recognized, the UAM stands out for its commitment to creating impactful projects with the trust and commitment of the diverse artists and community members they partner with. This initiative aims to ensure that individuals from all backgrounds and cultures can see themselves and their stories reflected and represented within the Museum context.

As a university museum, the UAM has a longstanding commitment to supporting University faculty and students. This commitment is evident through professional internships, work-study opportunities and providing access to collections tied to the curriculum. Notably, the UAM's dedication to increasing access to the celebrated Retablo and contemporary art collections has been consistently addressed with plans to expand this effort. Two of the highest priorities of this Plan link to achieving long-term financial stability and securing the right blend of professional staff to undertake the demands and work of the Museum.

The central tenet of the planning process involved ensuring that the mission, vision, and values of the UAM align with its current commitments, ethos, and future aspirations. This thorough and thoughtful process has given rise to a revised mission as the foundational core of this comprehensive Strategic Plan. On the following page is the full Strategic Framework including the new mission, vision, values, and guiding principles.

The mission is:

The New Mexico State University Art Museum intersects art, research, and community engaged practices to reimagine the power of our place.

In support of the planning process and assessment of the operations and future aspirations of UAM, several key Goals were identified. The Goals are:

Goal 1: Expand University + Community Engagement

Goal 2: Strengthen Financial Viability

Goal 3: Enhance Operational Infrastructure

Goal 4: Advance Collections Stewardship + Research

With the adoption of this Strategic Plan much of the work begins in earnest. This is a shared effort of collaborative work across the University and regional communities to integrate the Museum into the vitality of life at NMSU and in Las Cruces.



Gail Anderson, President
Gail Anderson & Associates
Strategic Planning Facilitator

MISSION, VISION + VALUES

Mission

The New Mexico State University Art Museum intersects art, research, and community engaged practices to reimagine the power of our place

Vision

The University Art Museum envisions a world where art, artists, and creative expression are integral to a holistic understanding of an equitable society

Values

The University Art Museum of NMSU staff value:

- Our place within the University, Las Cruces, and the Borderlands
- Inclusion and diversity of people, cultures, and identities
- Representation and support of marginalized artists
- Unexpected experiences with art, artists, and contemporary issues
- Mobility for every NMSU student on their educational journey
- Intentionality, compassion, and joy in our work
- Public access to explore and learn about our collections
- Mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships
- Courage and informed risk-taking
- Ethically and financially sustainable operations

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These Guiding Principles advance the UAM mission all year-long. The UAM Staff:

Leads with compassion and intentionality by:

- Entrusting artists to express their vision and interpretation of contemporary realities
- Designing public engagement experiences incorporating the realities and hopes of our communities

Elevates the arts in research and curriculum within NMSU by:

- Enhancing the student educational experience with exposure to NMSU Permanent Art Collection and artists
- Providing opportunities for students to become artists and museum professionals

Supports NMSU commitment to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion by:

- Addressing diversity and accessibility as we plan, develop, and implement our work
- Undertaking ongoing reflection and training to increase our sensitivity and awareness

Commits to advancing the work of marginalized artists and lessening the obstacles they face in an inequitable society by:

- Supporting them through the creation of their work and producing exhibitions that reflect their visions
- Undertaking the research, exhibition development, and acquisition of their work

Serves as a bridge to our community by:

- Offering dynamic programs, exhibitions, and art that are timely, accessible, and engaging
- Welcoming all to experience emerging and established artists from here and across the world

Builds capacity in sustainable ways by:

- Ensuring we have the resources and staff to undertake significant projects
- Supporting the well-being and professional growth of our staff and student interns

Embodies innovative and responsible museum operations by:

- Implementing nationally recognized museum standards and best practices
- Collecting what we can properly steward

Upholds financial responsibilities and accountability by:

- Leveraging resources to maximize impact of programming for our greater community
- Growing at a rate we can sustain

ELEMENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY

These essential qualities of sustainability were drafted during UAM's October 2023 retreat. These elements of organizational sustainability are referenced throughout the Plan including Guiding Principles, Outcome Measurements, and the four Goals. These elements are aspirational and when achieved comprise a sustainable model for UAM.

NMSU leadership recognizes and celebrates the role of UAM and its work to advance the University educational mission with:

- Meaningful and effective support for faculty and students
- Advancement of all 6 LEADS 2025 goals for NMSU
- Student enrichment of their college experience including preparation to enter the museum workforce
- Regard for how UAM can enhance curriculum across departments in ways that suit the goals and aims of other educational priorities

Diverse engagement with UAM from NMSU and the broader community and region with:

- Efforts that engage, expand, and reflect the diversity of the NMSU and greater region
- Faculty and student teaching aligns with broader goals
- Higher visibility within NM, the Borderlands, nationally, and internationally

Financial sustainability as evidenced by:

- NMSU support for UAM annually with a consistent baseline budget: 100% operations and 50% programming including support for a contract grant writer
- Ongoing support through external fundraising and grant writing to augment NMSU appropriations

Coordinated work with key NMSU departments evidenced by:

- Integrated and coordinated efforts with the Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity (OEID) efforts within NMSU
- Clear procedures with HR, facilities, finance, etc. so UAM can participate in a way that is supportive and positive with key colleagues and departments
- Ongoing clarification and collaboration with the Department of Art that enhances the Goals and work of both entities

A healthy right-sized staff to advance the mission, vision, and values of UAM at NMSU supported by:

- Clear roles and responsibilities for all staff (FT and PT) and student interns
- An organizational structure that aligns with the scope of activities of UAM
- Institutionalized staff positions to ensure the Museum's capacity to sustain museum standards and excellence
- Sharing support positions among NMSU museums and collections
- Succession plans for key staff roles

An organizational culture that defines and outlines the efficiencies, ethical strategies, and ways of working that:

- Use the Plan and its tools as our road map and compass for all we do
- Reflect the guiding principles of how UAM does its work
- Operate with strategic Goals and decision-making that includes saying no to requests when staff and financial capacity, alignment with current priorities, and realities necessitate such a response

Ongoing responsible care and stewardship for UAM collections by:

- Adhering to standards of the American Alliance of Museums for collection management and care, accessibility, conservation, and educational purposes
- Operating with intentional growth and use of collections that supports the mission and vision and expand the greater impact of retable, contemporary art, and collection holdings

GOALS

INTRODUCTION TO GOALS

These four Goals form the pillars of work that will be undertaken to advance the UAM Plan in the coming years. Each goal encompasses a defined area of effort yet all the Goals interrelate and influence each other. Specific objectives are defined in each goal with a timeline to guide and prioritize the work that will be undertaken.

Goal 1: Expand University + Community Engagement

Central to this Plan is the enhancement of participation across NMSU in the distinctive art experiences provided by UAM. Whether it be faculty and students engaging with an exhibition or utilizing an object from the collection for an art history class, the Museum staff will persist in their efforts to achieve deeper integration into the curriculum, foster student internships, and encourage overall student involvement. The community has shown enthusiasm in their participation, and these efforts will be sustained and expanded upon. Underpinning this objective is the dedication of Museum staff to advance diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) in collaboration with NMSU LEADS 2025 Goal 6.

Goal 2: Strengthen Financial Viability

The UAM has been a part of NMSU since the 1970s; however, it wasn't until the recent inauguration of a new, museum-quality facility that the full cost of operations became apparent. Despite having a small staff, UAM consistently produces noteworthy exhibitions and programs, garnering national recognition for their informed risk-taking and innovation. Currently, the budget relies on a modest allocation from NMSU and the Director's proactive fundraising efforts. While fundraising initiatives will persist, the aspiration is that, in the upcoming years, the overall budget will more accurately reflect the institution's actual needs. This will be achieved through an increase in annual NMSU support and continued fundraising efforts, strategically coordinated with the NMSU Foundation and the Office of Research, Creativity, and Economic Development (RCED).

Goal 3: Enhance Operational Infrastructure

This goal focuses on shoring up several key aspects of operations to ensure adherence to national museum standards of operation. While Museum leadership is committed to this standard there are specific areas that require attention and coordination with other NMSU departments. Top of the list is securing the core staff positions critical to operating the Museum. Other areas to address vary from building improvements and exterior projects to provide ability for receiving and sending shipments, etc.

Goal 4: Advance Collection Stewardship + Research

UAM has dedicated itself to the supervision and preservation of its collections, aligning with national museum standards. This Goal's emphasis is on various behind-the-scenes operations, including the ongoing digitization of the NMSU Permanent Art Collection. To ensure optimal documentation and management, a top priority involves reviewing and updating specific policies related to collections. These revised policies will, in turn, serve as valuable inputs for updating the NMSU Administrative Rules and Procedures. UAM remains unwavering in its commitment to expanding access to the collections in classrooms and for study purposes, as well as, facilitating research in support of NMSU curriculum.

APPENDIX D: STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The following highlights the key steps undertaken during the strategic planning process at the UAM. The process was facilitated by Gail Anderson & Associates (GA&A).

Process Begins (June 2023)

- Held first meeting with Director to lay out planning process
- Reviewed institutional documents
- Prepared protocol for confidential interviews

Institutional Assessment (July – September 2023)

- Held confidential interviews with current Museum staff, New Mexico State University administration & faculty, donors, students, business professionals, and community members
- Developed and administered staff survey
- Prepared institutional profile & history (UAM Staff developed)
- Researched operations of 11 academic museums and local and regional museums

Strategic Planning Retreat (October 2023)

- Reviewed and discussed findings from interviews and review of institutional documents
- Presented industry trends and issues facing museums in 21st century
- Reviewed information on local and state demographics and cultural landscape
- Assessed UAM's strengths and areas for growth
- Outlined initial thinking on mission, vision, values, and guiding principles with staff
- Identified four initiative areas and working group members

Staff Work Sessions (November – December 2023)

- Facilitated working groups around four Goals and tenets of organizational culture
- Facilitated sessions to define mission, vision, values, and guiding principles
- Developed supporting tools to assist in the use of the Plan

Review and Final Approval of Plan (February 2024)

- Facilitated review of the Plan with staff
- Discussed implementation strategies for ongoing use and adjustments over times
- Adoption of the 2024 – 2027 Plan

APPENDIX E: GUIDELINES FOR USING THIS PLAN

With the adoption of this Plan, the UAM staff are committed to advance the core commitments, values, and ideology represented in this Plan. As the main management tool for the organization, all efforts undertaken must relate back to this document, and be implemented with steady rigor and new habits. The Plan is a blend of short-term and long-term efforts. It is a living document and meant to be reviewed and revised annually.

It is important to pause and celebrate positive gains large and small, and to be open to changes that need to be made along the way. Remain agile-yet-dogged in staying true to the mission, vision, and values, advancing the guiding principles and Goals in this Plan, and commit to learning and adopting new ways of working. Unexpected challenges and opportunities will arise throughout each year, demanding scrutiny and careful review to determine what the best course of action will be, given that the budget and annual priorities have already been adopted. In many cases, another priority may need to be set aside to make room for an alternate activity. This requires a blend of assessing gains, costs, and potential impact with each decision. It is also fundamentally about being flexible, self-reflective, and clear about the long view.

Incorporate annual retreats to pause and reflect on how the staff did advancing the Plan. Appraise the outcome measurement results in advance of the retreat to provide concrete evidence for review. Reflect on the learning moments during the past year, and as appropriate, affirm or adjust the priorities for the coming year including making any revisions to the outcome measurements.

These guidelines are designed to help the Director, staff, work study students, and undergraduate and graduate assistants, and volunteers uphold their roles in support of the Plan, support the mission, vision, values, and guiding principles, commitments for the future, and embrace the new ways of working as an integrated institution and operation striving for equity and inclusion and meaningful impact in the changing world.

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEWEES + PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

The following NMSU, museum staff, and community members participated in and or were interviewed through the strategic planning process from Summer 2023 through Winter 2024. The names and titles below reflect their position and involvement at that time.

Museum Staff

Keslee Bennett, *Assistant Preparator*

Eva Gabriella Flynn, *Education & Outreach Coordinator*

Zhanea Gillespie, *Web Designer*

Jesus Hernandez Ramirez, *Graphic Designer*

Jasmine Herrera, *Art Museum Coordinator*

Yasmine Jahangiri, *Work-Study*

David Jones, *Exhibitions Coordinator*

Olivia Juedeman, *Graduate Assistant*

Marisa Sage, *Director*

Courtney Uldrich, *Collections Curator*

NMSU Administration, Foundation, Faculty + Staff

Brita d' Agostino, *Associate Professor of Graphic Design, Dept. of Art*

Lucille Casas, *Business Affairs Officer, College of Art & Sciences*

Melissa Chavira, *Executive Director of Marketing, Web and Brand Management*

Dr. Luis Cifuentes, *Vice President, Research, Creativity and Economic Development*

Joshua R. Clark, *Assistant Professor of Ceramics, Dept. of Art*

Craig Cully, *Associate Professor of Painting, Dept. of Art*

Diana Curran, *Sr Director of Development, NMSU Foundation*

Ammu Devasthali, *Chair, Board of Regents*

Motoko Furuhashi, *Associate Professor of Metals, Dept. of Art*

Dr. Margaret Goehring, *Department Head & Associate Professor of Art History, Dept. of Art*

Dr. Jay Gogue, *Interim President, NMSU*

Katherine Harrison-Rogers, *University Planner*

Bree Lamb, *Assistant Professor of Photography, Dept. of Art*

Allison Layfield, *Sr Proposal Development Specialist, RCED*

Dr. Rio C. López, *Director, Chicano Programs, Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity*

Stacey MacDonnell, *Interim Vice President of Development, NMSU Foundation*

Dylan McDonald, *Assistant Professor, Archives, and Special Collections*

Silvia Marinas-Feliner, *College Assistant Professor, Director, Museum Conservation Program*

Dr. Enrico Pontelli, *Dean, College of Arts and Sciences*

Cecil Rose, *Director, Black Programs, Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity*

Carissa Samaniego, *Assistant Professor of Sculpture, Dept. of Art*

Dr. Teresa María Linda Scholz, *Vice President, Office of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity*

Dr. Alan R. Shoho, *Provost and Chief Academic Officer*

Dr. Michèle Shuster, *Associate Dean, Research, College of Arts & Sciences*

David H. Strong, *Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer, NMSU Foundation*

Rebecca Smith, *Student Program Coordinator, Dept. of Art*
Polly Wagner, *Executive Director, Environmental Health Safety
& Risk Management*

Dr. Laura Ahn Williams, *Associate Professor, Director, Gender
& Sexuality Studies*

Grantors + Donors

Carl D. Thoma, *Co-founder and President, Carl & Marilyn Thoma Foundation*
Holly Harrison, *Director, Carl & Marilyn Thoma Foundation*
Dr. Terra Winter, *President and Chief Executive Officer, Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico*
Sandy Zane, *Owner, Form & Concept Gallery*

Museum Professionals

Kerry Doyle, *Director, UTEP Rubin Center for the Visual Arts*
Arif Khan, *Director, UNM Art Museum*
Jennifer McClung, *Acting Exhibit Manager/Exhibit Curator, Las Cruces Museum System*
Aaron Wilder, *Curator of Collections and Exhibitions, Roswell Museum of Art*

Community Members

Nikesha Breeze, *Artist*
Karen Conley, *Artist*
Marcus Chormicle, *Artist*
Joey Fauerso, *Artist*
Joseph Flores, *Content Specialist K-12 Fine Arts, Las Cruces Public Schools*
Kasandra A. Gandara, *Mayor Pro-tem*
Betty Hase, *Artist*
Connie Hines
Paul Hallsted, *Executive Director, New Mexico American Choral Directors Association*
Penny Peace, *Gallery Manager, Doña Ana Arts Council*
Larry Bob Phillips, *Artist, RAiR Program Director*
Dr. Emmanuel Ortega, *Curator, Marilyn Thoma Scholar in Art of the Spanish Americas, Assistant Professor, University of Illinois, Chicago*
Nan Rubin, *KTAL Radio*
Araceli Solis, *Executive Director, Doña Ana Arts Council*
Lea Wise-Surguy, *Executive Director, Cruces Creatives*