

FACT SHEET

OVERVIEW

The National Museum of Women in the Arts ([NMWA](http://nmwa.org)) is the first museum in the world solely dedicated to championing women through the arts. With its collections, exhibitions, programs, and online content, the museum inspires dynamic exchanges about art and ideas. NMWA advocates for better representation of women artists and serves as a vital center for thought leadership, community engagement, and social change. NMWA addresses the gender imbalance in the presentation of art by bringing to light important women artists of the past while promoting great women artists working today.

LOCATION

NMWA is located at 1250 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005. For more information, call 202-783-5000 or visit nmwa.org.

HOURS

The museum building is currently closed for a [major renovation](#) with plans to reopen in late 2023.

COLLECTION

NMWA's collections feature more than 5,500 works from the 16th century to today created by more than 1,000 artists. Displayed according to key themes, the on-site presentation emphasizes connections between historical and contemporary art. The collections encompass work in many mediums, featuring paintings by Frida Kahlo, Lee Krasner, Berthe Morisot, Faith Ringgold, Amy Sherald, Alma Woodsey Thomas, Suzanne Valadon, and Élisabeth Louise Vigée-LeBrun; sculpture by Magdalena Abakanowicz, Sarah Bernhardt, Chakaia Booker, Louise Bourgeois, Judy Chicago, Dorothy Dehner, Barbara Hepworth, and Louise Nevelson; drawings and works on paper by Mary Cassatt, Elizabeth Catlett, Käthe Kollwitz, and Maria Sibylla Merian; photographs by Louise Dahl-Wolfe, Lalla Essaydi, Nan Goldin, and Gertrude Käsebier; and videos by Dara Birnbaum, Mwangi Hutter, and Pipilotti Rist.

EXHIBITIONS

The museum has presented more than 300 exhibitions showcasing the creative contributions of women artists from around the world. Highlights include *The Magic of Remedios Varo* (2000); *An Imperial*

Collection: Women Artists from the State Hermitage Museum (2003); Nordic Cool: Hot Women Designers (2004); Berthe Morisot: An Impressionist and Her Circle (2005); Dreaming Their Way: Australian Aboriginal Women (2006); Italian Women Artists from Renaissance to Baroque (2007); Fashion Forward: Photographs by Louise Dahl-Wolfe (2009); Lois Mailou Jones: A Life in Vibrant Color (2010); The Guerrilla Girls Talk Back (2011); Royalists to Romantics: Women Artists from the Louvre, Versailles, and Other French National Collections (2012); Women Who Rock: Vision, Passion, Power (2012); American People, Black Light: Faith Ringgold's Paintings of the 1960s (2013); Picturing Mary: Woman, Mother, Idea (2014); She Who Tells a Story: Women Photographers from Iran and the Arab World (2016); Magnetic Fields: Expanding American Abstraction, 1960s to Today (2017); Women House (2018); and Sonya Clark: Tatter, Bristle, and Mend (2021).

EDUCATION

To educate the public about women's artistic accomplishments, the museum presents programs for all age groups, engaging visitors with hands-on workshops, conversations with artists, weekly gallery talks, art history lectures, and tours. Intergenerational programs and tours for adults, youth, and families emphasize active learning. NMWA's signature Art, Books, and Creativity (ABC) initiative is a model for integrating the visual arts into the core curriculum of schools. ABC reaches local and national school audiences through annual ABC Teacher Institutes and free web-based resources.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Women, Arts, and Social Change (WASC) is an acclaimed public programs initiative that highlights the power of women and the arts as catalysts for change. These programs convene women from a range of disciplines whose socially conscious ideas are reshaping lives and economies, engaging communities, and empowering women. Fresh Talk, the initiative's signature program series, features cause-driven conversations with artists, designers, activists, entrepreneurs, social innovators, and others. WASC also features Cultural Capital programs, collaborative partnerships with leading D.C.-area organizations that build community and foster new audiences.

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

The museum's website and blog, *Broad Strokes*, inform visitors about women artists in the collections, explore our exhibitions in greater detail, and provide vital information about gender disparity in the arts. The @WomenInTheArts social media channels on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and

Instagram amplify the museum's collection, programs, publications, and advocacy by connecting with global audiences. The award-winning #5WomenArtists campaign raises awareness about gender equity issues in the arts and has initiated tangible, real-world impacts for artists and arts organizations around the world.

LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTER

With 18,500 books and print resources, as well as a diverse collection of rare and unique items, including artists' books and zines, the Betty Boyd Dettre Library and Research Center facilitates scholarship on historical and contemporary women artists. Archival collections include the Judy Chicago Visual Archive, comprising photographs, slides, negatives, and printed ephemera; correspondence from Frida Kahlo; drawings by Doris Lee; the palette and brush of Eulabee Dix; and the museum's own institutional archives. The library also creates rotating exhibitions showcasing its collections and providing opportunities to discover and interpret primary source material.

MEMBERSHIP

NMWA's 13,000 supporters represent all 50 U.S. states and 25 other countries, including France, Australia, Chile, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. While many supporters hail from Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia, other states with large membership bases include California, New York, Florida, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Texas, and Illinois. Benefits of NMWA membership include unlimited free admission, exclusive events, a subscription to *Women in the Arts* magazine, and more.

OUTREACH COMMITTEES

In 1984, the museum created its network of national and international committees. NMWA currently has 28 outreach committees with more than 3,000 dedicated members in the United States and around the world. The museum continues to expand its network with new groups. These global committees spread the museum's mission, advocate for regional women artists, and serve as NMWA ambassadors. The *Women to Watch* exhibition series, presented every two to three years, features emerging or underrepresented artists from the states and countries in which the museum has committees.

FUNDING

NMWA is a private, not-for-profit organization that is funded through memberships, individual contributions, foundation grants, corporate sponsorships, government grants, facility rentals, and retail sales.

NMWA's FY20 annual budget was \$10 million, and it has an endowment of \$65.7 million.

HISTORY

On a trip to Europe, Wilhelmina Cole Holladay (1922–2021) and her husband, Wallace F. Holladay, admired a 17th-century still life by Flemish painter Clara Peeters. The Holladays sought information on Peeters, but found that the definitive art history text, H. W. Janson's *History of Art*, made no reference to her—or any other female artist. Inspired to show women's contributions to the history of art, the Holladays began collecting works by women artists, establishing what would become the core of the museum's holdings. NMWA was incorporated in 1981 as a private, nonprofit museum and opened its doors to the public on April 7, 1987.

BUILDING

Initially designed by the architecture firm Wood, Donn & Deming, the museum's 1908 Classical Revival style building was constructed in 1908 as a temple for the Masons, an organization that did not allow women members. The 78,810-square-foot main building is listed on the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites and the National Register of Historic Places. The exterior façade incorporates Tuscan and Mediterranean design elements, in addition to Masonic symbolism. In 1983, the museum purchased the building and, after extensive renovations, it opened on April 7, 1987. In 1993, the museum purchased 5,300 square feet of adjacent property, and, following further renovation, the Elisabeth A. Kasser Wing opened in 1997, making the entire facility 84,110 square feet. In 2021, the museum began its first major renovation since its opening, which will expand gallery space, create a new Learning Commons, and increase accessibility. The building renovation will last approximately two years, during which time the building is closed to the public. The anticipated opening is fall 2023.

MUSEUM SHOP

The Museum Shop offers merchandise inspired by NMWA's collections and special exhibitions, as well as art books, note cards, jewelry, scarves, home decor, clothing, and more. All products are created by women-owned or operated businesses. The shop also features custom products by local women artists and designers created specifically for the museum. During the renovation period, the online shop is open and fulfilling orders.

**DIRECTOR
AND STAFF**

NMWA's director is Susan Fisher Sterling. The museum has 50 full-time employees.

**MISSION
STATEMENT**

The National Museum of Women in the Arts brings recognition to the achievements of women artists of all periods and nationalities by exhibiting, preserving, acquiring, and researching art by women and by teaching the public about their accomplishments.

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