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Images available upon request.

Denver Art Museum Awarded \$2.25 Million Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Grant to Endow Native Arts Curator and Curatorial Fellowship

DENVER – April 7, 2016 – The Denver Art Museum (DAM) announced today a \$2.25 million grant was awarded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation that will endow the Native Arts Curator leadership position and support an American Indian arts curatorial fellowship in the native arts department. These new funds will enable the department to expand on forward-thinking initiatives already underway, including the focus on artist-centric presentations and close collaborations with contemporary American Indian artists.

The curatorial position challenge grant will be matched one-to-one within three years to establish a \$4 million endowment to support the DAM's lead, full-time Curator of Native Arts, a position currently held by Nancy Blomberg. In addition to the endowed position, the grant will also provide \$250,000 in seed funds for an American Indian arts curatorial fellowship, focused on providing close mentorship and high-level experience.

This post-doctoral curatorial fellowship is the first of its kind offered by the Mellon Foundation at the DAM. It will provide opportunities and resources to develop experience, with the goal of influencing the success of the next generation of curators in the American Indian art field. Conceived in collaboration with the Mellon Foundation, the post-doctoral position emphasizes the skills and strategies fellows will require to be successful at a major art museum, including advanced-level training, exhibition development, research and scholarly publication production. Fellows also will gain experience with planning programs such as the Native Arts Artist-in-Residence program and the DAM's annual Friendship Powwow and American Indian Cultural Celebration. An international call for qualified candidates will begin the process of filling this exciting new role.



Installation view of *Red, White + Bold: Masterworks of Navajo Design, 1840-1870*, in 2013.
Courtesy of the Denver Art Museum.

“The museum is renowned for its progressive efforts in collecting American Indian art, and these new grants will allow the museum to continue to be a leader in the field,” said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. “Our staff is devoted to exploring, presenting and preserving American Indian works, making this new endowment and fellowship crucial to continuing the museum’s legacy.”

Since 1925, the DAM has been credited with being one of the first major art museums to collect American Indian art. The collection the native arts department manages contains nearly 20,000 art objects from tribes across the United States and Canada and is composed of artworks by the indigenous peoples of North America, Africa and Oceania.

“It is a great honor and privilege to have the Curator of Native Arts position bear the name of Andrew W. Mellon,” said Blomberg. “The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is one of the most prestigious foundations in the world, and their recognition and support for the work we do at the Denver Art Museum will enable us to grow in new ways. To have the position fully endowed in perpetuity guarantees that meaningful work in celebration of native arts and artists will continue.”

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was founded in 1969. The Foundation endeavors to strengthen, promote and, where necessary, defend the contributions of the humanities and the arts to human flourishing and to the well-being of diverse and democratic societies by supporting exemplary institutions of higher education and culture as they renew and provide access to an invaluable heritage of ambitious, path-breaking work. To date, this is the fourth position the foundation has endowed at the DAM.

Those interested in the fellowship, as well as additional details on application submission, should visit the jobs page on the DAM website at <http://denverartmuseum.org/jobs-internships>.

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The Denver Art Museum

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro citizens support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations. For museum information, call 720-865-5000 or visit www.denverartmuseum.org.

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