

NHCC Art Museum Receives Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Futures Fund Grant to Boost IT Infrastructure, Public Engagement, and Bilingual Arts Education

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ALBUQUERQUE – The National Hispanic Cultural Center (NHCC) Art Museum and Visual Arts program was awarded an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Futures Fund grant in the amount of \$200,000. This generous gift will be used for the hiring of new positions to bolster the NHCC’s technological infrastructure, public engagement, and bilingual arts education.

“We are so excited and grateful. Our request was based on critical needs at this moment in history and the ability to sustain our commitment to our communities in the next years,” said Tey Marianna Nunn, director of the Art Museum and Visual Arts Program at the NHCC. “With the support of the Mellon Foundation, we will be able to actively fulfill our mission to showcase the artworks of diverse Latinx artists, center meaningful community representation, hold space for untold stories, and challenge exclusionary discourse about the role of artists of color in American art in order to contribute to narrative change in the interest of a more equitable and socially just world.”

While the NHCC Art Museum and Visual Arts Program continues to work diligently to better serve the public through virtual platforms, there are four areas that require an immediate hiring need at this time. The first is to employ the services of a web developer to update the NHCC website and work with the eMuseum database interface to create virtual exhibitions and programming. The second priority is to fill a public relations/marketing/social media manager position.

The third priority is to hire a bilingual arts educator/gallery assistant. Specifically, this position will address the longstanding history in New Mexico of “Americanization through Language” policies, including the old practice of encouraging New Mexicans to speak English rather than Spanish, which contributed to language loss for some and continued stigma associated with

those who do speak Spanish. Only recently have “Heritage Language” programs been introduced into the educational system, and a bilingual educator would support the Art Museum and Visual Arts program’s ability to develop programming, curricula, and other resources in Spanish to meet the needs of Spanish-speaking communities and encourage the recovery of the language for others.

And the fourth priority is to bring on admissions staff at NHCC Art Museum. If the museum is closed to the public for a prolonged period, this position will be assigned as an administrative assistant for the museum team. Upon reopening to the public, the position will return primarily to museum admissions.

Remaining funds will be directed towards the care and storage of artworks associated with a new paño study center.

“Medium and small museums, which were barely keeping up with changing technologies, have been disproportionately affected by the need to pivot to a virtual world due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic,” said Josefa González Mariscal, Executive Director of the NHCC. “The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Futures Fund allows the NHCC to upgrade its virtual and engagement capabilities in an impactful and lasting way.”

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation launched the Art Museum Futures Fund in September 2020. To date, the foundation has distributed roughly \$27 million to small- and mid-sized arts museums and cultural organizations across the U.S. facing unprecedented financial obstacles as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

About the National Hispanic Cultural Center

The National Hispanic Cultural Center is dedicated to the preservation, promotion and advancement of Hispanic culture, arts and humanities. The Center presents mission related events throughout the year, some produced by its history, literary, performing and visual arts programs, and others by partnering with external organizations. Events take place at its 20-plus-acre campus, which includes a plaza, an art museum, a historic designated building, a library, and genealogy center. The Center is a division of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs and is further supported by the National Hispanic Cultural Center Foundation.

About The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is the nation’s largest supporter of the arts and humanities. Since 1969, the Foundation has been guided by its core belief that the humanities and arts are essential to human understanding. The Foundation believes that the arts and humanities are where we express our

complex humanity, and that everyone deserves the beauty, transcendence, and freedom that can be found there. Through our grants, we seek to build just communities enriched by meaning and empowered by critical thinking, where ideas and imagination can thrive.

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