

COLBY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART IMPACT REPORT



For the 2024-2025 academic year, the Colby College Museum of Art continued to advance its mission of access, scholarship, and connection through a dynamic year of exhibitions, collection growth, learning initiatives, and creative partnerships.



The museum proudly reaffirmed its role as a vital hub for art, ideas, and community—on campus, across Maine, and nationally. Through exhibitions that illuminate new perspectives, acquisitions that expand and deepen the collection, programs that engage learners of all ages, and the innovative work of the Lunder Institute for American Art, the museum remains a place of inquiry, inspiration, and joyful exchange.



The following highlights reflect a year of ambitious curatorial projects, meaningful collaborations, and an enduring commitment to art's capacity to foster understanding and connection.



IMAGES clockwise from top left: Art & Some American stories, 2024. Photo: Ben Wheeler; Nora Demak '28 and Carla Servin '27 led discussions on Edvard Munch's *The Sick Child* motif. Photo: Tanya Sheehan; Paul J. Schupf Art Center. Photo: Trent Bell; Tara Aisha Willis, Lunder Institute for American Art Summer Think Tank, Greene Block + Studios, July 17, 2025. Photo: Ben Wheeler; Elisa Germán, Lunder Curator of Works on Paper and Whistler Studies. Photo: Ben Wheeler

EXHIBITIONS

With a mission of access to art and artists—and to serve as a forum for experimentation, research, dialogue and joyful connection—the Colby College Museum of Art organizes and presents an ambitious program of exhibitions each year.

For the 2024-2025 academic year, the Colby Museum of Art opened **11 shows**, including permanent collection rotations, traveling exhibitions from peer institutions, and original exhibitions, 10 of which were organized or co-organized by the Colby Museum.

- **GERTRUDE ABERCROMBIE: THE WHOLE WORLD IS A MYSTERY** is co-organized with colleagues at Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, Pa. Accompanied by a catalogue with new scholarship, the exhibition quickly garnered national media attention in *Vogue*, *Artnet*, *Art Forum*, and elsewhere.
- Guest curated by Penobscot basket maker Sarah Sockbeson, **MAWTE: BOUND TOGETHER**, is an exhibition of contemporary Wabanaki art that centers Indigenized methodologies and artistic expression. *Mawte* showcases community collaboration in action, presenting shared visions while honoring the specificities of each individual maker.
- Two additional Colby Museum exhibitions were also seen elsewhere in the United States: **MARTHA DIAMOND: DEEP TIME** at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, Conn., and **ALEX KATZ: THEATER AND DANCE** at the Frye Art Museum in Seattle, Wash.

IMAGES: Installation view of Gertrude Abercrombie: *The Whole World Is a Mystery*, Colby College Museum of Art, Waterville, Maine, July 12, 2025–January 11, 2026. Photo: Abby Lank; Colby Woodsmen's *Team Collaboration*, November 20, 2024. Photo: Sae Gleba; Tania Morey, *Sipu*, 2025. Brown ash, blue iron oxide, braided sweetgrass, birch bark. 9 ¾ × 4 ½ × 3 ½ in. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Sae Gleba

FOLLOWING PAGE: Emily Alford '25 (left) and Zoe Pellegrino, Colby Museum assistant, hang Alford's artwork during the installation of the Senior Art Exhibition 2025. Photo: Colin Flood '26; Quill Dyeing Workshop with Jessa Rae Growing Thunder, April 10, 2025. Photo: John Meader



COLLECTIONS

This year, the museum continued to strengthen its internationally recognized collection. Over the course of the Dare Northward Campaign, the museum's holdings have expanded from approximately **6,000 to nearly 11,000 works of art**. This unprecedented growth reflects both significant gifts as well as strategic acquisitions, and this year was no exception.



- The museum added complexity and breadth to the histories of American art that the museum's collection represents, purchasing a substantial group of prints by Latinx artists working in the United States as well as artworks by María Magdalena Campos Pons and Stephanie Syjuko; works on paper by Chiura Obata; four photographs by Tseng Kwong Chi and others.
- The museum strengthened historical holdings with the addition of Raphaëlle Peale's 1813 painting *Still Life with Raisin Cake*. This rare oil by America's first professional still life artist is just the fourth painting from the 1810s to enter the museum's collection and is currently on view in *Some American Stories* in the Lunder Wing.
- Gifts of art were gratefully received from Peter Lunder '56, D.F.A. '98, and Life Trustee Paula Lunder, D.F.A. '98, who continue to build the Lunder Collection at the Colby Museum. Some of the latest acquisitions include prints such as Winslow Homer's *A Voice from the Cliffs*, Maurice Prendergast's *Evening on the Pier No. 3*, and James McNeill Whistler's *Chelsea Embankment*, all of which add to the museum's robust collection of 19th-century works on paper.
- Another new acquisition on view in the galleries is Jared French's *Prose*, which will soon be joined by Emil Bisttram's *Spectre*. These two exceptional paintings further bolster the Colby Museum's significant holdings in American modernism.

LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

In the last academic year, the Colby College Museum of Art was able to reach **13,836 participants** across Academic Engagement & Campus Life, K–12 Engagement, and Public Programs & Community Engagement programs, honoring our commitment to create access, dialogue, and joyful connection to art and artists across all ages.



- Our academic engagement with Colby faculty and students included **98 courses across 28 departments** from creative writing to chemistry.
- In addition to curricular offerings, **2,632 students** interacted with the museum through its student worker program, through campus collaborations with student clubs, and through a project of peer-led student perspective surveys and listening sessions.
- Strong partnerships with K–12 teachers and administrators made it possible for **3,415 students from 30 public schools around the state** to experience the museum. Our most popular K–12 tours were *Maine Experience: Materials & Inspiration* (3rd–4th grade) and *Wabanaki: Lineage and Legacy* (5th grade).
- Public Programs & Community Engagement team offered **5,971 participants access to 104 programs and events—all for free**, reflecting our unwavering commitment to access, connection, and education.

LUNDER INSTITUTE FOR AMERICAN ART

Since its launch in 2017, the Lunder Institute for American Art has been a core part of the Colby Museum, supporting innovative research, scholarship, and creative production that expands the boundaries of American art. Through fellowships, programs, partnerships, and an innovative oral archive, it serves as an incubator and convener for the field while connecting peers nationally and internationally with Colby's communities.



- In February, the Lunder Institute **partnered with The Broad in Los Angeles**, Calif., for a program titled *Unsettled Voices*. This newly commissioned music, visual, and spoken word performance featuring Indigenous musical artists Lynn Daphne Rudolph and Lazaro Arvizu Jr., invited our audience to consider the meaning and importance of reconciliation.

- During the **Summer Think Tank**, the Lunder Institute **brought 64 individuals to Waterville** to participate in and create public programs focused on the theme of Centering Performance in American Art.
- The Lunder Institute for American Art continued its work of **supporting scholarly and creative production** by hosting six fellows whose work aligns with its goal of expanding the contours of American art.



GIVE

If you would like to support our efforts in the upcoming year, please consider a donation today.

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