In gratitude to a dedicated community

Developing this report provided the opportunity to reflect on the previous year and its highest of highs and lowest of lows. In March 2020, when the pandemic hit the United States, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art was on track to have the biggest year in its history, exceeding all projected attendance and revenue goals. Then we closed our doors for the remainder of the fiscal year to support the city’s health and safety efforts. While we still hit targeted revenues and hosted a record-breaking 545,000 visitors in fiscal year 2020 (FY20), we experienced the beginning of a difficult chapter in the museum’s history during those final months.

Though the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted the organization and will have repercussions for years to come, the role of museums in society remains constant—as places of solace, understanding, learning, inspiration, and connection. We will continue to provide these experiences to visitors as we rebuild and will look to FY20 and its many successes as the benchmark to which we aspire.

From the complex and inspiring images of the 30 Americans exhibition to the unforgettable stages of the Walking Wall by Andy Goldsworthy and the debut of two new and exciting programs—Tivoli at the Nelson and Art Course—as well as record-breaking attendance at the cultural festivals and in the galleries, FY20 remains a landmark year for the museum.

Without each and every one of you, the museum would not have accomplished all that you see in the following pages. We are more grateful than ever for the steadfast support of our community. Thank you for taking pride in the Nelson-Atkins—the art & soul of Kansas City.

Richard C. Green
Chair, Board of Trustees

Julián Zugazagoitia
Director & CEO
* Due to the debilitating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the museum has been forced to reduce its budget by 25%, resulting in staff reductions and the cancelation of traveling exhibitions, in-person tours, classes, public programs, and festivals.
By the Numbers
May 1, 2019 – April 30, 2020

545,000
Museum visitors

63,000
Family event & festival attendees

40,000
K–12 students visited on a field trip

38,300
Played Art Course

7,800
Individuals attended a presentation or performance

335
New art acquisitions

FY20 HIGHLIGHTS

Andy Goldsworthy’s Walking Wall

Art Course

30 Americans Exhibition

FY20 Gift of Art

Tivoli at the Nelson-Atkins

3 | The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
ON THE COVER: KC Kids Unite: Building Bridges with Writing and Art Education Program


LEFT: Golden Prospects: California Gold Rush Daguerreotypes Exhibition
Gifts of Art
FY20 | May 1, 2019–April 30, 2020

CLOCKWISE, LEFT to RIGHT:


5 | The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
CLOCKWISE, LEFT to RIGHT:
Bank of America
Generous support from Bank of America enabled free admission to the 30 Americans exhibition on June 8 and 9—the same time as the Juneteenth Festival, which commemorates the abolition of slavery in the United States through the Emancipation Proclamation.

“Supporting such projects demonstrates our belief in the power of art to create understanding. 30 Americans ignited dialogue about race in our community that proved to be timely.”

Matt Linski, Kansas City Market President for Bank of America

Windgate Foundation
The Windgate Foundation in Little Rock, Arkansas provides grants to programs providing art education to K–12 schools. Because of the foundation’s interest in art-integrated instructional programs that develop creative, innovative ways of thinking, the foundation supported the museum’s education department for the first time with a substantial challenge grant fulfilled over two years for the School Incentive program. The School Incentive program offers a free school tour or workshop for student groups from Title I schools in the Greater Kansas City metro area plus a $200 stipend to offset trip-related expenses.

Susan De Jong
Susan De Jong donated nine Diné (Navajo) textiles. De Jong has admired and collected Navajo textiles for over four decades. Her initial interest began with trips to the Navajo Reservation. Her collection grew apace with her fascination in the weavers’ innovative and artistic responses to the cultural changes in history.

Diné (Navajo) artist, Arizona or New Mexico. Pictorial Weaving, ca. 1940. Handspun undyed and synthetic-dyed Merino fleece, 71 ¼ x 100 inches. Gift of Susan De Jong, 2019.65.4.