

New Mexico Museum of Art



NEW MEXICO MUSEUM OF ART CENTENNIAL TIMELINE

6 Jan 1912 New Mexico achieves Statehood

18 Mar 1915 Legislation

New Mexico Legislature appropriates \$30,000 for half the cost of constructing an art museum under the condition that another source contribute an additional \$30,000 to build the museum. Lawmakers decided that the new building should be a larger version of the popular New Mexico Building at the Panama-California Exposition

17 Apr 1915 Old Barracks

Santa Fe citizens urge the Santa Fe Board of Education to deed their land at the corner of Lincoln and Palace Avenues, known as the “old barracks”, to the Museum of New Mexico.

24 Nov 1917 Opening

This building opens to the public as the Art Gallery of the Museum of New Mexico with trains booked from as far away as NYC to travel and join the opening celebrations.

29 Sept 1920 Modernism under attack

The museum gets caught in the nationwide “Red Scare” weeks before a Presidential election. After several months of scathing editorials criticizing modern art in the local newspaper, *The New Mexican* accuses the museum of promoting “propaganda for art extremism of the most absurd kind” and advised to “take every precaution to see that the gallery is not regarded as a center of anything remotely connected with Bolshevist ideas in art or otherwise.”

1 Nov 1921 Los Cinco Pintores exhibition

Five young painters calling themselves “Los Cinco Pintores” hold their first group exhibition together at the art museum. They are artists Will Shuster, Willard Nash, Walter Mruk, Fremont Ellis and Jozef Bakos.

1934 – 1943 Shuster paints murals

The Federal Emergency Relief Agency commissions artist Will Shuster to paint murals in the courtyard of the art museum

April 1937 McNary Pipe Organ arrives

The historic pipe organ, donated by James McNary, is installed in St. Francis Auditorium in several parts. The museum begins to offer music appreciation classes.

19 Aug 1951 First juried exhibition

The 38th annual exhibition for New Mexico Artists marks the museum's first juried exhibition, officially ending the museum's original "open-door" policy.

**13 Sept 1944 –
15 Jun 1959** Traveling exhibition series

The museum begins a series of multi-venue art exhibitions outside of Santa Fe. Each show lasted about 6 weeks at a venue. Works in these exhibitions were made by artists living in New Mexico and were often available for purchase. The exhibitions would start to travel in the fall and ended their run in spring of the next calendar year.

31 Dec 1946 End of an era

Edgar Lee Hewett, founder and Director of the Museum of New Mexico, dies. His ashes are interred in the courtyard of the art museum that he created.

8 Jan 1958 Re-branding

Director James Taylor Forrest changes name of museum to "Museum of Fine Arts" Governor Bruce King and First Lady Alice King established the Governor's Awards for Excellence in the Arts to honor New Mexicans who have made a significant lifetime contribution to the arts. Every fall since 1974, the Museum of Art's St. Francis Auditorium hosts the public awards ceremony honoring that year's recipients.

21 Aug 1962 Stravinsky Festival

The Santa Fe Opera performs Igor Stravinsky's "The Flood" in the Museum's St. Francis Auditorium as part of the Santa Fe Stravinsky Festival. The Festival includes a series of 6 lectures and an exhibition in the galleries titled "Stravinsky and the Dance" which was organized by the Museum of Modern Art in New York and exhibited here from July 29 – August 20, 1962.

1 July 1973 Chamber Music

The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival debuts in the Museum's St. Francis Auditorium, a tradition that continues to this day.

**1 Jan 1975 –
31 Dec 1975** Governor's Gallery opens

Clara Apodaca, former First Lady of New Mexico (1975-1978), founds the Governor's Gallery in 1975 on the 4th floor of the State Capitol as an outreach facility of the art museum. The first exhibition featured the paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe, who closely

3 Oct 1978 Bradford Smith Censorship Dispute

The Museum’s director cancels the contemporary art exhibition, *Installations*, days before it is scheduled to open. Local artist Bradford Smith refused to alter or move his rubber sculpture in response to concern it was “pornographic”, causing it to get pulled from the show. In protest of the Director’s decision, other artists withdrew their work and the show had to be canceled.

1 Mar 1980 Museum closes for construction

Museum closes doors for construction of New Wing galleries, sculpture gardens and renovated collections storage and office spaces in basement.

15 May 1981 Museum reopens

Museum opens with new exhibitions to celebrate its 64th year of existence.

15 July 1995 Longing and Belonging exhibition

Curated by SITE Santa Fe and co-presented by the art museum and SITE, this exhibition takes place at both institutions and marks the first of SITE’s celebrated biennials

17 July 1997 O’Keeffe’s New Mexico

Our 80th anniversary exhibition is timed to coincide with opening of the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum in a public-private partnership between the State of New Mexico, Museum of New Mexico Foundation and Georgia O’Keeffe Museum.

4 April 1998 Sniper’s Nest exhibition

Noted art critic Lucy Lippard donates her personal collection of American feminist, minimalist and political works of art and ephemera to the museum. The collection initially arrives here as part of a traveling exhibition curated by the Bard College Center for Curatorial Studies, titled *Sniper’s Nest : Art that has lived with Lucy R. Lippard*.

2 Dec 1998 Frederico Vigil paints mural

Commissioned by the New Mexico Museum of Art in commemoration of the *400th anniversary of the Oñate expedition to New Mexico* with funds provided by the City of Santa Fe Cuartocentenario, Herbert Beenhouwer, Susan McGreely and the Museum of New Mexico Foundation, *Exodus: Influencias Positivas Y Campadrazgo* depicts the positive influence of the Spanish on the state’s cultural history. It marks the first time a mural has been added to the courtyard since the Will Shuster murals were completed during the Great Depression.

7 Feb 2007 Senate Bill 276

Museum legally changes its name to New Mexico Museum of Art

2017 Museum of Art celebrates centennial year beginning on November 25, 2017