



Dear MONA friends,

After serving as executive director at The Museum of Nebraska Art for the past 3 years, I have let our board and staff know that I'll be assuming the same role at Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at the end of July. As I share this news with you today, I want to thank you, truly and deeply, for your support of the important work the staff conducts at MONA. Leading MONA has been

an opportunity of a lifetime for me and I'm so proud of everything we've been able to accomplish together.

In the interim, the board, staff, and I are committed to a smooth leadership transition. The board has assembled a search committee and has hired a recruiting firm to lead a national search. I'll continue to run the Museum throughout the coming months. The next leader of MONA will have the same remarkable opportunity I had – to work side by side each day with a committed, thoughtful, and endlessly talented board and staff.

For those of you who know me personally, you're already aware of how passionate I am about the Museum's mission. You can imagine that this decision did not come easily. Career opportunities and their timeliness can rarely be planned for, but this is that moment which feels like the right time to usher in the next phase of my career to another institution, with hopes to put to work the many meaningful experiences I've had leading museum teams.

I want to thank the many generous members, donors, and supporters of our projects, who believe in celebrating the visual arts throughout our state and beyond. I also want to thank all of my advisors and colleagues. Throughout my tenure, I was deeply fortunate to work closely with Jon Watts, Marilyn Hadley and Tom Gallagher to name a few, and I benefited from their wisdom.

As a new director in 2020, I had the profound opportunity to help reshape the vision for MONA and how it serves our community. Together, we have designed an incredible expansion that will be a beacon of light for generations to come. While bittersweet, I am excited for the next executive director, who will get to experience the wonder of this special place and to keep the Museum evolving for years to come.

With a full heart,

Nicole Herden  
Executive Director

Nonprofit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Midwest  
Connect

MUSEUM OF NEBRASKA ART  
2401 Central Avenue  
Kearney, NE 68847

# MUSEUM news



**MUSEUM  
of  
NEBRASKA  
ART**



SPRING 2023

# CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

In addition to the design of the expansion, the museum is taking a bold step, with a new landscape design transforming the once gated sculpture garden to a 43,000 square foot open communal space that is open and accessible on all sides. This exciting landscape design will transform the museum block into a 24/7 community sculpture garden. This design reimagines the current footprint, by bridging the landscape to the new addition with a raised platform that doesn't limit access but rather encourages it.

The plan provides a variety of outdoor spaces including the main sculpture garden which will be broad and visible from the street, a raised outdoor dining and sculpture terrace that sits at the same height as the first floor of the museum addition, and a large multipurpose lawn. The individuality of the spaces and intentional flexibility within each means the museum will have not only a variety of settings for diverse sculptures but also spaces that can host events.



Hiway 30 looking South

Like the Museum's permanent collection, the landscape is curated to reflect Nebraska. The broad native prairies that once covered much of the state are reflected in the gardens with selections of native prairie grasses and flowers including little bluestem, switchgrass, and coneflower. Anchoring the gardens and outdoor spaces are simple crushed native stone walking paths and courtyards made of a Nebraska limestone. The limestone provides an accessible surface that also engages the senses as the stone crunches under one's feet. And like the native landscape, the design celebrates Nebraska's seasons. In spring and summer, flowers will emerge through the fine



textured grasses that will sway in the breeze. In fall, a subtle yet striking punctuation of color will develop as the prairie grasses take on hues of red and purple, and bold lines of plants and crisp linear landscape structures will stand proud against the drifting snow.

MONA's reimagined grounds will tell the story of Nebraska. And like the collection it is not a static story; it is a story of resilience and change all rooted in a distinct, regional landscape.

## INTRODUCING!



We are thrilled to introduce you to Christine Brown, MONA's new Director of Learning and Engagement! Christine has been teaching since 1989 but most recently comes to the Museum via Blue Hill Community Schools, Nebraska, where she has been teaching art education to grades 7-12 since 2000, as well as serving as an adjunct teacher at Hastings College, Nebraska since 2012.

Christine holds a B.A. in arts education from Kearney State College (University of Nebraska at Kearney) and an M.F.A. in curriculum and instruction from Doane College, Crete, Nebraska. She has also taught at several other Nebraska schools and has professional affiliations with the Nebraska Art Association and the Nebraska Art Teachers Association.

She will be working in tandem with Museum staff to provide a comprehensive art education curriculum, ensuring that programming fulfills the mission and vision of the Museum.

# CURATORIAL SPOTLIGHT

The Terra Foundation for American Art, a privately operated nonprofit organization, has awarded the Museum of Nebraska Art (MONA) a \$75,000 grant to support the curated exhibition *In Search of Ourselves: A Re-Installation of MONA's Permanent Collection* and its associated educational programming.

*In Search of Ourselves* will dive deeply into various areas of the permanent collection to present the many ways "Nebraska art" has been defined through the Museum's collecting practices. Hosted in the new spacious upper floor galleries, this exhibition will approach the collection thematically, bringing artworks from various time periods into critical conversation.

The Terra Foundation for American Art supports individuals, organizations, and communities to advance expansive understandings of American art. Established in 1978 and headquartered in Chicago, with an office in Paris, the Terra Foundation is committed to fostering cross cultural dialogues on American art locally, nationally, and internationally, through its grant program, collection, and initiatives.



William E. Artis, *Vernon*, terracotta, c. 1946-1950, Museum Purchase made possible by Cliff Art Endowment, Cliff & Mary Hillegass Trusts

Albert Bierstadt, *Clouds Over the Prairie*, oil mounted on paper, n.d., Museum Purchase made possible by Cliffs Charitable Foundation

Barbara Takenaga, *Nebraska II*, acrylic on linen, 2015, Museum Purchase made possible by Margaret Hornady-David & Donald David, Kwik Stop Convenience Stores, NebraskaLand National Bank, Tom & Sue Tallman

Jules Tavernier, *Untitled (Indian encampment in winter)*, oil on canvas on board, n.d., Museum Purchase made possible by Anonymous Donor, Carl & Jane Rohman, Jack Karraker, Jon & Leslie Abegglen, Carl & Karen Brasee, Mary Ellen Mulcahy, Ed & Betty Cook, Clay & Beth Smith, Anne Thorne Weaver, F. William & Beverley Karrer, Gary Zaruba

All Museum of Nebraska Art Collection



**TERRA**  
FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN ART