

Annual Report 2025



Morris Museum



On Cover (detail)
Unknown maker, 18th Century England
Dining Chair (set of 12), c. 1745
Mahogany, upholstered, 8 x 22 1/8 x 18 3/4"
Anonymous gift, 2024.2a-l

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From Everywhere, For Everyone

What can it mean to be our region’s premier engine of curiosity and wonderment? This is precisely the question we confront as the leaders of this great institution, now well into its second century of service within this community. Or more tightly put, *what are we doing to ensure that we fill that role within our state’s cultural ecosystem?* The past year we have pursued this vision with high intensity on two, parallel tracks: first, by realizing our current mission-centered agenda of exceptional experiences with art, design, and science and second, through a major planning effort to align the organization and shape the future of our campus. Thanks to the energy and engagement of our staff, volunteer corps, and board, the Morris Museum in 2025 finds itself at an important turning point in its history, able to see to its important work in the community and equipped to confront its future with more clarity.

The past year we brought art into greater conversations about who we are and what we aspire to be. It was a banner year for programming, both in its diversity and its quality. Particularly refreshing were the opportunities to showcase the work and working practice of so many artists from across the greater region. From last autumn’s *New Sculpture/New Jersey* to this spring’s choral concert with the Princeton Singers inspired by *James Prosek: At Work*, the Museum was able to catalyze exciting encounters with the

arts, instigate important conversations about the creative economy, and raise the visitor experience for everyone. Collaborative presentation with regional partners—including Morris Arts (featuring the author of “Your Brain on Art”), Nimbus Dance, the Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey, Art in the Atrium (especially the live podcast with Malcolm Jamal Warner’s *Not All Hood* team), Carolyn Dorfman Dance, the greater-Morristown Día de los Muertos celebration, and the Newark and Suburban chapter of the American Institute of Architects (*Canstruction 2024*)—drove a rich and varied palette of offerings through the year.

Whether coming for one of the two concerts offered with the acclaimed Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Spark!Lab, or any of our special exhibitions, patrons could rely on the Museum creating a lively and inspiring program that consistently surpassed expectations. And those experiences were amplified by the launch of a new visitor interface on Bloomberg Connects—a digital platform used by over 500 colleague institutions worldwide. Another fundamental enhancement was an upgrade to the demonstration area of the Guinness Collection, now home to dossier exhibitions around object-based stories. Additional outreach happened through the thriving programming of our two affiliated volunteer clubs, the Astronomical Society and the Mineralogical Society.

Less visible was the sustained effort to gather the Museum’s close constituencies together to outline a strategic plan for the coming five-year period. The arts-first roadmap for systematic growth and renewal of leadership that emerged reiterated the organization’s commitment to serving the region with meaningful opportunities to engage with culture and science. Over the nine months spent listening and considering the strategic context and the iterative process of assembling the plan’s six imperatives, leadership within staff and board identified a path forward that will increase the Museum’s impact and ensure the centrality of the public in all we do. Our mission is clear: the Morris Museum enriches lives with exemplary exhibitions and performances of art, design, and science. We execute on that mission with the people who work, live, and visit northern New Jersey at top of mind, but with a spirit that welcomes all and is designed to satisfy the curiosity of everyone. As one team member put it, “our collections, exhibitions, and performances are from the world over—from everywhere—and we put them forward with great care—in service to everyone.”

Work on strategy quite naturally dovetailed with a major assessment of our campus—how it currently supports our program ambition and how a vibrant future will require us to shape it as one of the region’s major cultural sites. The plan identified the Museum as really the only organization at our scale presenting such a wide range of experiences in the arts and

sciences for the general public. And yet the expectations of cultural consumers have shifted greatly from the most recent campus master planning effort in the early 2000s and even more so since the major additions of 1970, 1990, and 2007 expanded the Museum’s footprint beyond the walls of the Twin Oaks mansion. We raised significant funds from within the board to enable a deep dive survey into our existing conditions and a thorough exploration of the possibilities for fundamental reinvestment in our campus. Our work is ongoing and includes an ambition to put the eight acres and over 77,000 sq. ft. of buildings to greater use, creating an integrated experience ready to host you and your family for the next two generations. Our great thanks to all involved in this “big lift” effort.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Museum soon!



Edward von der Linde
Board Chair

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ed von der Linde".



Thomas J. Loughman, Ph.D.
President and CEO

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tom Loughman".



Exhibitions in Review

A pivotal period of curatorial and programmatic growth

Artists of international standing and regional roots presented their work, many of whom were working with the Museum for the first time. In tandem with this effort, the staff found creative and thoughtful opportunities to feature collection objects within contemporary projects. Refreshing the Main Gallery brought the space to a higher aesthetic befitting the caliber of the exhibiting artists; similar upgrades have made the Guinness Workshop area ready to host focused projects. There were notable collection acquisitions, the inclusion of 38 collection items on view in our contemporary shows, and 41 lenders propelling our exhibition offerings. Public programming in conjunction with these exhibitions generates additional engagement.



TULA TELFAIR: N A T U R E does not locate itself with the artist leading a talk
Prior spread: Installation view of Tula Telfair's exhibition.

***TULA TELFAIR:
N A T U R E does not locate itself***

June 26 – October 5, 2025
Main Gallery

Tula Telfair's massive imaginary landscapes evoke the sublime view-making in American painting. They also emanate from her lifelong engagement with the natural world globally. Harnessing the unusual characteristics of the Museum's collections, Telfair selected objects—including trays of sand vials collected from around the globe—to tell her story about living in and thinking about the power

of landscape. A dedicated educator, the artist extended our learning capacity by speaking with visitors in a gallery talk and presenting a lecture and discussion. Her generous commitment of time and ideas also set in motion a new opportunity to develop volunteer-led weekend exhibition tours, offering a richer experience for visitors.

Installation support for this exhibition is provided by Novartis Pharmaceuticals and Melanie and Alan Levitan.

**Landscape by Altitude: Discussion
with Tula Telfair and Peter Gottschalk**

Saturday, July 26, 2025

Wesleyan University Professor of Religion Peter Gottschalk spoke with the artist about her inspirations and processes for an at-capacity audience of 45 visitors. Gottschalk, who has written about Telfair's work and shares her passion for exploration, brought an insightful perspective to the exhibition and provided the audience with his thoughts on the connection between spirituality and the natural world.

Artist Lecture

Friday, September 5, 2025

In the Bickford Theatre and the Main Gallery, Tula Telfair presented a visual narrative of her early life that illustrated how her upbringing in the rural African country of Gabon and subsequent travels shaped her work as a painter of monumental and imaginative landscapes. As a new effort to encourage Museum visitation through free-with-admission events, this afternoon lecture format received high praise from the attendees and resulted in some remaining in the Museum well past the program conclusion.



Artist Sean Cavanaugh and guest view *James Prosek: At Work*.

James Prosek: At Work

February 28 – June 8, 2025
Main Gallery

Over 100 works of art powered a cohesive look at the artist's ideas and artistic output over the first 30 years of his career. His deep engagement with nature resonated with a wide variety of visitors. Prosek's meticulous process and playful perspective questioned how we name, represent, and understand the living world through visual art. The project

inspired our first Spark!Lab crossover activity, Help Clean up the Ocean. A specially commissioned performance of The Princeton Singers reflected on the exhibition through choral music, positioning the museum as a forward-thinking presenter of interdisciplinary ideas.

Support for this exhibition is provided by Barry and Jennifer Jaruzelski and the Martin Guitar Charitable Foundation. Installation support for this exhibition is provided by Novartis Pharmaceuticals and Melanie and Alan Levitan.

**Spark!Lab Station:
Help Clean up the Ocean**

April 2025

Among many positive outcomes of *James Prosek: At Work* was the first Spark!Lab crossover activity with an exhibition. Titled Help Clean up the Ocean, this activity was developed at the Smithsonian and provided an opportunity for young inventors and their caregivers to bring their ideas formed at the Spark!Lab into an exhibition.

**A Night of Music and Art with
the Princeton Singers**

Thursday, April 3, 2025

In this specially-commissioned performance of the Princeton Singers, Artistic Director Steven Sametz worked with Prosek to create an eight song concert. The innovative performance reflected on the exhibition in choral music, and was the final performance of the group.

The Morris Museum thanks Will and Mary Leland for their support of this program.



President and CEO Thomas J. Loughman and Curator Bryant Small with the *New Sculpture / New Jersey* artists.

New Sculpture / New Jersey

September 20, 2024 – February 2, 2025
Main Gallery

Born from a curatorial curiosity about the state of contemporary sculpture in New Jersey, this exhibition offered a compelling snapshot of the state's diverse sculptural practices. Jersey City-based independent curator Bryant Small was invited to shape the idea, resulting in a dynamic presentation that incorporated large-scale work, surprising materials, filmed studio visits, and special public programs led by the artists. This also marked a new effort to feature special exhibitions in Education Visits, which was highly praised by educators and greatly enjoyed by over 200 young students. This productive collaboration preceded Small's appointment as Associate Curator.

Exhibition support generously provided by Novartis.

Artist Workshop with Valerie Huhn

Saturday, January 18th, 2025

Featured artist and designer Valerie Huhn led participants in her innovative process of print stamping and embossing fingerprints as represented in the exhibition.



Visitors viewing paintings in *Sally Michel, Brilliant Legacy*.

Sally Michel, Brilliant Legacy

January 29 – May 4, 2025
Bickford/Bush-Compton Galleries

Organized by the Mennello Museum of American Art as *Sally Michel: Abstracting Tonalism*, the Morris Museum presented the work of New York's 20th Century art scene. Somewhat underrecognized, Michel made art in the shadow of her more famous husband, Milton Avery. Enlivened through original sketchbooks and studies, the paintings on view were joined by the personal perspective of her grandson, Sean Cavanaugh, also a working artist.

This exhibition was organized by the Mennello Museum of American Art. *Sally Michel: Abstracting Tonalism* was curated by Katherine Page, Curator, Art and Education, Mennello Museum of American Art. Generous funding for this exhibition and the publication is provided by The Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation. Additional funding for the Morris Museum presentation courtesy of The Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation and other donors.

Exhibition Tour with Artist Sean Cavanaugh, *Sally Michel, Brilliant Legacy*

Saturday, April 26, 2025

An enthusiastic audience joined Sally Michel's grandson and artist Sean Cavanaugh for a special tour of the exhibition *Sally Michel: Brilliant Legacy*. During this unique experience, Sean Cavanaugh shared personal anecdotes and memories of his grandmother's life, career, and legacy.

Voices: Mid-century Oaxacan Embroidery and Weaving from the Permanent Collection

October 11, 2024 – January 5, 2025
Bickford/Bush-Compton Galleries

Textiles from around the world form an important part of the Museum’s collection. This showcase brought together fine examples from six Indigenous communities from across the Mexican state of Oaxaca. To bring new knowledge to the curatorial process, the Museum worked with Gabriela Tutalo of local artisan shop Solano EXP to connect with artisans with whom she works to generate the interpretive materials. Community member Montserrat Franco Rojas provided translation services, contributed personal photographs to the exhibition, and helped lead two exhibition tours during the Museum’s Día de los Muertos celebration. The result was a story of the weaving tradition told with contributions from those with authority on the subject in ways that benefit the visitors to an exhibition and benefit the Museum staff as they work to add knowledge to the collection archives.

Translation and curatorial support generously provided by Montserrat Franco Rojas and Raul Santoyo.

Troy Jones – Echoes of the Diaspora: A Study in Style, Culture and the African Mask

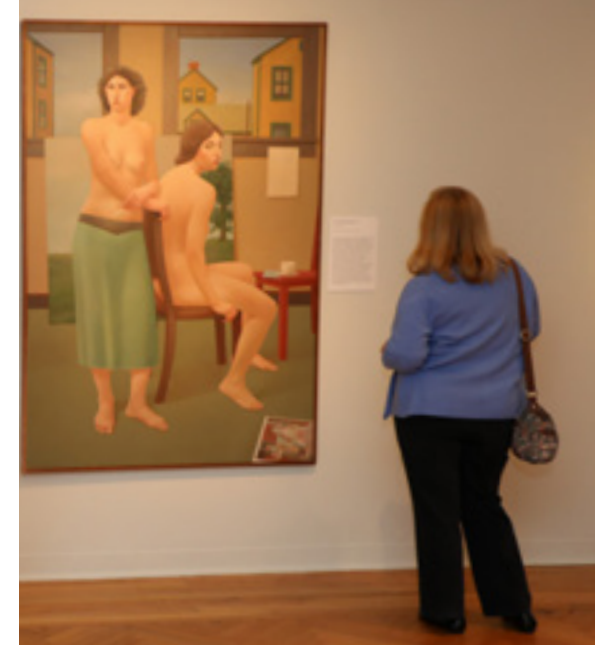
June 19 – October 26, 2025
Hedley Gallery

Echoes of the Diaspora was one of several examples during the year that featured creative interpretations of the Museum’s collections. Painter Troy Jones reimagines the African mask as a vibrant symbol of identity, resistance, and cultural continuity, drawing inspiration from traditional African aesthetics and the lived experiences of the African diaspora. In developing this exhibition, Jones was invited to select objects from the Museum’s collection of African masks to tell the story of his work. The result was a combined presentation of the Museum’s collection of masks and some of his own as the contextual underpinning of his paintings. A first for the artist, this curatorial approach manifested into a rich and layered dialogue between ancestral memory and modern identity.

Artists Donna Bassin and Kyle Meyer in their exhibition.



Installation view of Alan Feltus: *A Painter’s Painter*.



Interwoven: Rupture and Repair. Photography by Kyle Meyer / Donna Bassin

May 29 – November 2, 2025
Bickford Gallery

Juxtaposed for the first time was the powerful work of two distinctly different photographers, Kyle Meyer and Donna Bassin. Both explore themes of identity, trauma, and resilience while incorporating sewing and weaving techniques in their processes, offering a serious reflection on contemporary global issues. Through personal narratives and imagery of subjects living as near as New York and as far as the African continent, the Museum facilitated a conversation about important contemporary issues. This

exhibition also successfully included an audio companion piece available to all through the Bloomberg Connects App.

Alan Feltus: A Painter’s Painter

May 22 – September 21, 2025
Bush-Compton Gallery

A rare glimpse into the timeless and contemplative world created by this masterful American expatriot figure painter. A longtime resident of Assisi, Feltus’ depictions of interior settings and exterior views call to mind the architectural history of Italy and an influence of the Renaissance.

Support is provided by Edward and Susanne von der Linde.

Michael Malpass: Sculptor of Wit (1946–1991)

October 18, 2024 – February 23, 2025
Hedley Gallery

Created in partnership with the Malpass family, the Museum paid tribute to this artist and educator’s artistic legacy in our first presentation of his work since a posthumous exhibition within months of his death in 1991. As part of the Museum’s focus on outstanding New Jersey artistry, *Michael Malpass: Sculptor*



Donna Bassin’s portraits’ subjects tell their stories on camera, hosted and accessible via Bloomberg Connects.

Donna Bassin, *My Own Witness: Rupture and Repair* Maryam T, 2020. Courtesy of the artist.



The opening preview of *Michael Malpass: Sculptor of Wit (1946-1991)* on October 22, 2024.

of Wit celebrated Malpass’ playful sense of humor and irrepressible creative drive through his drawings, collages, and metal sculptures while contributing to the continuation of his legacy. The Malpass Art Fondation donated the work *Wedge II* (1978) to the Museum’s collection.

Neil Jenney / Pablo Picasso

May 15 – August 31, 2025
Tregenza Gallery

American artist Neil Jenney’s “Improved Picassos” oeuvre was presented alongside the Museum’s collection of Picasso lithographs, allowing an unusual story to be told between these two artists who lived and worked a generation apart. Jenney had commissioned the late portrait painter Ki-Young Sung to create copies of works by Pablo Picasso so he could build new frames for them, and Picasso’s prints in the collection also represent reproductions. The result was a playful presentation on legacy, reinvention, and how artists have an impact on one another.

Fresh Perspectives 2025

March 14 – May 25, 2025
Theatre Lobby

The 36th edition of this special annual exhibition showcased the work of accomplished high school art students throughout the state. Nominated by their art teachers for their artistic excellence, 50 students representing 27 total public, private, charter and parochial high schools were featured in the Theatre Lobby gallery and published in a digital catalogue. Each was selected jointly by a panel of arts professionals and celebrated by family and friends during a special reception at the Museum.

Installations

To ensure that objects from the Morris Museum collection are consistently available to the public, several small collection-centered installations were created throughout the year. From different historical periods, mediums, and cultural contexts, each provided an opportunity to spotlight the unique eclecticism that makes the Museum’s collection special.

The Trans-Cultural Journey of the Guinness-Puccini Music Box

October 4, 2024 – January 19, 2025

This unique story traced the international movement of a particular music box in the Guinness Collection as it traveled the globe and even crossed paths with famed composer Giacomo Puccini, who used its tunes in his operas *Madama Butterfly* and *Turandot*. This noteworthy encounter between a mechanical object and the

music of its time allowed the Museum to present an exhibition and a concurrent live performance highlighting this surprising historic connection.

Primo Puccini: Celebrating Puccini with The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey,
November 17, 2024

Commemorating the 100-year anniversary of famed composer Giacomo Puccini’s death and the premiere of his last opera, The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey presented a special sold-out concert featuring guest operatic singers Theresa Carlomagno and Timothy Maureen Cole that celebrated his work and legacy.

Leadership support is provided by Will and Mary Leland.



The Harmoniphone Cylinder Musical Box with Reed Organ, c. 1870s with the Chinese tunes that inspired Giacomo Puccini.



Conjurer, c. 1875, demonstrates the ancient cup game.

A Golden Age of Magic

May 9 - June 8, 2025

The first show in the newly designed Guinness Workshop area, this exhibition presented the story of magic's major surge in public popularity between 1865 and 1910. Illustrated through intricate automata from the Guinness Collection in which magicians perform tricks through mechanical means hidden from the viewer, the project also included a special public performance by Magician Simon Mandal, who brought these objects into a contemporary context with his own story of studying and creating magic.

Gallery Talk with Magician Simon Mandal

Saturday, May 31, 2025

To a standing-room only audience, magician Simon Mandal, known as "one of the world's funniest master magicians," shared stories about the history of magic while performing a range of age-old illusions during this special look at *A Golden Age of Magic*.

Support from Will and Mary Leland enabled the redesign of our Guinness Workshop, creating space for in-gallery programs.

At Home with Lady Normanby: A Regina Music Box Suited for Royalty

Opened March 28, 2025

This remarkable example of mechanical music, donated to the Museum by Murtoogh Guinness' sister, Lady Normanby, recently underwent significant funder-supported restoration.

Leadership support is provided by Will and Mary Leland.

In Conversation: American Sublime

March 15 - October 5, 2025

Generations of American painters have worked from memories of nature on a grand scale. Landscape paintings by Albert Bierstadt and Thomas Moran were shown alongside a contemporary take on the subject by Tula Telfair, offering a foretaste of Telfair's solo exhibition.

Ragtime: Portrait of America's Music

Opened June 19, 2025

America loved Ragtime. This timely opportunity to celebrate Black musical artistry used three gorgeous jukeboxes from the Guinness Collection. Opening just in time for the Museum's Juneteenth celebration and concurrent *Ragtime* allowed visitors to get a close look at the aesthetic quality of early jukeboxes while listening to recordings of songs from this important creative era. This project

inspired the installation of a new sound system in the Guinness Workshop area, improving the exhibition capabilities of that space for more audio-based projects in the future.



Regina Hexaphone, c. 1917.



Scan to hear the recordings of popular ragtime songs.

Featured Works

Essential to the visitor's experience at the Morris Museum are unexpected encounters with standalone works of art. To achieve this, single artwork displays were installed, sometimes as a complement to an exhibition, and other times as a special "spotlight" on a particular contemporary artist or collection work of note. Overall, 14 objects were on view in FY25 representing an exceptional range from New Jersey artists to recent acquisitions, and collection items rarely seen.



Adolphe Borie (American, 1877-1934), **Portrait of Mrs. John Petit**, 1908. Oil on canvas. 81 3/4 h x 42 1/8 w inches. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Austin, 83.138.

Desirae Brown (American, b. 1980), **The Queen**, 2023. Bed foam, rhinestones. 68 h x 50 w x 7 d inches. On loan courtesy of Art in the Atrium, Inc., with permission of Desirae Brown and Hera Gallery.

Leandro Comrie (American, b. 1973), **The Guardian**, 2020. Acrylic, pastel, ink on canvas. 72 h x 72 w inches. On loan courtesy of Leandro Comrie.

Neil Jenney (American, b. 1945), **North America Divided (The Big Stump)**, 1992-1999. Oil on wood in artist's frame. 39 1/4 h x 151 1/2 w inches. On loan courtesy of the artist.

Guillermo Kuitca (Argentinian, b. 1961), **Untitled (People on Fire)**, 1994. Oil and acrylic on canvas. 63 h x 67 3/4 w inches. Private Collection.

Kwang Young Chun (Korean, b. 1944), **Aggregation 09-AU047 Blue**, 2009. Mixed media with Korean Mulberry paper. 147 h x 114 w centimeters. On loan from the collection of Art Mora Gallery, Ridgefield Park, New Jersey.

Michael Malpass (American, 1946-1991), **Trilogy**, 1979. Welded and forged steel. 24 h x 24 w x 24 d inches. On loan courtesy of the Michael Malpass Art Foundation.

Danielle Scott (American, b. 1977), **Milkweed Blessings**, 2023. Mixed media assemblage and resin. 75 h x 51 w inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Tula Telfair (American, b. 1961), **Vision Transformed the Site**, 2018. Oil on clayboard. 24 h x 36 w inches. On loan courtesy of Forum Gallery. Exhibited in *In Conversation: American Sublime*.

Chinese, likely Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), **Untitled (White bird in flight over sea)**, c. 19th century. Pigment on silk and linen. 71 h x 51 1/2 w inches. Gift of Nelson Schaenen, Jr., RD2023.33.2.

Facing page: Artist Leandro Comrie and his artwork *The Guardian*.

Gifts to the Collection

Unknown maker, 18th Century England

Dining Chairs

(set of 12), c. 1745

Unknown maker, 18th Century England

Mahogany, upholstered, 8 x 22 1/8 x 18 3/4"

Anonymous gift, 2024.2a-l

The 4th Earl of Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley-Cooper—a prominent noble at the court of George II—commissioned a renovation of his country estate, St Giles House beginning in the late 1730s, turning it into a showplace for contemporary design. These chairs form a dining set that was part of “an unusually large amount of seat furniture for St. Giles” but from which cabinet maker we do not know: possibly Thomas Chippendale (1718-1779), possibly William Hallett (c. 1707-1781).

Tom Loughman leads a Members First Tuesday talk about the sublime that discussed the dining chairs.



Michael Malpass (American, 1946-1991)

Wedge II, 1978

Welded and forged steel, 36 x 11 x 3"

Gift of the Michael Malpass Art Foundation, 2025.1

Most closely associated with Brooklyn's Pratt Institute where he studied and taught-- and the Jersey Shore where he lived-- Malpass was an innovator of metal sculpture whose work is collected around the world. This transitional work in his career—made at a time when he was experimenting with welding and fused metal in addition to the blacksmithing techniques of his early work—was a centerpiece of the Autumn 2024 exhibition *Sculptor of Wit*.



George Vincent, *Landscape (site unknown)*, c. 1825.

George Vincent (English, 1796-c. 1832)

Landscape (site unknown), c. 1825

Oil on canvas, 40 x 55 1/2"

Gift of Edward M. Lee III

and Aimee Barnes Lee, 2024.3

A major figure within the circle of view-making painters associated with the city of Norwich in England's Norfolk coast, Vincent specialized in portraying country estates, as in this painting, and harbor scenes. He was a pupil of John Crome (1768-1821) and, despite a highly productive start to his career, struggled with addiction and living beyond his means, ultimately disappearing in 1831 and presumed dead a year later.

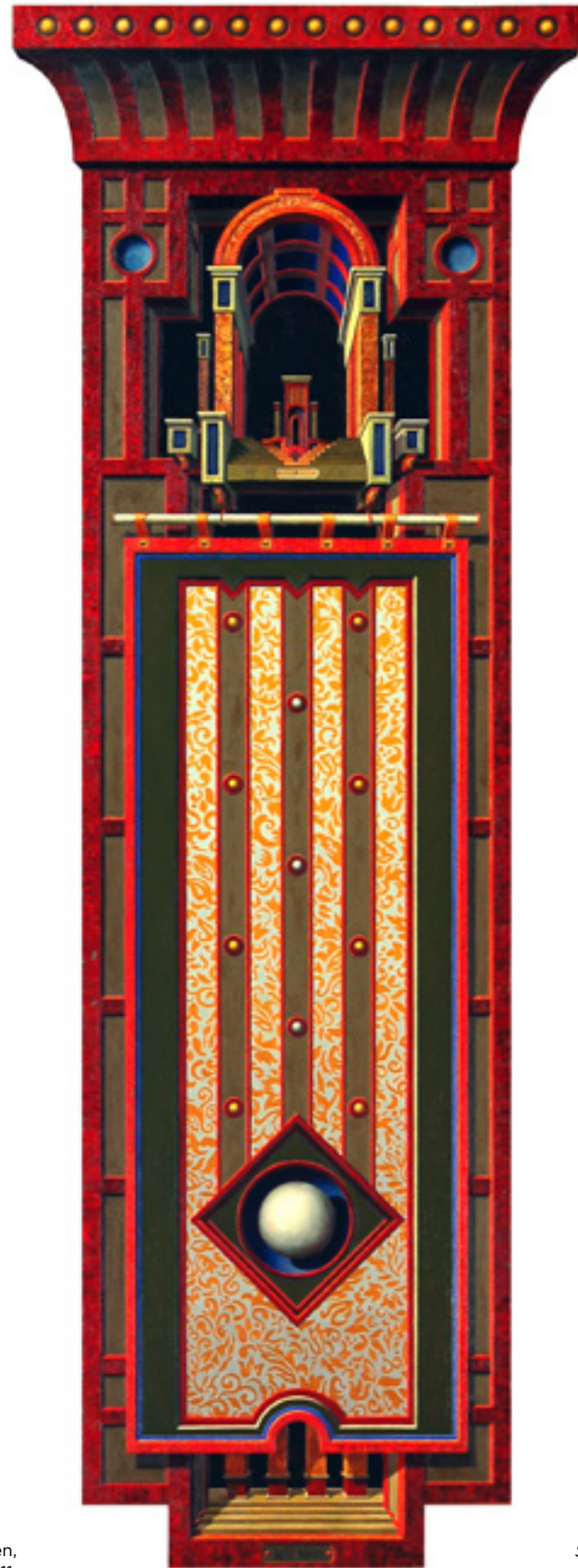
Richard Whitten (American, born 1958)

Segredos, 2011

Oil on wood panel, 59 1/4 x 21 1/2"

Gift of the Artist, 2024.1

Included in the Museum's 2024 exhibition, *Set in Motion: The Kinetic Worlds of Richard Whitten*, this painting exemplifies the artist's celebration of trompe l'oeil effects and monumental architecture, evoking both the grandeur of Renaissance design and the whimsy of American folk art.



Richard Whitten,
Segredos, 2011.

Facing page: James Prosek,
*Self-Portrait as a Burned Log with
Branch of Cedar Elm*, 2023

In Conversation

Art and Nature

An Interview with James Prosek

Accomplished artist and author James Prosek spoke with us about his exhibition *James Prosek: At Work*, giving insight into his practice and perspectives on art-making and the natural world.



Morris Museum: What was your experience creating such an ambitious survey last spring?

James Prosek: Oh, it was a wonderful experience. I was really impressed by how the team chose a few themes to organize the show around, and it flowed very well. I liked how they separated my earlier work—like the children’s book illustrations—from the rest, alongside the Eels and *The Complete Angler* film. It was the first solo show I’ve had in New Jersey

and the biggest survey of my work, which I appreciated. It exceeded my expectations for such an ambitious exhibition.

MM: It was a beautiful show. I hear it repeatedly from visitors. You have frequently returned for other exhibition openings and special events at the Morris Museum. What does that mean to you... what shared connection do you feel?

JP: Yes, I know! In the shows I’ve seen—whether it’s Sally Michel, Sean Cavanaugh,

or even Neil Jenney—there’s a common thread of concern, care, and awareness that our environment matters and that we are part of it. If we treat it poorly, we’re essentially harming ourselves. Without any overt political message, there’s an expression of shared love for the environment. Nature is a source of inspiration for us; the forms created by evolution—from flowers to dinosaur bones—really inspire me. I think the Morris Museum, given its focus on both the Earth’s history and human creations, is the kind of place I naturally gravitate toward.

Lastly, the Princeton Singers event was amazing. The director, Steven Sametz’s comments were very thoughtful. It was deeply moving because the director picked up on the theme of my work, which focuses on my observations and experiences in the environment. He composed a diverse selection of musical pieces from around the world that consistently explored connections with the natural world and indigenous themes, including those related to trees and animals, and even incorporated animal sounds, which I thought was wonderful.

MM: It was quite a performance, and it was their final performance after 41 years! When you first started creating work about nature, there were few contemporaries. What was your experience creating art back then?

JP: Well, so, when I started my career, it was kind of by chance. Not exactly by accident, but it wasn’t completely planned

either. I was an undergrad studying English literature (at Yale University), and I mostly thought I wanted to be an architect because I loved to draw. My father asked, ‘Well, what are you going to do for a living?’ I enjoyed drawing buildings and similar things, and I think I would’ve liked architecture. However, I couldn’t find a book about the trout of North America, so I researched them. I had been working on a project since I was nine years old to document trout, even traveling from age 16 to catch and paint them. When I was a college freshman, I sent out 10 proposals to publish a book on the Trout of North America, and I was lucky to find a publisher. The short story is that the book was published when I was a junior in college, and it did well enough that I thought, well, I could keep drawing, painting, and writing.

That’s how I ended up an artist. I wrote another book, then another, and I’ve never had a traditional job with a steady salary, for better or worse. By my early twenties, I had finished work on my second book of trout paintings [which featured the] trout of Europe, Asia, and North Africa. I was like, well, I’m not sure I want to be pigeonholed as a fish painter for the rest of my life. I started exploring this world of contemporary art that seemed interesting because you didn’t have to be employed by a university, but you could do research and inquiries that sometimes felt slightly academic, and I was drawn to it. I also wanted the least restrictive label possible so I could do whatever I wanted. An artist basically means nothing, and you can do

Installation view of *James Prosek: At Work*.



whatever you want. I worked very hard to be seen as an artist, not a specific kind of artist, but my foundation was a love of the natural world.

MM: You were like a pioneer, making your own way in the art world.

JP: Thirty years ago, if you painted animals, you were essentially an animal painter or a wildlife painter. But I knew that there were a lot of important themes related to our relationship to animals in nature that transcended just painting a picture of an animal. It was a statement about the impossibility of naming things and classifying and taxonomizing the world. I was thinking about things that transcended just painting a representation of something, and I wanted to be able to inject those things into my work. And I learned about conceptual art. I sought out artists who were 15 or 20 years older than me and wanted to learn about those working in the contemporary art scene who also had a deep interest in nature. There were really three main ones that at the time: Mark Dion, Walton Ford, and Alexis Rockman. I was writing articles back then for various magazines, doing journalistic work as well, and I pitched a story to *Men's Journal Magazine* about these three artists, and that gave me an excuse to go visit their studios and write about their work. It was a bit like spy work. But through that article I wrote, which was a long time ago—maybe 25 years—I became friends with all three and spent time with them.

MM: You've said "nature is boundless, not constrained by lines and maps." Could you elaborate on that further?

JP: Basically, nature is this holistic, interconnected, constantly changing thing. Everything influences everything else in an environment, but to communicate it, we have to simplify nature and reduce complexity. If you don't fragment the world, you can't name it. It's been a theme of my work for 30 years, and I don't think that will change. There's a beautiful tension between the named world and the unnamed world. And if we can live in both and understand that the language and the systems we use to describe nature are not nature.

MM: That's a beautiful idea. How do intuitive and highly visual methods, like silhouettes and field guides that you use in your work, foster connections with people today?

JP: Many early written or pictographic languages used symbols that resemble objects in nature. For example, an icon of a snake might represent a snake. From what I can tell, the earliest depictions of animals on cave walls were essentially silhouettes or monochromatic outlines. A lot of information can be conveyed through a silhouette—an impressive amount, considering it's not three-dimensional but two-dimensional. It's completely flat and colorless, just an outline. Perhaps our brains learned to interpret silhouettes as predators many years ago because, often in nature, you only see a backlit figure.

The sun isn't necessarily shining directly on an animal. I would say that more often than not, when you look at a bird against the sky or an animal on the horizon, you're seeing a silhouette rather than a full-color, three-dimensional image.

MM: Yes. That makes perfect sense.

JP: I would imagine that there's a myth about the history of drawing, or a myth that the first drawing was simply tracing a person's shadow on the wall. I believe silhouettes are part of our legacy of reading the landscape, dating back to early hunter-gatherers and continuing to today. These silhouettes have conveyed a lot of information and have been translated into pictographic languages, which eventually evolved into our modern alphabet. In a way, we owe our written languages and our ability to record history to silhouettes. They resonate with us because they've been so important throughout history. Some old field guides use silhouettes to

identify animals in the field because, as I mentioned, often that's all you see—just the silhouette.

It's been a wonderful experience, and thank you all. I'm grateful for the opportunity to have exhibited at the Morris Museum, and I look forward to watching the institution grow and seeing future shows. I'm excited for you guys.

James Prosek, *Great White Shark with Oyster*, 2015.



Performances by Grammy-winning artists delight audiences

The 2024-2025 performing arts season offered a dynamic range of experiences for everyone both indoors in the Bickford Theatre and outdoors during the 6th annual Back Deck concert series. The highest-attended programs included a sold-out collaboration with the Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey featuring objects from the Guinness Collection, Water Gap Jazz Orchestra's Ellington Nutcracker, Amani jazz, and the return of Orpheus Chamber Orchestra featuring Grammy Award-winning pianist Garrick Ohlsson.





Still from the film *Van Gogh: Poets & Lovers*.

Fall 2024

Art on Screen:
Picasso: A Rebel in Paris
September 18

**Orpheus Chamber Orchestra with
Garrick Ohlsson**
September 29

**mr. RAY’s 30th Anniversary
Live Music Show!**
October 19

Dan Levinson & Friends
October 27

**Art on Screen: *Munch: Love,
Ghosts, and Lady Vampires***
October 30

Exhibition on Screen:
Van Gogh: Poets & Lovers
November 20

**Primo Puccini – Celebrating
Puccini with The Baroque
Orchestra of New Jersey**
November 17

The Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey, under the inspiring leadership of Maestro Bob Butts, developed a special performance to coincide with the exhibition *The Trans-Cultural Journey of the Guinness-Puccini Music Box*. Composer Giacomo Puccini heard the music on the very music box in the early 1900s that is now in the Museum’s Guinness Collection and created arias for his most famous operas afterwards. offering a major opportunity for the Museum to present a collection object within a musical context, this sold-out program established an annual collaboration between the Museum and the Orchestra that continues to grow.

Prior spread: Carolyn Dorfman Dance performance in the Bickford Theatre.

Winter 2025

**Great Art on Screen: *Perugino:
Eternal Renaissance***
January 22

**PBS American Masters: *Danielle
Scott: Ancestral Call and Q&A
with Sonia Kennebeck and
Danielle Scott***
February 16

Nimbus Dance
February 21

**Celebrate Mardi Gras with
Thaddeus Exposé!**
March 2

***What Makes It Great?* Hosted by
Rob Kapilow and featuring vocal-
ists Emily Albrink & Ben Jones**
March 12

**Exhibition on Screen: *Dawn of
Impressionism: Paris 1874***
March 19

Film audiences increased in FY25, with this film and *Van Gogh: Poets & Lovers* sharing the highest film sales of the year



Nimbus Dance

**Water Gap Jazz Orchestra:
Duke Ellington’s Nutcracker
and the Grinch Suites**
December 22

Featuring Duke Ellington’s Grandson as narrator, this memorable musical experience has become a popular annual tradition at the Museum. With high-quality artistry, storytelling and humor, this performance also offers a welcoming environment for young visitors and their families to experience professional jazz.

SPRING 2025

A Night of Music and Art with the Princeton Singers
April 3

Film: *Anselm* hosted by Gerard Amsellem
April 8

Daniel Colalillo Piano Trio featuring Special Guests
April 10

Exhibition on Screen: *Michelangelo: Love and Death*
May 21

Art on Screen: *Florence and the Uffizi Gallery*
June 18

Carolyn Dorfman Dance: *LIVE LOVE LAUGH*
April 6

As the Bickford Theatre’s longest artistic relationship, Carolyn Dorfman Dance and the Morris Museum united again for a public performance of works representing their innovative and diverse repertoire over 34 years. As an additional program, Carolyn Dorfman hosted a special open rehearsal for Museum members.



Princeton Singers performing at the Morris Museum.

Orpheus & Anne Akiko Meyers: Beethoven, Haydn, Eric Whitacre, & more!
May 16

One of the world’s most esteemed violinists, Grammy Award-nominated Anne Akiko Meyers shared her trailblazing artistry in a special performance with Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. Taking place just one day before their performance at Carnegie Hall, this concert exemplified the successful way in which the Bickford Theatre offers world-class experiences as a New York City alternative.



Bria Skonberg performing on the Back Deck.

Jazz on the Back Deck 2025

Amani presents The Beatles and Music of All Seasons
June 27

The Fumos
July 12

Lynette Sheard: *Gatsby Reimagined*
July 24

Richard Baratta
August 2

The Alaya Project
August 8

Mike Davis & the New Wonders
September 4

Evan Sherman
September 20

Bria Skonberg
July 17

Trumpeter, vocalist, and composer Bria Skonberg first performed at the Museum as an emerging jazz musician in 2011. Now an established figure in the jazz world and called “the future of hot jazz” by *The New York Times*, she took time from her busy touring schedule to return for the fifth time to a sold-out audience with a lineup of major players in the jazz world.

John Lee & Friends with Roberta Gambarini
July 3

Legendary bassist and former Dizzy Gillespie band member John Lee brought his Grammy-winning sound to the vocals of jazz superstar Roberta Gambarini for a sold-out crowd at their first Morris Museum appearance.



Tesla Quartet performing on the Back Deck.

Lot of Strings on the Back Deck 2025

Frisson Winds
July 10

Cuarteto Latinoamericano
August 7

Tesla Quartet
August 23

Black Oak Ensemble
September 11

Balourdet Quartet
June 14

This notable and relatively new ensemble, known for taking creative risks, presented a vibrant program combining the well-known figure of Josef Hayden with lesser-known composers who have inspired them. Their thoughtful and informative performance embodied the Museum’s educational and artistic values, while also celebrating homegrown virtuosity through ensemble member and Morristown native Justin DeFilippis.

Facing page: Evan Sherman on the Museum’s Back Deck.

In Conversation

Passion & Community Bring Evan Sherman Home

From NYC’s Carnegie Hall to London’s Royal Albert Hall, Evan Sherman is a world-traveling jazz star. He has recently returned from an international tour with Samara Joy to perform at the Morris Museum’s Back Deck for his fifth concert on September 20, 2025. When Sherman was a young prodigy, he honed his drum skills playing alongside jazz legends—a musical education that echoes the tradition of master artists and apprentices. We had the chance to speak with him about his influences and why he always comes back to the Museum’s Back Deck.





Jimmy Fallon and Evan Sherman after filming the Tonight Show on February 16, 2023.

Morris Museum: Who were your first musical influences growing up?

Evan Sherman: With a father who plays guitar, bass, and sings; a mom who plays piano; and my brother, who plays guitar; I naturally chose drums because that completed the family band. My parents enjoyed many genres of music, but I developed a particular liking for the Rolling Stones when I was very young. The drummer Charlie Watts was an early idol of mine, and he actually remains one of the main influences that led me to jazz. My parents took me to the Blue Note in 2001 when I was about nine years old. I saw Charlie Watts playing jazz there with his band. After that, I started to get more into jazz. Growing up in New Jersey, many musicians lived in both New Jersey and New York, so I was able to meet a lot of great jazz musicians as a kid.

MM: Yes, we are lucky to have so many artists and musicians live close by. What are some of the key moments that inspired you to pursue drumming and music?

ES: One very influential figure in my life is John Lee, who I know just performed at the

Morris Museum this past summer. I met him when I was around 15, and I used to go to his house to work for him, helping him mail CDs for his record label. A great trumpet player named Greg Gisbert used to call it Jazz Elfing. We were stuffing envelopes and going to the post office and putting six stamps on these envelopes.

John Lee's house is this beacon of music and art, and he had a weekly gig in South Orange that I used to go and watch all these great musicians play. And a lot of the musicians that would come through were my childhood heroes. And on any given Thursday night, I would find myself playing, sitting at a table, and eating with them. Looking back on those early years in New Jersey, it was a unique experience because it wasn't organized or part of an official program; it was simply an organic experience. One time, I was helping out at a recording session and I had to do my college audition recordings, and John said, "How about we leave the mic set up, and we'll record your college audition tape tomorrow." It just so happened to be with Benny Green, the great pianist, and Greg Gisbert; they were generous enough to help me out. We recorded 10 songs and I got into Julliard and the Manhattan School of Music.

MM: Wow, that must have been quite a recording! In 2014, you formed the Evan Sherman Big Band. What inspired you to start the band?

ES: I met Jimmy Heath when I was 16 years old, and I used to see Jimmy Heath's and



Evan Sherman and band performing on the Back Deck in 2024 with surprise guest singer Samara Joy.

Roy Hargrove's big bands. I was just raised around them. I used to go to the Blue Note as a kid, and when I was 16, I would sit at the bar for two sets and listen to my favorite musicians play big band music. And when I got to college, I started playing. In New York, every age group has the gigs that are typically available to them. I was fortunate to perform at Dizzy's Jazz at Lincoln Center during the late-night sets. I was around 21 when I had the chance to form my own big band. For about six solid years, that band was booking gigs all over the New York area.

MM: In 2017, you began as the artistic director for Jazz for Jennings. Why is it important to share your knowledge with young musicians?

ES: It is very important to pass on the energy and information. I would say that because I was blessed with so many opportunities and generosity from my heroes over the years and continue to feel so grateful to have connections with people that are older

than me, more experienced. One of the many things I love about being a musician is that there's a multi-generational connection across all decades.

MM: What brings you back to the Morris Museum Back Deck year after year?

ES: Oh, man. It always feels great because I grew up nearby, so it's a wonderful chance to reconnect with people I know. I still play in New York quite often when I'm not on tour. When I perform in Morristown, I always run into old friends I haven't seen in a long time. It's especially meaningful to perform at the Morris Museum—a beautiful place with fantastic staff like Lewis and the crew. And is such a peaceful and inspiring environment. I remember my first gig with Justin Coughlin, where a traditional African drum choir performed in the lobby. That moment made me think, yeah, I'll definitely come back here all the time.



Education Programs

Continuing our 112-year commitment to education with a dynamic and multifaceted approach

Education programs in 2024-2025 served a wide range of audiences from young children and families to high school students and older adults. Some of these programs were new initiatives such as a free family tour of the Dino Gallery, a community partnership event during Día de los Muertos featuring projects made by local students and community members, a professional mentorship experience for select graduating seniors at the Morristown Beard School, and education support for Seton Hall University's Museum Professions MA Program.



A young participant during the Día de los Muertos community event.

Spark!Lab

Spark!Lab, the flagship educational initiative of the Smithsonian, is a hands-on invention workspace where children and their families can learn about and engage in the history and process of invention. Spark!Lab offers any child (accompanied by an adult) an informal approach to ignite their ingenuity with compelling and open-ended challenges. Our Morris

Museum Spark!Lab team is comprised of three staff members and 25 dedicated volunteer Ambassadors.

In November 2024, the Morris Museum Education team participated in the Annual Spark!Lab Network Conference in Washington, D.C. which focused on “inventor identity” and how Spark!Lab facilitators can encourage inventive thinking with young visitors.

To celebrate Black History Month, Spark!Lab highlighted its activity *Design a Superhero*, which focuses on the action figure Sun-Man and its creator, Yla Eason; and displayed stories of other outstanding Black inventors and innovators to inspire our visitors as they imagined their own inventions.

Educational Group Visits

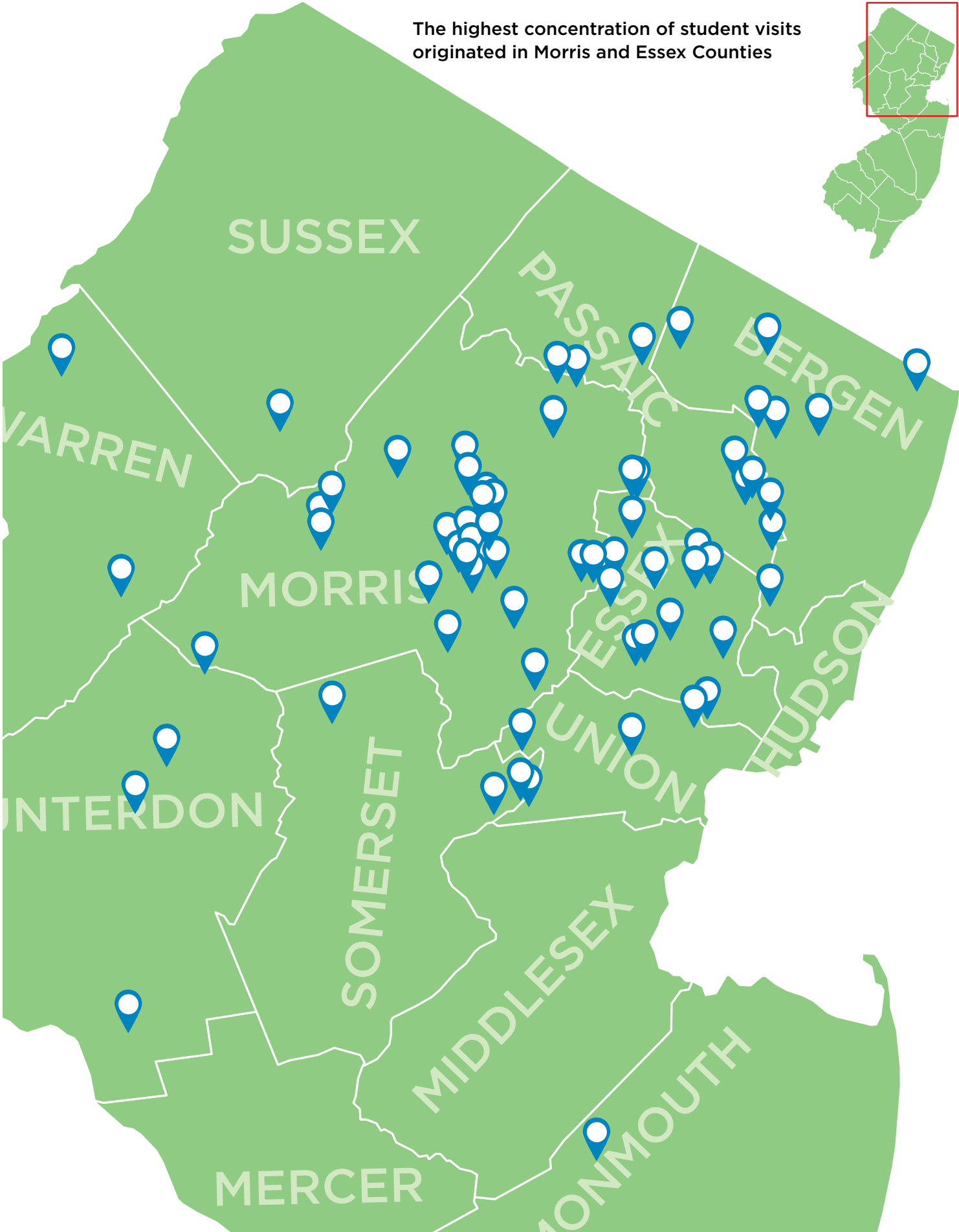
The Education Department provides dynamic educational programming for local schools, camps, and youth groups, on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Students participate in an educator-led tour, a hands-on art-making activity, and an interactive session in our Spark!Lab.

Cristina Rovayo, Associate Educator leads a group visit to the dinosaur exhibit.



We delivered education programming to 69 institutions across northern New Jersey

- | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Acorn Montessori School | Homeschool Village | Philip's Academy Charter |
| Apple Montessori Schools | Jardine Academy | School of Paterson |
| Bayberry School | Jefferson Elementary School | Redeemer Christian School |
| Bedminster Township School | JSDD WAE Center | Ridgewood Ave. School |
| Blairstown Children's Center Preschool & Kindergarten | Lebanon Borough School | Ridgewood Montessori School |
| Byram Lakes Elementary | Lincoln Elementary School | Shalom Yeladim Nursery School |
| Cedarbrook K8 School | Livingston Public Schools | Shepard School |
| Chessie Dentley Academy | Manalapan High School | South Branch Homeschool Co-op |
| School No. 30 | Midland Park School | South Hunterdon Regional High School |
| Clifton High School | Morris County School of Technology | St. Vincent Martyr |
| Clifton School 3 | Morris Plains Borough School | STEM Innovation |
| Clifton School 5 | Morristown Beard School | Academy of the Oranges |
| Clifton School Number 8 | Morristown High School | Stonybrook School |
| Creative Learning Academy | Morrow Memorial Preschool | Susan B. Anthony Elementary School |
| Cresthaven Academy Charter School | Mountview Road School | Sussex Avenue School |
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| Delbarton School | New Horizons Community Charter School | The Goddard School |
| Denville Summer Camp Plus | New Providence Presbyterian Preschool | Montclair |
| Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27 | NJ Harvest Summer School | The Morris Collective Co-op |
| Faith Day Habilitation | North Dover Elementary | The Red Oaks School |
| Frelinghuysen Middle School | North Jersey Homeschoolers | Unity Charter School |
| Girl Scouts of Northern New Jersey | Over the Rainbow Early Learning Center | West Essex YMCA Peanut Shell |
| Good Grief | Parsippany Hills High School | William Mason Elementary School |
| Harding Township School | | Wyoming School |
| Harrison Elementary School | | |



Inspiring Students at the intersection of Art and the Natural World

In a major survey at the Morris Museum, *James Prosek: At Work*, the artist explores fundamental questions about our relationship with nature through his vivid depictions of individual creatures from around the globe. Prosek’s studio practice—which includes painting, drawing, sculpture, mixed-media work and writing—has resulted in a remarkable variety of works. From plein air studies of the birds of Suriname to life-size portraits of ocean fishes of the Atlantic, Prosek chronicles subjects from nature and his experiences with them. A more playful exploration involves the hybrid series, which showcases fantastical creatures in taxidermy that blend realism with imagination.

James Prosek, *Flying Squirrels* (detail), 2013.



The hybrid work initially appears whimsical; his motivation for creating them stems from his own curiosity about naming and language. The artist plays with the meanings in reengineering animals into these freely invented riffs. His straightforward realism drives his point home and delivers the absurdity of naming conventions with a deadpan twist—what would happen if certain creatures became their names almost in protest of us trying to make sense of them through language?

Students creating hybrid drawings (above).
Example of a student hybrid artwork (right).
Overleaf, a montage of student hybrid artwork.

Following a gallery tour of his exhibition, the Museum’s education team asked visiting students to create a drawing of their own Hybrid, including a title and a third object for scale, just as James Prosek does. The results of this program are on the next page.





Crab Cake



Squirrel



Trachabot!



Jellyhorse



Seaphant



Mosquito toothbrush



Qtipturtle



Apple

The Melephant



Duckcat



FroglyFish





Convenings

Building Community Engagement through Public Programs

The ways in which a museum can offer useful connections and address important issues was strongly felt through the partnerships and new connections that formed throughout the year. The Museum increasingly welcomes community convenings in a wide range of formats and on diverse topics. Partners expand the Museum's reach and broaden the creative voices contributing to the public experience.



Solutions Architecture, LLC's design for CANstruction.

CANstruction at the Morris Museum!

September 3, 2024

Members of the design and construction communities are brought together by the Newark & Suburban chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in this unique design competition. Firms

design and assemble original structures made out of canned goods according to a theme. The results are on display in the central areas of the Museum for visitors to enjoy, after which all canned goods are donated to the Community Food Bank of New Jersey.

A W.O.W.! Closing with Malcolm-Jamal Warner

September 15, 2024

The Museum welcomed longtime community partner Art in the Atrium to the Bickford Theatre for a special event and podcast recording to mark the conclusion of their exhibition, *WOW: Women's Outstanding Works*. Actor and Jersey City native Malcolm-Jamal Warner joined Not All Hood podcast co-hosts Candace Kelly and Weusi Baraka to discuss creativity and artistic legacy from a variety of perspectives. Artist Nette Forné Thomas and Art in the Atrium CEO Simone Craig also joined in this lively and warm discussion. Tragically, the creative community lost Warner to an accident in July 2025.

Morristown Fall Festival on the Green

September 29, 2024

The Museum raised awareness within the community and connected directly with both current and potential visitors at this annual festival. The Education Team brought several Spark!Lab activities for children and families to enjoy,



Visitors at the Morris Museum's booth during the Festival on the Green.

Día de los Muertos Family Fiesta

November 2, 2024

The Morris Museum hosted its first Día de los Muertos program in partnership with The Artist's Baker, Solano EXP, Beanie's Ice Cream, Sweet Love Churros, and Central Taqueria. Delbarton, Red Oaks, and Morristown High School students created artistic contributions, and over 250 community members attended the event. Taking place concurrent with the dual-language exhibition *Voices: Mid-century Oaxacan Embroidery and Weaving from the Permanent Collection*, this celebration also marked a step forward in serving the Spanish-speaking community. And, as a high-visibility community event, the Family Fiesta demonstrated the museum's unique ability to offer the public a multifaceted event with a film screening, live music, museum exhibitions, food vendors, and other activities.

Your Brain on Art
Author Susan Magsamen

January 22, 2025

New York Times bestselling author and neuroaesthetics leader Susan Magsamen presented her research into the critical yet undervalued links between art and health from her book, *Your Brain on Art*. Co-presented with Morris Arts, this event brought over 100 attendees to the Museum's Bickford Theatre from art and culture institutions throughout the region.

encouraging attendees to step into the role of an inventor by building their own automata, constructing sturdy bridges, and designing complex gear systems.

Cars and Coffee

October 12, 2024 and June 28, 2025

Over 200 enthusiastic car collectors attended these lively events that were presented in a non-traditional format. Of those who attended to socialize, show off their cars, and explore the galleries, a majority had visited previously but not in recent years, indicating the presence of a specific audience that is poised to be reengaged. Overall, this convening exemplified the importance of being an active part of a community beyond the arts, and the opportunities this brings for visitor growth.



Morris Museum's St. Patrick's Day float drives down Washington Street.

World Premiere of PBS *American Masters: Danielle Scott: Ancestral Call*
February 16, 2025

This groundbreaking PBS short film series dedicated an episode to New Jersey mixed-media artist, Danielle Scott, who concurrently loaned a work of art to the Museum and presented the premiere of the film with Director, Sonia Kennebeck. The result was an impactful multi-modal look at an artist through the artwork on view, the film, and her discussion with visitors. This program was so well-received that it was screened four times in a row as requested by the public, and was featured with Danielle in attendance once again during the Museum's Juneteenth celebration.

Morris County St. Patrick's Day Parade
March 15, 2025

Attended by more than 30,000 people, this is one of the largest parades in the Garden State and 2025 marked the first time the Museum participated. The Museum utilized the opportunity to bolster regional awareness of the

museum through a customized parade float featuring an array of unique Museum elements including a life-size functioning player piano.

Juneteenth Arts Celebration
June 20, 2025

This multi-day celebration across the greater Morris County community united four impactful arts organizations: Art in the Atrium, Mayo Performing Arts Center, Morris Arts, and the Morris Museum. As the host for the final event, the Museum coordinated a dynamic agenda that brought current exhibitions and programs to the public with admission waived.

Affiliate Groups

Mineralogical Society

In September 2025, the Mineralogical Society visited Monmouth County and examined the Cretaceous-era streams near Homdel, NJ, a popular site for fossils, where they collected teeth from extinct goblin and crow sharks, as well as fish like salmon and pycnodonts. Established in 1971, the club promotes interest and education in various earth sciences, especially geology, mineralogy, paleontology, lapidary, and related fields. The club also hosts annual mineral shows: the Annual Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Show in August and the Rock and Mineral Weekend in November.

Astronomical Society

With a robust series of regular lectures and viewings open to the public, the group has been a resource for people interested in astronomy in the area for over 50 years. The meetings include celestial and solar observing sessions, and they offer outreach to schools and civic organizations throughout Northern New Jersey.

Crab Nebula





Every thriving community needs a space where stories are told

At the Morris Museum, that space is made possible by people who believe that art should be accessible, local voices should be heard, and future generations should be inspired.

Every donation to our museum is more than a charitable gift; it is an investment in the cultural and creative fabric of the community.

Donors are not just supporters of our museum—they are visionaries who understand that when we invest in creativity, we invest in connection, wonderment, and a shared sense of pride.

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A memorable wedding moment at the Museum's Pavilion. The museum's rental program hosts 48 events each year.

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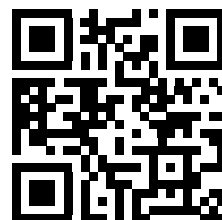
Installation view of visitors viewing sand samples in *TULA TELFAIR: N A T U R E does not locate itself*.

1913 Circle

The Museum's Planned Giving Program

The Morris Museum creates experiences that bring generations together and those experiences become the thread that is woven into our lives, today and beyond. A simple, flexible, and versatile way to help the Morris Museum continue to bring generations together is through a gift in your will or living trust, known as a charitable bequest. As part of the Morris Museum legacy you will be able

to continue to help the museum share the exhibits, programs and performances that have thrilled you throughout your lifetime and will inspire those yet to see them. Join the generous donors who have already made a commitment to the future of the Morris Museum.



[Scan to go to our Planned Giving Page](#)

Installation view of *Sally Michel, Brilliant Legacy*.





Curator Bryant Small gives an exclusive tour to the Berkley One staff.

Donor Spotlight

“Berkley One is a proud corporate supporter of the Morris Museum, as we both share a commitment to fostering creativity, innovation, and public engagement through the arts. Our Community Museums program operates with the mission of supporting institutions like the Morris Museum and its unique blend of art, science, and history, which aligns with our values of helping to preserve our clients and community’s cultural heritage.

Just as the Morris Museum is grounded in the local community, so is Berkley One as we work with clients across New Jersey to provide expertise and solutions to help protect the things that matter most to them, including art and collectibles.”

*Kathleen Tierney, President of Berkley One,
a Berkley Company*



Morris Museum President’s Circle The Leaders Delivering the Vision of the Museum

The vision of the Morris Museum is articulated simply: we will make good on the promise of being the region’s premier engine of curiosity and wonderment. To bring this vision to reality we rely on an informed collective of our friends, members, neighbors, and other supporters. Those who love the Museum and admire what we are trying to accomplish commit to us because they believe in its strength, impact, and ability to realize this vision for everyone, these individuals are members of our President’s Circle.

The generosity and engagement of the President’s Circle enables our work to positively impact the lives of thousands across northern New Jersey and beyond. More than any other support group, the President’s Circle members understand the importance of planning, recognize great programming and understand welcoming the public. The time we spend together promotes greater understanding, community, and a camaraderie around our common commitment to support the Museum. We also have a lot of fun at special events at the Morris Museum and experiences beyond our walls such as visiting artist studios and VIP access to art fairs and special receptions. To become a member of the President’s Circle you are invited to engage our President and CEO, Tom Loughman; you may message him directly through this QR code.



The President’s Circle trip to visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibit *Siena: The Rise of Painting, 1300–1350*.



To join please scan
and message our
President Tom
Loughman

Building an Engine of Curiosity and Wonderment

A Master Campus Plan in the Works

Over the past two years, leadership at the Morris Museum has set ambitious goals and achieved them. One major accomplishment was completing Phase One of a historic preservation project of Twin Oaks (1913)—the McKim, Mead & White mansion built for the Frelinghuysen-Havemeyer family, which was finished on time and within budget in spring 2024. The Morris Museum continues this momentum with a master campus plan. It envisions integrating our expansive outdoor

space with inside experiences as well as enhancing and enlarging those inside spaces to present dynamic programming. This plan will bring significant benefits to the community by creating jobs and boosting regional tourism.

These goals became fully clear with our recently developed strategic plan that began in July 2024 with the assistance of Purple Valley Strategies and was adopted in March 2025. The plan outlines a path to

doubling the Museum’s operating impact and scale within five years. This led to the emergence of a campus master plan, which began in December 2024 with the help of Zubatkin Owners Representation. This effort further analyzed current and future program needs, systematically assessing the facilities and site with a critical eye toward current conditions, executing planned reinvestment in infrastructure, and phased campus enhancements for an exceptional visitation experience. To fund these planning activities, the Museum executed a \$250,000 mini campaign within the Museum’s board and reached that goal in 8 short weeks, demonstrating the commitment of the Board and their desire to reshape the museum for the next generation.

Enriching the lives of New Jerseyans with exemplary exhibitions and performances of art, design, and science is the mission of the Morris Museum. Our institution aims to transform our cultural campus into a more inviting and modern space for community involvement. In evaluating how well the institution is prepared to serve 21st-century New Jerseyans, we identified the following goals:

- **Moving to a more seamless, indoor-outdoor cultural experience for all visitors.**
- **Enhancing the quality and overall space dedicated to Mission delivery.**
- **Reinvesting in our campus and built environment to increase the total space for special exhibitions and educational programs, and to expand the available area for long-term collection displays.**
- **Expanding facilities to accommodate the public, including improved amenities.**

The Morris Museum will work steadfastly in the upcoming fiscal year to continue its progress on these crucial goals.

View of Twin Oaks Mansion.





Gala Floral display in Pavilion.
(Below) Illusionist Simon Mandal wows our gala attendees.

Gala Committee

Marsha Baldinger, Trustee
Joanne DelRio
Laurie Goldberg
Lynn Goldberg
Hon. Donna Guariglia, Mayor Morris
Township
Allie Hixson
Cecily Johnson
Genesia Perlmutter Kamen
Linda Levi
James Yarosh Associates
Fine Art Gallery

Morris Museum Gala 2025 Museum in Motion: Celebrating Museum Education

The Morris Museum's 2025 Gala, held at the Museum on Saturday, March 29th, celebrated the Museum's 112 years of educational impact. The theme was intertwined with the art and nature of featured artist James Prosek whose journey through nature and expressed with a variety of mediums is emblematic of the expression of the educational programs and opportunities at the Morris Museum. Further intertwining museum themes, the Master of Ceremonies for the evening,

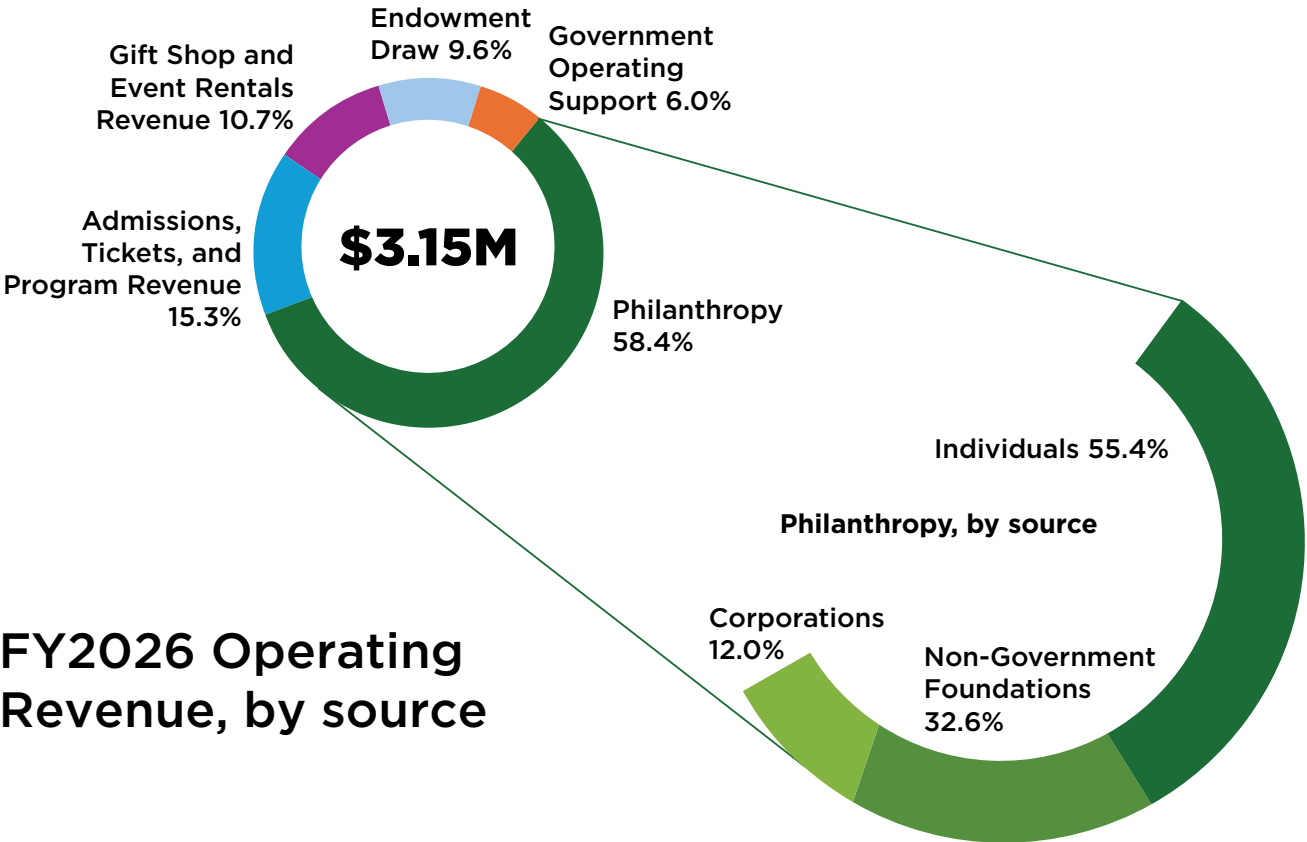
nationally recognized illusionist Simon Mandel, performed for the audience and shared the stage with "cup and ball" automata illusionists from our Murtough D. Guinness Collection.

The evening abounded in celebration as the ambience was enhanced through astounding flower arrangements, and scrumptious food all influenced by the nature-influenced art of James Prosek. Museum supporters enjoyed live jazz

music throughout the evening from Walt Bibinger and Martin Pizzarelli Jr. Those in attendance brought new levels of support to the museum, acknowledging the work of the education team, the history of their impact and a desire to be part of the current and future excellence that resonates through every facet of the Morris Museum.

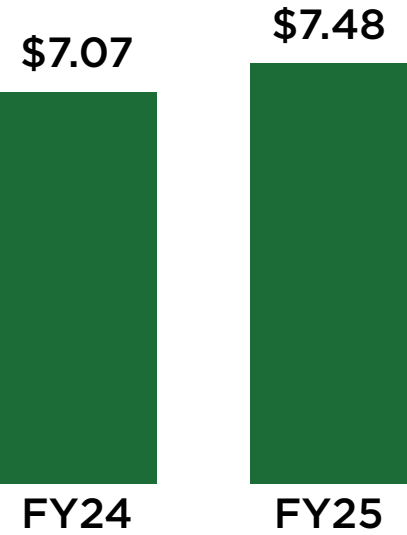


Financial Profile



FY2026 Operating Revenue, by source

Market Value of Investments
Stated in Millions



54.5%
of our visitors reside
outside
Morris County

The Morris Museum Statement of Activities
for the Year Ended June 30, 2025

Stated in Thousands

	2025		
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Revenues, Gains and Other Support:			
Endowment Draw	\$ 291	-	\$ 291
Private Contributions	\$ 828	\$ 341	\$ 1,169
Fundraising Events	209	-	209
Program	592	-	592
Grants; General Operating			
Government	191	-	191
Foundation	163	-	163
Gift Shop Net	41	-	41
Other Income	1	-	1
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	475	(475)	-
Total Revenues, Gains and Other Support	2,791	(134)	2,657
Expenses:			
Program Services			
Exhibits and Education	1,602	-	1,602
Theatre	658	-	658
Total Program Services	2,260	-	2,260
Supporting Services:			
Fundraising and Marketing	656	-	656
Administrative	383	-	383
Total Supporting Services	1,039	-	1,039
Total Expenses	3,299	-	3,299
Change in Net Assets	(508)	(134)	(642)
Non Operating Income (Expense)			
Depreciation	(583)	-	(583)
Amortization	(1)	-	(1)
Capital Repair and Replacement		89	89
Investment Income	47	216	263
Endowment New Capital*		76	76
Interest Expense	(99)	-	(99)
Releases from Endowments	(81)	(210)	(291)
Emergency Facilities Expenses	(193)	-	(193)
Realized/Unrealized Investment Gain/Loss	124	244	368
Master Planning			
Contributions	231	-	231
Professional Services	(239)	-	(239)
Total Non-Operating Income (Expense)	(794)	415	(379)
Net Assets - Beginning of year	5,533	7,226	12,759
Net Assets - End of year	\$ 4,232	\$ 7,508	\$ 11,740

*New Jersey Cultural Trust Certified Donation Program

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Morris Museum

6 Normandy Heights Road, Morristown, NJ - morrismuseum.org