

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

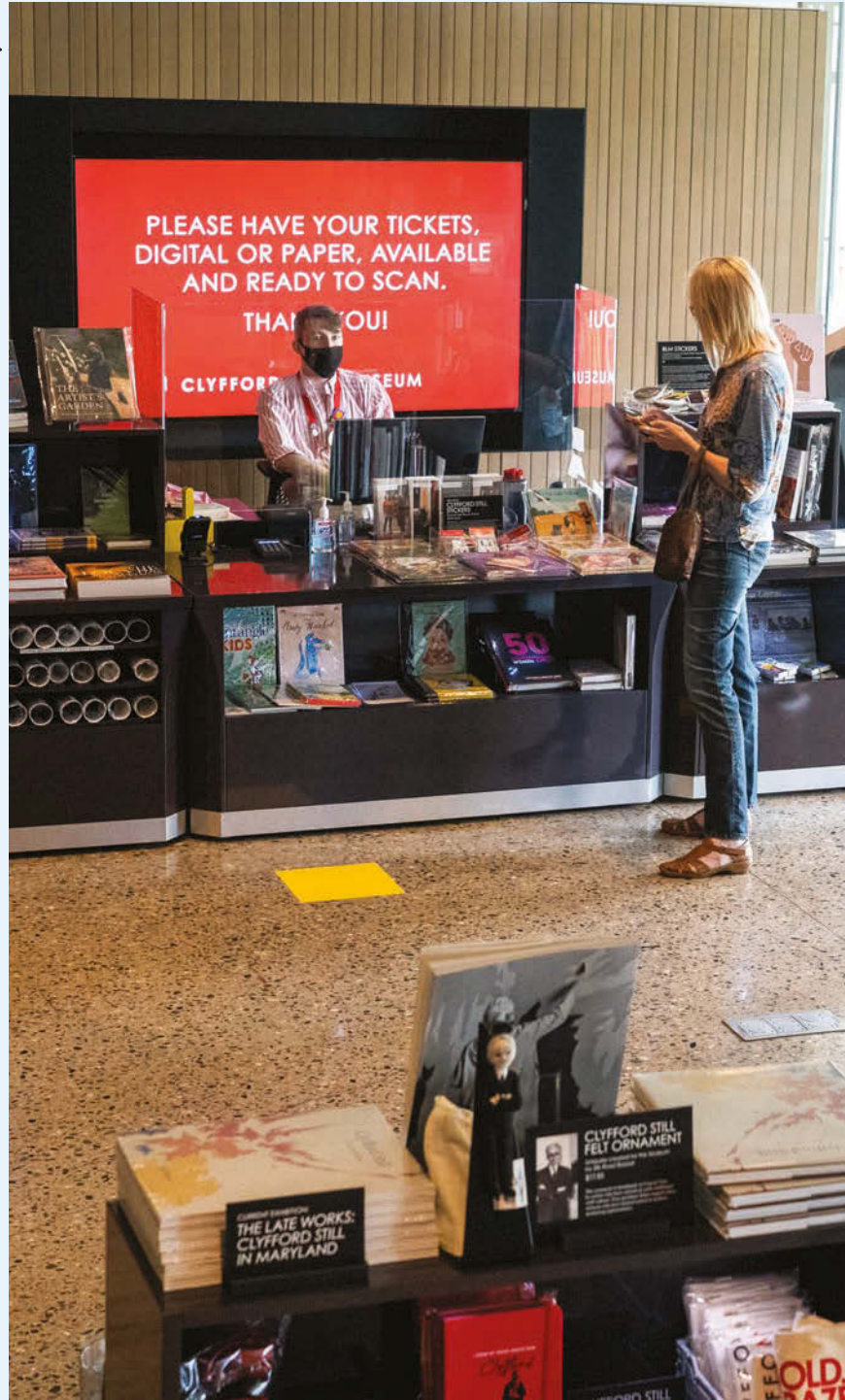


CLYFFORD STILL MUSEUM



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>President's and Directors' Report</i>	2
Message from Chris Hunt, Dean Sobel, and Joan Prusse	
<i>2020 Board of Directors</i>	3
<i>The Year in Review</i>	4
<i>Exhibitions</i>	4
<i>Mission Highlights</i>	8
<i>Public Programs and Events</i>	10
<i>New Engagement</i>	12
<i>2020 Staff</i>	13
<i>Financial Report</i>	15
<i>Contributors and Supporters</i>	16
<i>Membership (\$1,000 level and above)</i>	17



PRESIDENT'S AND DIRECTORS' REPORT

The year 2020 was challenging, but it also brought opportunities to the Clyfford Still Museum to serve visitors and connect to audiences in new ways. In January, CSM opened *The Early Years: Clyfford Still in Canada, 1920–33*, which showed the early development of Still's artistic practices in Bow Island and Killam, Alberta. This exhibition was open just eight weeks before the pandemic forced our closure from March 14–July 1. During the closure, CSM encouraged visitors to view Still's artwork by the online collection and offered free live programs and events on Zoom and YouTube. Virtual programs drew local, national, and international participants.

Retaining staff was a top priority during the closure, and CSM devised projects to keep all staff members engaged and actively employed. CSM honored pre-closure job offers and welcomed two new archivists in late spring. Onboarding these employees was challenging but successful. CSM also honored pre-closure commitments to partners, including local artists, and found ways to present previously planned programs in the changing world. Staff continued DEAI work through virtual sessions with our community task force members.

CSM staff developed new operating protocols to enable staff and visitors to return to the Museum as safely as possible. Upon reopening the Museum in July, city mandates required CSM to limit visitor capacity, so the Museum offered timed entry for almost a full year. In the fall, CSM launched a new interactive gallery experience via *Virtual Gallerie*, enabling those reluctant to visit in person to experience exhibitions online. During the year, CSM's reach grew through online engagement, and impressions and views were up by over 20%.

The Late Works: Clyfford Still in Maryland opened in September, representing the culmination of nearly ten years of inventory, research, and conservation work, and included archival recordings of Still discussing his art (in Spanish and English). In the fall, the Museum offered two virtual options for its free inStill School Program: *inStill Live* (classes held live on various platforms) and *inStill On Demand* (pre-recorded classes available on request).

In 2020, the Museum welcomed 15,178 visitors and ended the year with 946 member households.

CHRISTOPHER HUNT
*President,
Board of Directors*

DEAN SOBEL
Director (Jan.-Sept.)

JOAN PRUSSE
*Interim Director
(Sept.-Dec.)*



2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Sarah Anschutz
- Daniel Benel, *treasurer*
- Albus Brooks
- Sandra L. Still Campbell
- Ramey Griffin Caulkins
- Steve Chavez
- Susannah Drake
- Jennifer Evans, *vice president*
- Jeremy J. Flug
- Curt R. Freed, M.D.
- Andrew Freyer
- Christoph Heinrich
- City Council Rep. Chris Hinds
- Christopher W. Hunt, *president*
- Bobby LeFebre
- Rob McDaniel
- Kent Rice
- Maruca Salazar
- Judy Schiff
- Mark Smith
- Morris Susman, M.D., *secretary*
- Ginger White

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

EXHIBITIONS

The Early Years: Clyfford Still in Canada, 1920–33

January 17–August 23, 2020

Situated in the Museum’s first three galleries, *The Early Years: Clyfford Still in Canada, 1920–33* illustrated the early development and legacy of Still’s artistic practices in two distinctive Canadian geographical settings, Bow Island (1920–25) and Killam, Alberta (1925–33). This exhibition, organized by guest curator Patricia Failing, was the third in a series she organized tracing Still’s inspirations and achievements during his first two decades as a young artist. A new historical and biographical context for the Canadian work was offered in the catalog for the exhibition.

Nearly all of Still’s work from Bow Island, aside from portraits, represents the area’s seasonal prairie environment. Severe droughts, harsh winters, and abrupt shifts in weather conditions were typical in this inhospitable dry belt. Allusions to these hardships, however, are notably absent from Still’s sunny Bow Island landscapes, sketches of plants and animals, and atmospheric color studies.

In 1925, Still’s family moved 230 miles north to Killam, where farming conditions were more promising. Like his practice in Bow Island, Still’s Killam paintings and drawings concentrate on the landscape around his family’s farm. “The contrast between Bow Island and Killam work is not terribly difficult to ascertain,” said Failing. As Still wryly observed, “on the prairie, it is always tan.” In



contrast to Bow Island, however, the prairie in Killam also hosts groves of deciduous trees, small ponds and banks of leafy shrubs.

It was not only the landscape that changed in Still’s art. With additional artistic training in the mid- and late-1920s, his work became technically more adventuresome. Earlier drawings and paintings are primarily observational recordings of landscapes, railroads and grain elevators based on verbal and visual notes. After the move north Still depicts many of the same subjects, but draws more attention to aesthetic effects. Grain elevators and other structures are treated as shafts of atmospheric colored light penetrating long, horizontal stretches of sky. Compositions become more complex and the drawings document a new facility with rendering human figures in action. Still’s color palette brightens and he expands his repertoire of painting techniques.

These shifts during the first ten years of his artistic career were relatively subtle, Failing observed. “It’s not that his recordings become more ‘advanced;’ it is that he’s broadening his capabilities,” she said. Despite environmental contrasts and the relative sophistication of Still’s work of the later 1920s, both his Bow Island and Killam images convey his experiences in a familiar and comfortable environment, standing apart from his later preoccupation with the uncanny and sublime.

The exhibition concluded with some of Still’s later, mature abstractions, which Still believed “have nothing to do with prairie,” the chromatic and special effects that emerge in the work of the 1970s on view in a third gallery, however, indeed echo some of his youthful beginnings.



EXHIBITIONS

The Late Works: Clyfford Still
in Maryland

September 18, 2020–March 21, 2021

This exhibition, the first of its kind, investigated Clyfford Still’s later works, both in painting and in drawing, made after his move to rural Maryland in 1961. This marked a particularly fertile period for Still; he made over 375 works on canvas and over 1,100 works on paper, nearly all in pastel, in Maryland before his death in 1980 at the age of 75. Given Still’s especially reclusive posture later in life and the fact that few late works were distributed or shown during his lifetime, a full-scale presentation of these works is especially meaningful. The exhibition included approximately 40 paintings and 30 works on paper.

Still’s art evolved in a number of significant ways in the early 1960s. Perhaps most notable was a general broadening of his palette and an increasing economy of imagery. Implied movement also became more vivid, as if his painted forms were being set in motion by invisible forces. Still also developed new processes, such as roller brushes, and formats during this period. Given the nature of its collection, the Museum has the unique ability to present both unseen masterworks but also roads not taken, including insightful experimental works or bodies of works that underscore particular painting problems he was trying to solve.

This exhibition also represented the culmination of a nearly ten-year inventory, research, and conservation project in which CSM unrolled, catalogued, and stretched many late works, most for the first time, so they could be studied and made accessible as part of this exhibition.

To accompany the exhibition, CSM and Rizzoli Electa jointly released *Clyfford Still: The Late Works* catalog, which investigated Still’s late works in painting and drawing and included essays by Dean Sobel and David Anfam, along with forewords by artists Alex Katz and Dorothea Rockburne on the notion of late work.

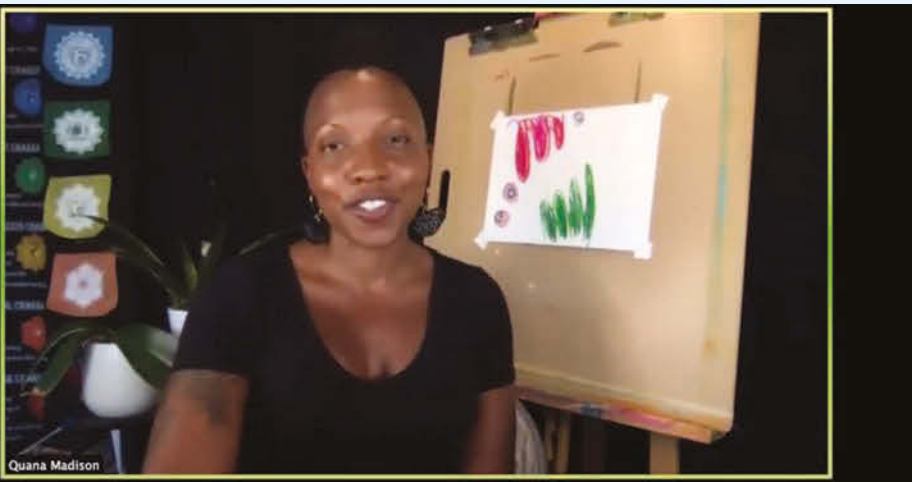
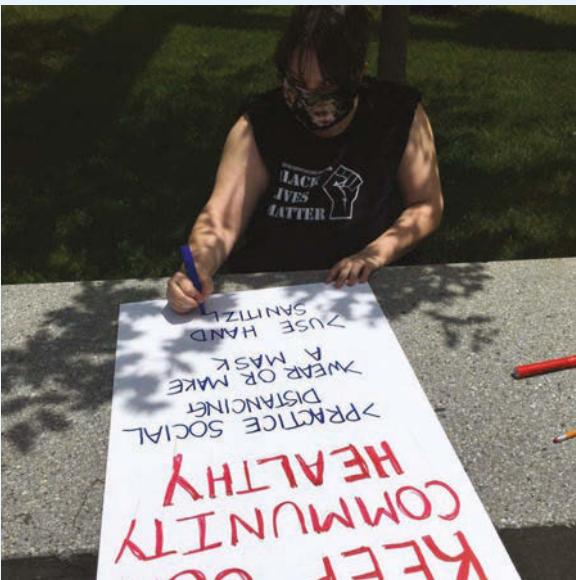


MISSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Clyfford Still Museum’s efforts around diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) formally began in 2015 in connection with an exhibition-supporting grant from the National Education Association (NEA). Over 18 months, the Museum created new policies and practices, built an accessibility page on its website, created captions for videos, made Spanish-language translations of exhibition text, trained staff on various accessibility topics, and partnered with the Alzheimer’s Association of Colorado to develop SPARK! Tours for visitors experiencing memory loss. More recently, the Museum updated the Family Activity Book to be more accessible, playful, and bilingual in English and Spanish and launched multisensory tours in 2020.

CSM also formed a community advisory committee in 2020, which was composed of individuals from diverse backgrounds. The committee helped the Museum understand the needs of different groups and their barriers to participating with the Museum; they assisted with exhibition content, wrote blogs for CSM’s website, and helped expand the Museum’s reach into new communities. CSM started a monthly Instagram takeover, inviting artists from diverse communities in Denver to visit the Museum and post about their experiences, their perspectives, and their own work. These takeovers garnered almost 9,000 engagements with CSM’s Instagram pages and helped the Museum reach new audiences virtually.

To make the Museum’s virtual content more accessible, CSM provided closed captioning for



all programs, and sign language and Spanish language interpretation on request. The Museum now distributes printed material in English and Spanish, including a family activity book and exhibition text translations. The Museum also improved its website to enhance accessibility.

Working closely with Black Lives Matter organizers, CSM educators created protest sign-making stations in the Museum’s forecourt in the summer of 2020. CSM staff offered a sign-making pop-up station at the student-led Denver Public Schools rally for BLM and celebrated Manual

High School’s Juneteenth parade with sign, button, and bracelet making. During the pandemic, CSM partnered with Phamaly Theatre, Laradon, Feel the Beat, and other organizations to host a day of free, virtual, and accessible artmaking and activities for all ages.

The Clyfford Still Museum plans to engage all staff more fully to ensure that DEAI is woven into the fabric of the Museum. We are committed and eager to welcome broader audiences to the Museum and make CSM even more accessible and welcoming.

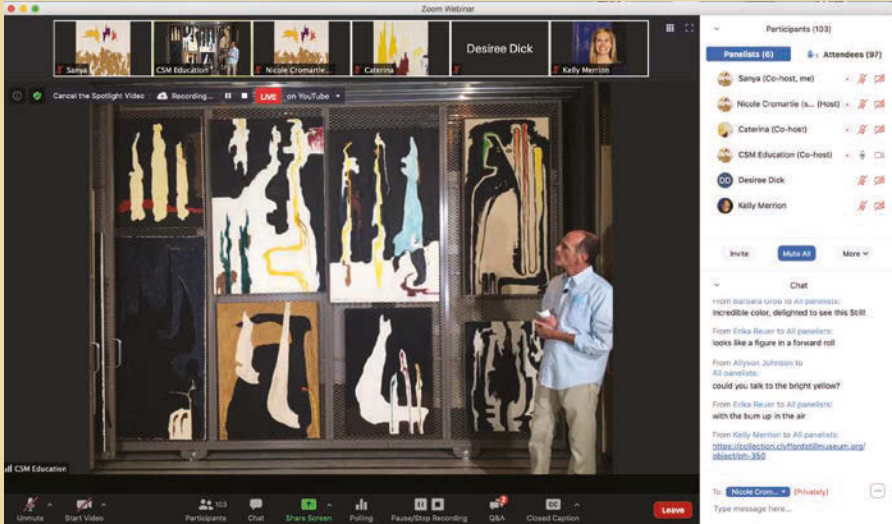
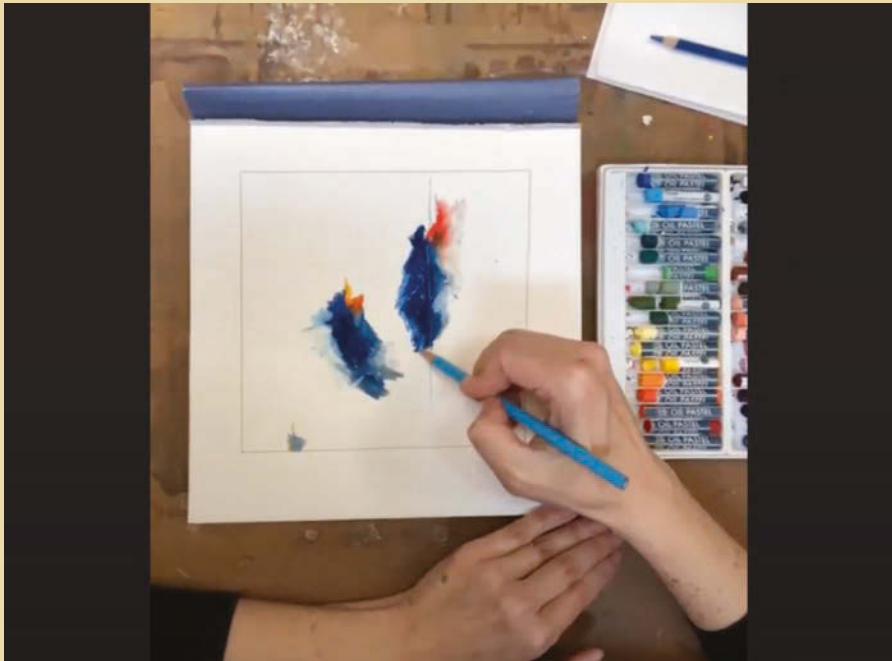
2020 PUBLIC PROGRAMS
AND EVENTS

Following the Museum’s temporary closure starting mid-March 2020, CSM staff asked how they could continue fostering meaningful, accessible engagement with our collections during a global pandemic. CSM had no history in providing virtual programs and recognized the importance of research to create virtual experiences to help fulfill its mission and connect with audiences in accessible and timely ways. Museum leadership encouraged education and programming staff to consider it a moment for experimentation. Following a short period of research and informal consultation with experts, CSM began offering free virtual programs and live events on Zoom and YouTube in April 2020. Virtual programs included a variety of offerings for adult audiences (artist talks, workshops, virtual tours, behind-the-scenes experiences, panel discussions, film screenings, and music events) as well as a newly conceptualized free virtual summer camp for children and virtual school programs.

In fall 2020, classroom teachers had access to two new virtual school offerings: *inStill On Demand*, which included pre-recorded videos of education sessions available for streaming anytime; and *inStill Live*, with real-time, interactive, virtual educational experiences with CSM educators for 4th- through 12th-grade classrooms.

In October 2020, CSM contracted evaluation consultants *Create Knowledge* to help staff better understand virtual programs, asking what attracted participants to them, to what extent the programs were engaging, and to what extent they were accessible. Staff implemented changes to these programs based on the findings and continued to make decisions informed by the study.

Because the Clyfford Still Museum has an extensive web presence with more than 2,500 of Clyfford Still’s artworks in the online collection and a



vast online archive database, CSM offered quality online content in the early days of the pandemic closure. The Museum also launched an interactive virtual gallery experience on its website using the same software the curatorial team uses to curate the Museum’s exhibitions, *Virtual Gallerie*.

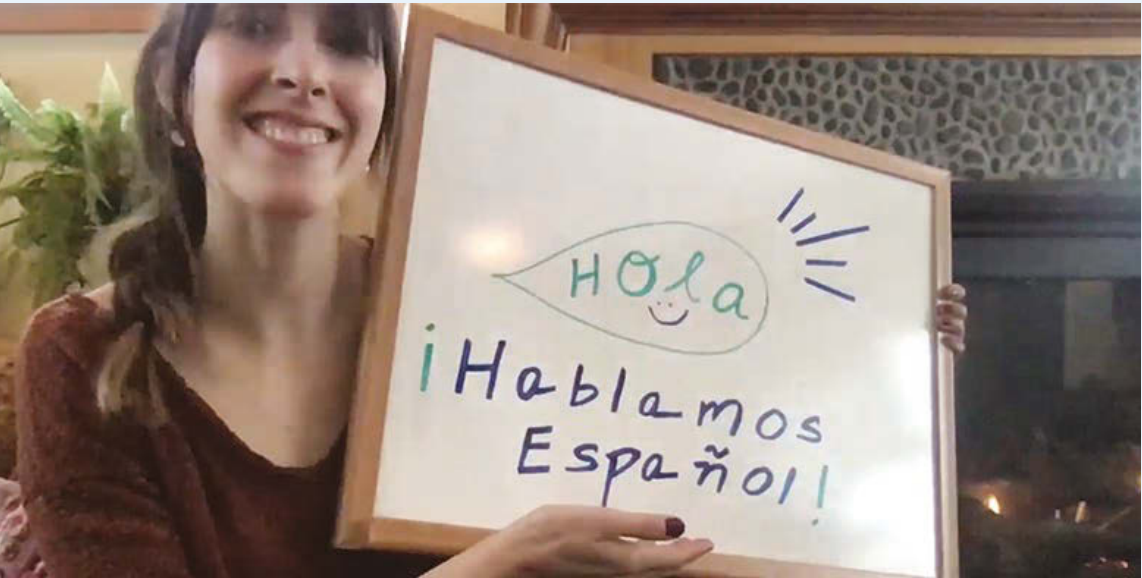
When the Museum reopened after its first COVID-19 closure, it substantially enhanced safety and cleaning protocols, including measures to ensure visitors could maintain social distancing. CSM created a no-touch or low-touch visitor experience throughout the Museum and offered free Making Space To-Go artmaking kits for visitors to take home inspired by Clyfford Still’s work.



NEW ENGAGEMENT

With the Museum’s tenth anniversary on the horizon, CSM reflected on who it serves and how it might thoughtfully expand its reach. Based on research demonstrating the positive impacts of early museum experiences on the development of young children and the connections between aesthetic preference in young children and CSM’s collection, Museum staff identified a new target audience for the Museum: children ages eight and under and their adults. To support this exciting new initiative, CSM developed critical program development partnerships during 2020 to ensure it created with, and not just for, the communities the Museum aims to serve. CSM will kick off this new commitment to serving young children with an exhibition curated with young children, *Clyfford Still, Art, and the Young Mind*. Education and curatorial staff partnered with teachers from schools and early childcare centers to collaborate with young children from around the Front Range. With CSM staff support and coaching, the children organized every aspect of the exhibition, from developing a checklist to interpretation and marketing. Much of the research for this project was done via Zoom in 2020 and will culminate in the exhibition’s opening in March 2022.

In 2020, CSM also developed the foundation for K-3 inStill experiences, gained valuable perspectives on CSM’s collection through the eyes of young children and their teachers, and learned new ways of working with the community. While hitting these key partnership targets was a great success, it is more important to note that these partnerships will continue to help CSM build a reputation as a trusted organization serving young children.



2020 STAFF

ADMINISTRATION

- Sanya Andersen-Vie
- Tony DeSantis
- Desiree Dick
- Virginia Dickinson
- Kristin Feldkamp
- David Finch
- Jacob Gutierrez
- Majken Koczara
- Debbie Linster
- Kelly Merrion
- Joan Prusse
- Sonia Rae
- Dean Sobel

COLLECTIONS

- Milo Carpenter
- Rachel Hancock
- Michal Mikesell
- Bailey Placzek
- Britt Scholnick
- James Squires

VISITOR SERVICES

- Marie Azzaro
- Violet Cruz
- Andrew Cushen
- Jennifer Davey
- Patrick Harrison
- Katie Watson

EDUCATION & PROGRAMS

- Trisha Ackerman
- Steven Aguiló-Arbues
- Emily Bullard
- Nicole Cromartie
- Nicole Fleck
- Allyson Johnson
- Corinne Kannenberg
- Kenda Keenan
- Marilyn Lindenbaum
- Quána Madison
- Emily Mullen Stenerson
- Gillian Terrace
- Melissa Thoet
- Caterina Zischke-Rincon



FINANCIAL REPORT

The summarized financial information below reflects year-end results for the Museum's operations during the fiscal year ended December 31, 2020.

SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For the year ended December 31, 2021

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Gifts and Grants

Change in value of long-term pledges	\$27,419
SCFD	\$322,694
Government grant	\$325,300
Grants from related entity	\$2,416,667

General contributions

	\$267,599
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Admissions

	\$53,597
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Membership

	\$88,259
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Other

	\$38,761
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Investment income

	\$0
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TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$3,494,704
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EXPENSES

Program Services

Education and programs	\$836,342
Museum building and galleries	\$888,569
Exhibitions and collections	\$922,513

Supporting Services

General and administrative	\$1,439,383
Fundraising	\$152,539

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4,239,346
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CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(\$744,642)
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(Excludes Clyfford Still Museum Foundation)

CONTRIBUTORS AND SUPPORTERS

\$100,000+
The Clyfford E. Still Endowment Fund
Scientific and Cultural Facilities District
Small Business Administration

\$10,000–\$99,999
Bank of America
Deborah J. Buck Foundation
Michael D. Horton
Robert McDaniel
John T. Pfannenstein
Riverfront Park Community Foundation
U.S. Bank Foundation
Wisecarver-Brown Charitable Trust

\$1,000–\$9,999
Sheila S. Bisenius
Sandra S. Campbell
The Collaborative of the SCFD
Ann Corrigan and Kent Rice
Susannah Drake and Montgomery C. Cleworth
Jennifer Evans and Jack Tankersly
Harmes C. Fishback Foundation Trust
Lena Fishman and Daniel Benel
Angie and Jeremy J. Flug
Nancy and Dr. Curt R. Freed
Giddy up Fund at The Denver Foundation
Robin and John Hickenlooper
Arlene and Barry Hirschfeld
Christopher Hunt
Kent Charity Fund



\$1,000–\$9,999 (CONTINUED)
Ann and Harold R. Logan, Jr.
Lizbeth Lynner and James Palenchar
Sharon and J. Landis Martin
Kelly L. Merrion
Joan Prusse and Robert Musgraves
Myra and Robert Rich
Judy and Richard Schiff
Mark Smith
Dean Sobel
Jodie and Maxwell Wilson Foundation

UP TO \$999
Too many to list, thank you!



MEMBERSHIP (\$1,000 LEVEL AND ABOVE)

DIRECTOR'S CIRCLE (\$5,000)
Sharon and J. Landis Martin
Craig Ponzio

CURATOR'S CIRCLE (\$2,500)
Susan and Richard Anderson
Lindsey and Pete Leavell
Mark Smith

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE (\$1,000 LEVEL AND ABOVE)
Sheila Bisenius
Ellen Bruss and Mark Falcone
Merle Chambers
Susannah Drake and Montgomery C. Cleworth
Jennifer Evans and Jack Tankersley

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE (CONTINUED)
Angie and Jeremy Flug
Andrew Freyer and Kinny Bagga
Laura and David Merage
George Messina
Judy and Rick Schiff



All photos by James Dewhirst and CSM Staff