

STRATEGIC PLAN

Vision 2030



February 2026

STILL Clyfford
Still
Museum

A Vision of the Future

3

New Strategic Declarations

9

Strategic Framework

13

Pillar I: Legacy

15

Pillar II: Audiences & Engagement

23

Pillar III: Resources

27

Implementation Narrative

29

1

A Vision of the Future



JOYCE TSAI

Director
Clyfford Still Museum

Clyfford Still entrusted over 93% of his life's work to an unnamed American city in his will. Denver vied for the honor and in 2011 opened an award-winning architectural marvel to house over 3,000 artworks. The Clyfford Still Museum, which embodies one of the most exceptional acts of generosity by an American artist, is perfectly calibrated to store, study, conserve, and show his work. We have built a loyal and expert staff that has forged collaborative approaches to research, education, and curatorial practice.

In recent years, our artist-curated exhibitions have attracted international attention for broadening our engagement with Still beyond the narrow confines of Abstract Expressionism. *"Tell Clyfford I Said 'Hi'"*, co-curated with the children of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, was celebrated in the New York Times as a model for community-led museum practice. Our infant program, Art Crawl, has received praise for its research-based approach to creating transformative experiences for babies and their families at the Museum. Since its inception in March 2022, we've served nearly 4,000 participants at the Museum and at sites throughout the Denver Metro Area, including Denver Public Library branches and Catholic Charities' Mariposa Early Childhood Education Center, through Art Crawl in Community.

In 2024, we began piloting the Clyfford Still Museum Institute, a residential fellowship program that encourages new perspectives on Still, his work, and our Museum with research drawn from our collections and expertise. Our Institute advisory board, comprising leading voices in art, education, and business, champions the transformative potential this program has for the museum field.

More than a storehouse for a leading Abstract Expressionist, the Museum has positioned itself as an institution animated by the renegade spirit and ethos of our namesake. We hold the vast majority of his life's work because he refused to treat his art merely as commodities or objects endowed with meaning by rarified experts. He did not title his works to give the public the courage to frame our own responses to his art. He gave his work to an American city because he knew it could and should have profound civic impacts. His ambition, as he shared in a letter to his former gallerist, was to make paintings that could become nothing less than "the living instrument of our revelation and freedom."

Beyond storing and showing Still's work, the Museum has the responsibility to create a living legacy for the artist. To do so involves positioning his art as indispensable to current artistic, curatorial, and scholarly practice by securing the Museum's and its collection's visibility. This goal is the focus of our Vision 2030.



Vision 2030

After analyzing our track record of achievements, aspirations, and capacities for our Museum’s 2026–30 Strategic Plan, we see the years ahead unfolding in two phases.

First, in 2026–27, we will focus on reinvigorating Museum attendance to raise our visibility locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. If our core purpose is to be an effective steward of Clyfford Still’s artistic legacy, then we must bring him to new and existing audiences in fresh ways.

A key priority in the first two years will be to sustain fundraising momentum—the foundation for our future plans. We will launch a campaign to secure the resources required to realize the ambitious projects of the second phase. In parallel, we will drive increased Museum visitation and boost our revenues from admissions, shop sales, membership, and private events. This plan will involve establishing a consistent cadence and an experimental approach to adult public programming, tours, and partnerships.

We will execute two significant projects touring *“Tell Clyfford I Said ‘Hi’”* to Washington state in 2027, and the Clyfford Still Catalogue Raisonné project.



The touring exhibition will bring attention to the innovative scholarship and curatorial practice in development at the Museum. This work is amplified by the accompanying catalogue, funded by the Wyeth Foundation for American Art. Internally, this project builds capacity within the Museum to work with the Board and the City and County of Denver in planning future touring opportunities to capitalize on the 2029 Catalogue Raisonné launch. Research and writing on the Catalogue Raisonné will continue in the first phase of the plan, fully funded with dedicated support from the Clyfford Still Museum Foundation.

Phase two, in 2028—30, continues the projects launched in phase one and begins scaling up critical investments to strengthen local access to the Museum, expand the Institute program, enhance the visitor experience, and augment our digital presence.

In 2029, we will complete and publish the Clyfford Still Catalogue Raisonné. This publication offers an opportunity to draw the attention of scholars, artists, and journalists to the Museum. With that spotlight we hope to launch by 2029 the first major traveling survey of Still's work since the monumental European tour that took place in 1992. To be created in close consultation with the Board and the City and County of Denver, this project will introduce new audiences to the depth and breadth of the artist's achievement. This expanded visibility, in turn, will help us position his work as a vital resource to animate the living practice of artists, scholars, and curators around the world.

Our investment in scholarly research continues throughout all phases of the plan. The expansion of the Institute will build on the success of the initial residential fellowship pilots in 2024 and 2025.

We will cultivate investments needed to expand the program in phase two from a one-month summer fellowship to a yearlong slate of activities that engage local artists, scholars, and entrepreneurs, along with programming delivered by our alumni network by the end of the strategic plan period.

In this period of elevated visibility, we will solidify plans for an expanded physical footprint, beyond the confines of the existing Museum building. The future expansion will enable enhanced programming, such as artist residencies for local and national fellows, online and in-person seminars taught by Institute alumni, collaborative programming with other cultural nonprofits, and space for local artists and entrepreneurs to test out new business ideas, with the feedback and support of the Museum's extended Institute networks.

Through the combination of these new actions, we aim to deliver on the promise of our new vision: Internationally renowned and locally transformative.



Beyond 2030

The activities we plan to undertake as part of Vision 2030 focus on the premise that recognition is a precondition for impact. The Catalogue Raisonné offers the first comprehensive view of Still's life's work, revealing just how influential he was in his lifetime, and informing future generations of artists and thinkers. The Institute will continue to encourage new research and practice with our collection and Museum. It will galvanize the field at large, while also affording local opportunities to connect with our Denver creative ecosystem. On-site improvements will create a more inviting and vibrant environment, encouraging more visitors to engage with and recognize the value of the Museum and its collections.

Yet all these efforts, even if successful, cannot solve a fundamental problem that we must face: Only a handful of Clyfford Still paintings are to be found in public collections worldwide—the lonely ambassadors of his artistic achievement and ethos outside of Denver. A touring exhibition organized by the Clyfford Still Museum is a step toward creating a living legacy for Still, to capture the imagination of audiences who will experience the power of his work not in isolation, but as a whole, just as he intended. Such steps are crucial in expanding access to the artist's work, not just in Denver but beyond.

STILL

We see the strategic initiatives laid out here as stages toward fulfilling Still's ultimate vision. Our success in realizing this plan will solidify the Clyfford Still Museum's role as an indispensable resource for its city, as well as a source of nourishment and support for generations of artists, ardent enthusiasts, and future thinkers—a true catalyst for creative life in Denver and beyond.



Clyfford Still, PH 272, 1950. Oil on canvas, 105 x 88 1/8 inches. Clyfford Still Museum, Denver, CO. © City and County of Denver / ARS, NY

2

New Strategic Declarations



STILL

As the Museum enters its next chapter, it rearticulates the convictions that define its purpose. The new mission, vision, and values reflect an evolution from stewarding a legacy to activating it.



STILLS

MISSION

Home to the art and legacy of the American painter Clyfford Still, we invite all to explore the potential of individual creative endeavor.



VISION

Internationally renowned and locally transformative



STILL

VALUES

Welcoming

We benefit from the varied perspectives everyone brings. Each program, partnership, and decision reflects a commitment to openness and access.

Trailblazing

We inherit and manifest Clyfford Still's fiercely independent spirit by pursuing bold and transformative practices in the museum field and in our community.

Collaborative

We work together—as a team and with our audiences, neighbors, and partners—to achieve more than we could alone.





Clyfford Still, PH 1074, 1956. Oil on canvas, 114 5/8 x 104 5/8 inches.
Clyfford Still Museum, Denver, CO. © City and County of Denver.

3

Strategic Framework



Becoming internationally renowned and locally transformative requires a clear structure for action and the courage to experiment. The CSM Strategic Framework sets three clear pillars to guide the Museum in fulfilling Still's legacy, expanding its reach, and sustaining its creative growth. Together, they chart a road map to strengthening scholarship, deepening community impact, and carrying forward the artist's spirit of bold, independent thinking.

Within each pillar, initiatives and projects turn ideas into measurable results. This is not a static plan. It is a dynamic framework, built to evolve as the Museum tests new approaches, learns from experience, and adapts to opportunity.

Pillar I: Legacy

Cement the legacy of Clyfford Still.

Pillar II: Audiences & Engagement

Boost attendance and visibility.

Pillar III: Resources

Expand capacity for innovation and growth.

Strategic Framework



Pursuing our new vision

4 Pillar I Legacy

Cement the legacy of Clyfford Still

The Legacy pillar connects to the core reason this Museum exists. Our collection is our greatest strength, our unique contribution to the world. This pillar ensures that Clyfford Still's artistic and intellectual legacy remains vital, relevant, evolving, and ever more visible. It reaffirms that the collection is both our foundation and our frontier, the source of our identity and the engine that drives experimentation across the entire Museum and beyond.

Over the next five years, the Museum will cement the legacy of Clyfford Still through the following projects:

Organize Touring Exhibitions

Tour *"Tell Clyfford I Said 'Hi'"* to Washington State in 2027 and establish the shared conditions and legal framework for future traveling exhibitions.

Publish the Catalogue Raisonné

Complete, publish, and market a five-volume catalogue raisonné by 2029 and update Clyfford Still Online to reflect the research produced.

Crystallize the Institute

Refine and scale the Institute into a globally recognized research platform by establishing governance, measuring impact, and building a long-term business model and case for support.

CSM Learning as Community Catalyst

Elevate learning as a core civic role by advancing an art-and-science initiative and strengthening partnerships, evaluation, and staff capacity for innovative, responsive programming.

Exhibit New Perspectives

Invigorate the exhibition program through frequent rotations and fresh interpretation, delivering 12 new perspectives/rotations annually and spotlighting never-before-shown works.

Increase Access to the Collections

Expand physical and online access to Still's work so more people can encounter and explore the collection in deeper ways.



Organize Touring Exhibitions

Project “**Organize Touring Exhibitions**” is one of the most transformative components of the 2026–30 strategic plan. It assumes that the Museum will travel “*Tell Clyfford I Said ‘Hi’*” an exhibition curated collaboratively with the children of the Colville Confederated Tribes, to Washington State in 2027. Already approved by the Board, the exhibition tour will amplify the Museum’s work and Still’s extraordinary achievement beyond our building. This project allows the Museum to work in concert with the Board and the City and County of Denver to create a shared understanding of what works and under what conditions we would contemplate traveling exhibitions in the future and to ensure that these projects move forward according to an agreed legal framework that protects the art and legacy of the artist as well as the interests of the Museum, Board, and the City and County of Denver. *Tell Clyfford* lays the groundwork for a future international traveling exhibition that can further elevate the artist’s global standing at the end of the strategic plan period, guided by a dedicated public relations plan. A combination of participation fees and shared-cost payments from participating institutions as well as contributed support will fund this project.

2–3 Cities

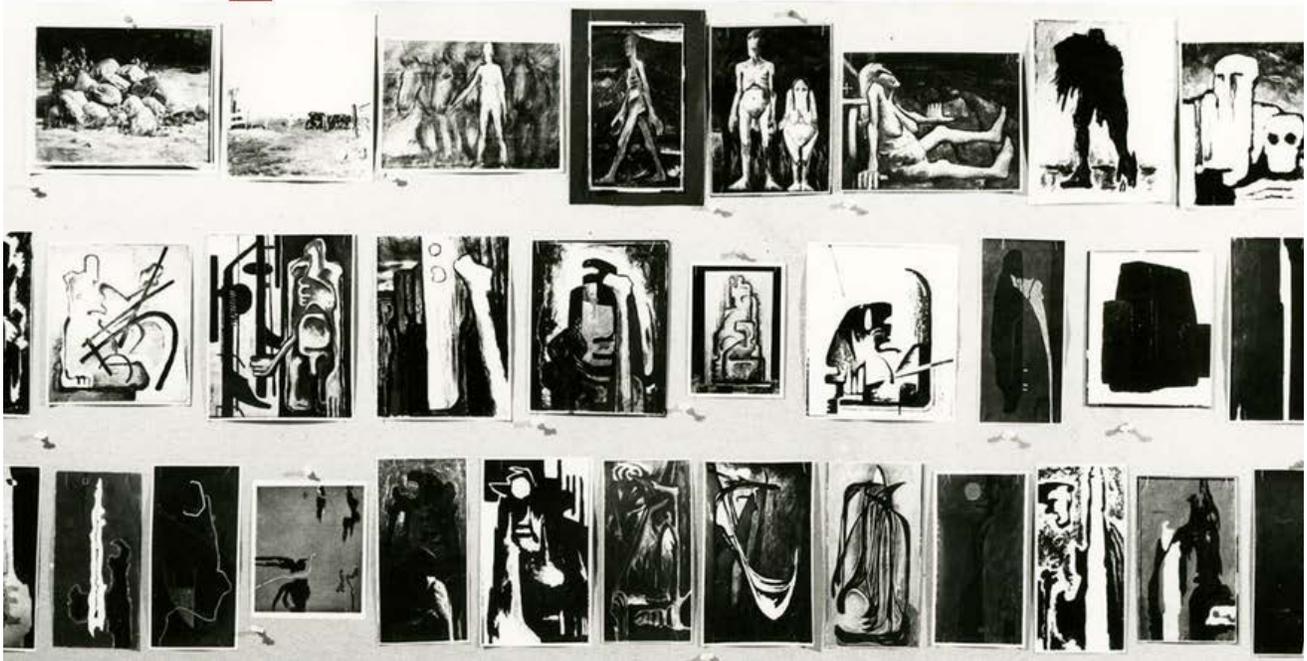
Reached by 2028



Amplify

Public relations





Publish the Catalogue Raisonné

Project “**Publish the Catalogue Raisonné**” promotes scholarship on Clyfford Still and his legacy. By 2029, the Museum aims to publish and market a five-volume catalogue raisonné to affirm the artist’s place in the broader art canon. The project is already well underway, having secured funding in 2025 through a special request to the Clyfford Still Museum Foundation. It entails completing all content elements of the catalogue, including photography, writing, appendixes, and entries; finding a publisher; finalizing the publishing plan; completing publication design, editing, and proofing; developing and implementing a marketing and programming campaign; and, finally, publishing the five-volume catalogue and updating Clyfford Still Online (CSO) to include relevant data collected during the creation of the CR. This project is a fundamental milestone for the Museum, and a significant art-historical reference that will generate greater local, national, and international interest. The Clyfford Still Museum Foundation has already committed funds to the project and has granted continued support for the remaining costs to complete this project over four years (2026–29).

3,000+

Works catalogued



5-volume

Catalogue Raisonné





Crystallize the Institute

Project “**Crystallize the Institute**” continues piloting the Clyfford Still Museum Institute to test resources and approaches that will shape its expanded operations and secure a dedicated future space for Institute activities—an addition that complements, rather than relocates, the Museum. The goal is to establish the Institute, which through its flagship Residential Fellowship Program serves as the Museum’s research arm, as a globally recognized platform. The Institute spotlights the Museum and invites researchers to Denver to study and expand upon Clyfford Still’s life’s work, and over the long term is expected to become the anchor tenant of the Museum’s future Hub. Refining the Institute’s program means establishing an Institute Advisory Committee (beyond the Residential Fellowship Advisory Committee), evaluating current fellow and alumni satisfaction, and conducting a stakeholder survey (fellows, alumni, staff, and other stakeholders) to gauge buy-in. Toward the end of the plan period (2030), the Institute will develop a case for support and identify the core program-impact metrics and participant outcomes. We will create a detailed business model and articulate the long-term strategy. The Strategic Plan Campaign will primarily fund this project, with potential for growth depending on incoming campaign funds.

The Clyfford Still Institute

Vision

To make Denver a destination for innovation in art, research, and practice.

Mission

The Institute invites thought leaders and innovators to reimagine the museum and its role in community life by engaging with the work of Clyfford Still in order to shape our collective future.

What We Do

Our resident fellows, research initiatives, publications, and events encourage free thought and practice anchored in, and inspired by Still’s renegade legacy to catalyze our museum’s impact in the world.



CSM Learning as Community Catalyst

Project “**CSM Learning as a Community Catalyst**” recognizes the Museum’s Learning and Engagement department as a driving force for community connection, creativity, and the realization of the Museum’s educational mission. Building on over a decade of research-driven and community-led practice, including internationally recognized work in early childhood education, youth co-curation, family learning, and culturally responsive engagement, this project elevates learning as a core pillar of the Museum’s identity and civic role. A primary focus of this effort is an art-and-science initiative to illuminate new and meaningful pathways into the collection. Developed in close collaboration with CSM’s Chief Conservator and community partners, this initiative will highlight the scientific, material, and technical dimensions of Clyfford Still’s work. This cross-departmental effort not only enriches visitor understanding but also positions CSM to participate in national education dialogues, demonstrating how art museums can illuminate the deep interconnections between scientific and artistic processes. Additional priorities include expanding university partnerships that support local educators and caregivers, strengthening evaluation and research efforts to measure social and learning impacts, and building staff capacity to sustain innovative, responsive programming.

By 2030, CSM aims to articulate a **clear learning-impact framework**, defining our strategies for youth-led engagement and demonstrating how **the Museum serves as a catalyst for community connection and creativity in Denver and beyond.**





Exhibit New Perspectives

Project “**Exhibit New Perspectives**” strengthens the Museum’s position as the home of nearly everything Clyfford Still created—some 3,125 pieces representing more than 93% of his lifetime of work. A key priority in this plan is to show more works in the collection, both physically and online. Per the original gift’s terms, CSM can show only Clyfford Still’s work in the Museum’s galleries. This compels the institution to find creative ways of doing so. The focus in coming years will be to invigorate the exhibition program through rotations facilitating fresh engagement with novel interpretive approaches. We will introduce 12 new perspectives and/or low-cost vignettes/rotations per year. This work will include extensive rotating, re-hanging, changing, and reinterpretation, and a continuous assessment of exhibition proposals and ideas. For our 15th anniversary, the curatorial staff is committed to displaying 15 never-before-shown paintings in 15 months (May 2026–September 2027). Curatorial and learning and engagement teams will facilitate engagement with these never-before-seen works. Lastly, the Museum commits to rotating at least four paintings/works on paper per year as part of its exhibitions. The Strategic Plan Campaign will fund this low-cost project, with potential for growth based on incoming campaign funds.

12

Rotations/new perspectives exhibitions annually



15

Never-before-shown paintings in 15 months





An example of innovative curation and display of the work of Clyfford Still is *“Tell Clyfford I Said ‘Hi’”*. Co-curated with youth from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation in Washington State, the exhibition highlights the perspectives of Colville children on Clyfford Still’s depictions of their ancestors and their home. Our curatorial and education staff worked with 100 young children and teachers from partner schools and child-care centers on the Colville Confederated Tribes Reservation on artwork selection and arrangement, object interpretation, gallery texts, and interactive experience. This exhibition reflects CSM’s commitment to sharing authority on Still’s work with the Museum’s communities. It is an occasion to bridge gaps—physical, cultural, metaphorical—that exist between Indigenous communities and the traditional art-museum space.

100

Children and teachers involved in co-curation



Commitment

To sharing authority on Still’s work with the Museum’s communities





Clyfford Still, PH 1026, 1959. Oil on canvas, 83 5/8 x 67 inches. Clyfford Still Museum, Denver, CO. © City and County of Denver / ARS, NY

5

**Boost attendance
and visibility**

Pillar II

Audiences & Engagement

This pillar strengthens CSM’s civic presence and expands its reach on-site, online, and throughout the community. It focuses on connecting more people to Still’s work, deepening engagement with existing audiences, and ensuring that all visitors feel welcome and represented. By 2030, CSM will have built a broader, more connected public—one that sees the Museum not only as a home for Still’s art, but also as a creative gathering place for Denver and beyond. Through this pillar, the Clyfford Still Museum will become an institution recognized not only for what it holds, but for what it contributes; a place that welcomes, inspires, and connects people through the power of Still’s art and the creative energy it continues to generate. Over the next five years, the Museum will boost attendance and visibility through the following projects:

Improve the Visitor Experience

Develop key facility upgrades focused on accessibility and satisfaction, to enable people to move easily through the Museum and feel comfortable during their visit.

Grow Adult Programming

Grow the variety, quality, and popularity of adult public programming to increase its attendance by 38% in phase one and by 83% by 2030. Boost programming quality by at least 10% from a 2028 baseline to a 2030 follow-up evaluation.

Enhance Digital Media and Digital Marketing

Reach 80,000 digital followers/subscribers, and grow social media and online website engagements by 50% by 2030.

Leverage Public Relations and Marketing

Increase awareness of the Clyfford Still Museum by 50% through an expanded public relations and marketing strategy measured by audience research.

Engage with Denver Metro Area Leaders

Cultivate and define mechanisms to engage more Denver County leaders each year, to drive awareness and general support for the Museum within the five years of this plan and in preparation for future expansion initiatives.

Enhance External Wayfinding

Implement a new wayfinding system across three key city access points.



Grow Adult Public Programming

More work is needed to integrate the Museum into Denver’s creative life. Project “**Grow Adult Programming**” intensifies community engagement. The Museum aims to grow adult program attendance by 38% in years one and two of the plan period (2026–27). By the end of year five (2030), the goal is to achieve 83% growth relative to the 2025 baseline, and to boost programming quality by at least 10% from 2028 (measured by attendee-satisfaction surveys). This project involves conducting a baseline quantitative assessment of existing programming, and then, based on the outcomes, designing and implementing a new program-development process that is aligned cross-departmentally. The identification and implementation of program formats and resources will support modular applications across the institution. The Museum will also develop an upgraded online course model with a corresponding course platform. This project will be supported in part by the Strategic Plan Campaign, and for the remaining amount by anticipated growth in earned revenue. Growth beyond the baseline scenario can accelerate other strategic projects in the Medium and Accelerated priority areas (see below).





Leverage Public Relations and Marketing

Project “Leverage Public Relations and Marketing” is a resource-dependent undertaking that will be contingent on the results of the Strategic Plan Campaign. It will make the public-facing initiatives of this strategic plan, such as the touring exhibitions and the catalogue raisonné, more visible. It includes a two-year audience-research study focused on increasing local awareness, coverage, and promotion, as well as increased spend on digital marketing and local advertising. Once funding is in place, the Museum’s team will collaborate with an external public relations firm to secure national and international press coverage. The team will measure brand awareness and audience recognition over time to ensure desired results—notably, a 50% increase in awareness. The Museum will prudently increase annual advertising investments, guided by performance data and focusing on channels and tools that deliver the highest return on investment (ROI). The Strategic Plan Campaign will fund this project in its entirety, with the possibility of accelerating its start and impact by raising more funds in the campaign.

50%

Increase in local and national awareness



Two-year

Audience research cycle launched.





Clyfford Still, PH 394, 1963. Oil on canvas, 116 1/2 x 95 1/4 in. Clyfford Still Museum, Denver, CO. © City and County of Denver / ARS, NY

6 Pillar III Resources

Expand Capacity for Innovation and Growth

CSM must have the necessary resources, talent, and structures to realize its ambitions. This pillar focuses on strengthening the Museum’s financial foundation, diversifying revenue streams, and building organizational capacity to enable innovation to thrive. It aligns resources with vision so that innovation, education, and community engagement are not occasional projects, but sustained commitments.

Over the next five years, the Museum will expand capacity for innovation and growth through the following projects:

Boost Earned Revenue

Grow earned revenue streams 3x by 2030.

Boost Contributed Revenue

Diversify our sources of contributed revenue and increase annual contributions 50% by 2030.

Enhance Cross-Departmental Efficiency

Develop Museum-wide systems and habits to bolster project delivery and durability.

Strategic Workforce Planning

Define a long-range staffing plan by 2026, aligned with strategic plan objectives, and implement staffing targets through 2030.

Increase Board Engagement

Cultivate a culture of leadership and philanthropy at the Board level through increased engagement.

Redesign Membership

Drive greater engagement and increase membership revenue by at least 25% by 2030.



Clyfford Still, PH 1057, 1977. Oil on canvas, 90 x 67 3/4 in.
Clyfford Still Museum, Denver, CO. © City and County of Denver / ARS, NY

8

Implementation Narrative

When it comes to implementation, it is helpful to group our 19 projects into seven lenses, which are furthermore activated in two phases.

Phase 1 Building Recognition and Visibility		2026–2027
Elevate National and International Profile	Organize Touring Exhibition	Legacy
	Publish Catalogue Raisonné	Legacy
	Leverage Public Relations and Marketing	Audiences & Engagement
Resources	Boost Earned Revenue	Resources
	Boost Contributed Revenue	Resources
Enabling Activities	Increase Board Engagement	Resources
	Enhance Cross-Departmental Efficiency	Resources
	Strategic Workforce Planning	Resources
In-Gallery Changes	Exhibit New Perspectives	Legacy
	Grow Adult Programming	Audiences & Engagement
	Increase Physical Access to the Collections	Legacy

Phase 2 Scaling Impact		2028–2030
Local Connection	Improve the Visitor Experience	Audiences & Engagement
	Enhance External Wayfinding	Audiences & Engagement
	Engage with Denver Metro Area Leaders	Audiences & Engagement
Digital Reach	Increase Digital Access to the Collections	Audiences & Engagement
	Enhance Digital Media and Digital Marketing	Audiences & Engagement
Program and Community Engagement	Crystallize the Institute	Legacy
	CSM Learning as Community Catalyst	Legacy
	Redesign Membership	Resources

 Legacy	 Audiences & Engagement	 Resources
--	--	---



Clyfford Still, PH 1008, 1976. Oil on canvas, 93 1/2 x 82 3/8 in. Clyfford Still Museum, Denver, CO. © City and County of Denver / ARS, NY

Acknowledgments

This 2026-2030 Strategic Plan is the result of the participation, insight, and leadership of many. We extend our sincere thanks to Susannah Drake, David Holland, and Gabrielle Schuller of the Strategic Planning Task Force, the Strategic Plan Core Team, and the entire CSM Board of Directors for their stewardship and guidance throughout the process.

Over the course of six months, András Szánto LLC partnered closely with the Museum to design and facilitate an intensive strategic planning process, engaging Board members, the full Museum staff, and key community stakeholders. Their expertise helped distill these diverse perspectives into a cohesive and forward-looking plan for our shared future.

We are especially grateful to Anna Boatwright, who served as the internal lead on the development of the Strategic Plan, guiding the work with clarity, rigor, and care, and to Joyce Tsai, whose vision and thoughtful contributions were instrumental throughout.

Above all, we recognize the CSM staff, whose deep engagement shaped every stage of the plan and whose commitment will bring its ambitions to life.

