

A Year In Review At Glenbow

**Report to Community
2024-2025**

April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025



Glenbow's revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture.
Architectural concept rendering by DIALOG.

Message from the Chair and President & CEO

Friends of Glenbow,

The past year has marked a bold and inspiring phase of transformation for Glenbow.

With construction progress accelerating at Glenbow's revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture, and \$193 million raised in support of *Glenbow Reimagined*, we are seeing the full shape of our vision come into focus. The revitalized museum is being built not only from concrete, steel, and glass, but from shared values: accessibility, inclusivity, and community.

Major milestones have been achieved across the building, from the installation of expansive new front entrance windows to the completion of spaces that will become vibrant new galleries. At the same time, our team has been working to develop powerful new experiences: exhibitions like *Obsession: The Unscripted Life of Jeanne Beker*, a major new commission by artist Faye HeavyShield, and community co-created exhibitions that reflect the diversity of voices in this city.

Our satellite gallery, Glenbow at The Edison, continued to connect thousands of Calgarians with art and ideas, hosting exhibitions of artists Ekow Nimako, Meryl McMaster, and Takao Tanabe. The gallery wrapped up a remarkable three-year run last fall, welcoming nearly 68,000 visitors and offering a glimpse into the importance of the free and inclusive admission model we will debut when we reopen — made possible thanks to the \$25 million JR Shaw Free Admission Endowment.

Throughout this transformative year, our commitment to community has remained at the centre of everything we do. We've deepened relationships across many communities, advancing our journey of reconciliation. Alongside this, we've developed new visitor experience, accessibility, and programming visions to guide our future.

We are profoundly grateful for the people who have made this work possible: our donors, partners, staff, and everyone who believes in what Glenbow can be. Your support is not only helping build a museum — it is helping shape a more open, inclusive, and inspiring future.

This report offers just a glimpse of the work we've accomplished together this year. As Glenbow continues to evolve, and as the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture nears completion, we look forward to continuing this journey with you.

With warmest thanks,



Lori Van Rooijen
Chair



Nicholas R. Bell
President & CEO

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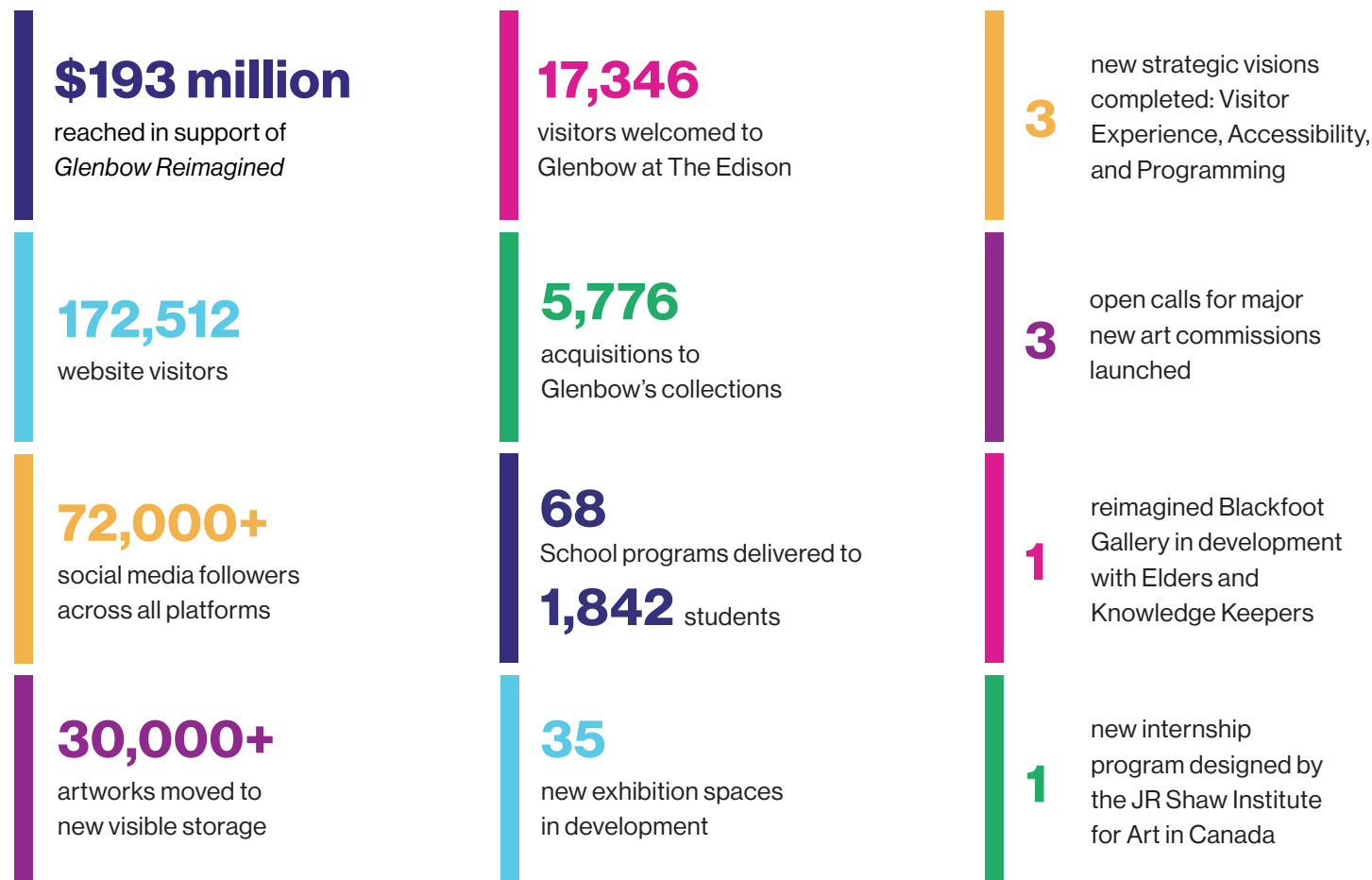
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Siksikaissksahkoyi Kiitaowahsinnooni

“Blackfoot land, your territory”

Highlights

This year marked a significant phase of transformation for Glenbow – both in the evolution of our revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture, and within the organization itself. Key accomplishments from the 2024-25 fiscal year include:



As we look toward reopening, these highlights show how the museum is reimagining not just its physical space, but its approach to serving the public.

Campaign Progress

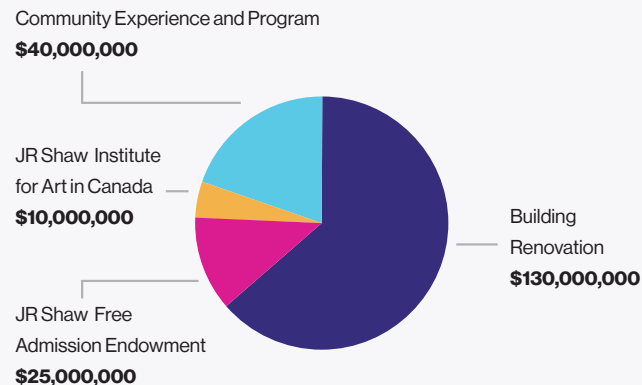
Glenbow Reimagined, our campaign to transform Glenbow into an accessible, sustainable, and community-focused museum, continues to make progress. With \$193 million raised of our \$205 million target, this ambitious effort is reshaping how Glenbow will serve its community for generations to come.

With the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture as Glenbow's home, the museum will offer revitalized spaces for collections, exhibitions, programs, and events.

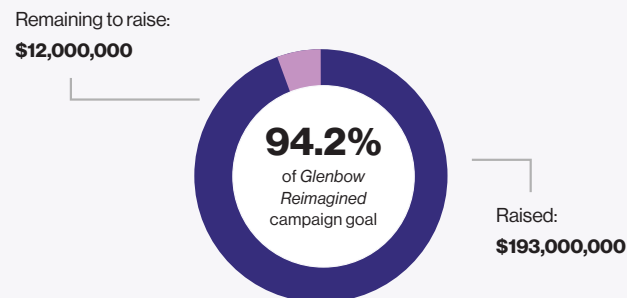
Our \$205 million goal includes base building construction, the JR Shaw Free Admission Endowment, the creation of the JR Shaw Institute for Art in Canada, and enhanced visitor experiences. With support from the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta, The City of Calgary, and our community of donors, we are close to reaching our goal.

Glenbow is deeply grateful for every individual, organization, and partner who has contributed to achieving this vision. For a complete list of donors, see page 25.

Funding Allocation



Progress Toward Target



Building Renovation

Glenbow's transformation has made remarkable progress this year. With each milestone, we move closer to reopening in our revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture, with a fully reimagined museum experience for all.

Base building work, including construction of the spaces that will become galleries and other public areas, is nearly complete. Beyond the drywall, glass, paint, and other finishes, our vision for a vibrant, inclusive, and accessible cultural hub is taking shape.

Following base building completion, Glenbow's team will begin exhibition construction and installation, marking the final chapter in bringing this bold vision to life.



New Front Entrance

New glass was installed in the northeast corner of the building this year, helping to define our new front entrance. These expansive windows don't just brighten the space – they represent Glenbow's commitment to accessibility, community, and creating a more welcoming space for all. Through this new entrance, visitors will enjoy direct access to the museum from Stephen Avenue, making it easier than ever to step inside and explore.

Front entrance glass in Glenbow's revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture, in March 2025. Photo: George Webber



Rawji Family Gallery construction in Glenbow's revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture, in March 2025. Photo: George Webber

Rawji Family Gallery

One of the most striking features to take shape this year is the space that will become the new Rawji Family Gallery, named in recognition of a \$1 million gift from Irfhan Rawji. This dramatic four-storey opening stretches from the ground floor to a skylight on our new fifth-floor terrace. Designed by renowned artist Maya Lin, the gallery will serve as an architectural centrepiece, filtering natural light from the fifth floor through the first four levels of the museum and transforming the atmosphere with a sense of openness, light, and connection.

The space will also be home to a newly commissioned installation by artist Faye HeavyShield. This work is part of an art commission project made possible thanks to a \$1 million gift from the Fischer-Cuthbertson Family.



O'Brien Family Gallery construction in Glenbow's revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture, in March 2025. Photo: George Webber

O'Brien Family Gallery

Construction of the space that will become the new double-height O'Brien Family Gallery, named in recognition of a \$2 million gift from Gail and David O'Brien, was completed this year. This expansive space is just one of two new double-height galleries in the building. These reimagined spaces will accommodate larger installations and artworks and offer visitors the opportunity to experience them from multiple vantage points.

Located on the third floor, the O'Brien Family Gallery invites visitors to explore exhibitions at eye level, while a mezzanine on the fourth floor, to be named in recognition of a \$250,000 gift from Jeff & Marilyn McCaig, provides an elevated view. A striking new window along 1 Street SE, to be named in recognition of a \$250,000 gift from Mary Rozsa de Coquet, filters natural light into the gallery and will connect visitors to the city around them.

Obsession: The Unscripted Life of Jeanne Beker will be the inaugural exhibition in this gallery upon the museum's reopening.

Future Experience

When Glenbow reopens in its revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture, visitors will experience bold new exhibitions that reflect the breadth of our collections and the diversity of the communities we serve. In the past year, it's been our pleasure to offer a sneak peek at a few of these future exhibitions.

Obsession: The Unscripted Life of Jeanne Beker

In September 2024, we were thrilled to announce an exhibition co-curated by Jeanne Beker and Paul Hardy titled *Obsession: The Unscripted Life of Jeanne Beker*. Through her groundbreaking work in media, Beker brought fashion and music into the mainstream, transforming public access to these once-exclusive worlds.

At the heart of this exhibition is the uniquely Canadian story of Jeanne Beker's career, from her early love of performance to becoming a trailblazer in fashion and lifestyle journalism. As the longtime host of *Fashion Television*, Beker became a household name, known for her authentic storytelling and deep connections with people she interviewed around the world.

Beker and Hardy's friendship began in the early 2000s and has grown into a creative collaboration that brings together their shared passions for art, fashion, music, and storytelling. The exhibition will debut in the museum's new double-height O'Brien Family Gallery, named in recognition of a \$2 million gift from Gail and David O'Brien.



Jeanne Beker and Paul Hardy. Photo: Phil Crozier



Faye HeavyShield stands in the future Rawji Family Gallery in Glenbow's revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture. Photo: George Webber

Faye HeavyShield

Internationally celebrated artist Faye HeavyShield has been commissioned by Glenbow to create a monumental new artwork to be revealed when the museum reopens. Known for her site-specific installations and minimalist sculptures, HeavyShield is drawing inspiration from the architecture of the building as well as Glenbow's collections – particularly traditional beadwork by Treaty 7 artists – to inform this significant new work.

Suspended below the new fifth-floor skylight and hovering above the main floor, the artwork will be the centerpiece of the museum's new Rawji Family Gallery, named in recognition of a \$1 million gift from Irfhan Rawji. HeavyShield's work will gently move with the building's air currents, catching light and reflecting her vision to the viewer.

This commission, along with three other commissioned works, is made possible thanks to a \$1 million gift from the Fischer-Cuthbertson Family.

Artist Commission Open Calls

In October 2024, Glenbow opened three artist calls for new artworks to be installed in its revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture. These commissions are central to Glenbow's new Curatorial Vision and will offer experiences that reflect the museum's commitment to showcasing diverse, contemporary voices.

One commission invites Indigenous artists from Treaty 7 to create a mural for the museum's new entrance off Stephen Avenue. This work will welcome visitors and will be installed for approximately two years, allowing Glenbow to highlight a range of artwork by other artists over time.

The second commission invited artists in Canada to design a custom window covering for the museum's new main floor Osten Victor Theatre, named in recognition of a \$5 million gift from Al Osten and his late partner, Buddy Victor. This artwork will be visible from inside the theatre and from 9 Avenue SE.

The third commission is for a suspended installation in the main floor atrium. Visible from multiple levels inside the museum as well as from Stephen Avenue and 1 Street SE, this installation is destined to become a signature artwork associated with the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture and Glenbow. This commission is open to artists from around the world.

Glenbow at The Edison Exhibitions

In 2024, Glenbow at The Edison hosted three exhibitions that reflected a diverse range of artists, perspectives, and practices. Exploring themes of history, identity, and connection to place, each exhibition offered visitors an engaging and thought-provoking experience.

- **Building Black Civilizations: Journey of 2,000 Ships**
(April 10 – May 19, 2024)
- **Meryl McMaster: nikihci-âniskotâpân bloodline**
(June 8 – September 1, 2024)
- **Takao Tanabe: Printmaker**
(September 21 – November 24, 2024)

In addition to these exhibitions, Glenbow offered a range of programming designed to make the gallery more welcoming and accessible to different audiences. This included school field trips, dedicated hours for seniors, and the return of Art Baby, which offered special hours for babies, toddlers, and their caregivers. These initiatives supported Glenbow's commitment to inclusion and community engagement, ensuring people of all ages and backgrounds could connect with art in meaningful ways. Together, the exhibitions attracted 17,346 guests.



Visitors to *Takao Tanabe: Printmaker* at Glenbow at The Edison. Photo: Mike Tan

Building Black Civilizations: Journey of 2,000 Ships

April 10 – May 19, 2024

Building Black Civilizations: Journey of 2,000 Ships continues artist Ekow Nimako's Afrofuturistic reimagining of ancient African kingdoms. Using LEGO® bricks as his medium, Nimako explores the mysterious fourteenth century sea voyage of the predecessor of Mansa Musa, ruler of the Mali Empire. Combining architecture, historical accounts and fantastical possibilities, Nimako transcends the geometric form of LEGO® to recreate the epic voyage. In doing so, he presents an uninterrupted and un-co-opted narrative of Black civilizations and imagines liberated futures.

Organized and circulated by Dunlop Art Gallery.

Free admission provided by Calgary Foundation.



Artist Ekow Nimako stands next to his work at Glenbow at The Edison.

“The whole experience was a highlight. It was mesmerizing. I was in awe of the story and the creativity. I will come back for more exhibits. The staff answered all my questions. I spent a lot of time looking at the intricacies of his work. Breathtaking!”

Glenbow at The Edison visitor

Meryl McMaster: nikihci-âniskotâpân bloodline

June 8 – September 1, 2024

Through *nikihci-âniskotâpân bloodline*, viewers are immersed in Meryl McMaster's works, past and present, witnessing her explorations of family history, identity, and ties to her ancestors. This survey exhibition provides a comprehensive overview of McMaster's career, showcasing the visual art of a remarkable Canadian artist whose trailblazing large-scale photographic works reflect her mixed nêhiyaw/ Métis and Anglo/Dutch ancestry.

Organized and circulated by the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in partnership with Remai Modern. The exhibition is made possible with support from Hatch, CONTACT Photography Festival, and Canada Council for the Arts.

Supported at Glenbow at The Edison by Mawer Investment Management Ltd.

Free admission provided by Calgary Foundation.



A visitor observes artist Meryl McMaster's work at Glenbow at The Edison. Photo: Mike Tan

***“The entire exhibition was thought-provoking, stunning, and beautiful.
So glad we came!”***

Glenbow at The Edison visitor

Takao Tanabe: Printmaker

September 21 – November 24, 2024

Takao Tanabe: Printmaker is the first survey exhibition of Tanabe's print works, covering 75 years of his career as a printmaker and supporter of other artists. Many prints on display have never been exhibited before. Tanabe, born in 1926 in Canada, is a distinguished Japanese Canadian artist renowned for his contributions to the landscape genre. His work is marked by its contemplative minimalism and profound use of colour, reflecting both his Japanese heritage and his deep connection to the Canadian landscape.

Organized and circulated by the Kelowna Art Gallery.

Curated by Ian M. Thom.



Visitors observe artist Takao Tanabe's work at Glenbow at The Edison. Photo: Mike Tan

“Everything was at a high level here, from the greeting of visitors at the entrance to the video at the end of the exhibition. But the most important thing was the artist and the choice of his works. An interesting idea was to show his search for his own style.”

Glenbow at The Edison visitor



Visitors to Meryl McMaster: *nikihci-âniskotâpân bloodline* at Glenbow at The Edison. Photo: Mike Tan

67,588

visitors from six
continents and every
Canadian province

10

exceptional
exhibitions

50+

artists' work
displayed

Hundreds

of stories
shared

Celebrating Glenbow at The Edison

Glenbow at The Edison, our free satellite gallery in The Edison building, concluded operations in November 2024 after three years of presenting 10 exceptional exhibitions to an enthusiastic audience of 67,588 visitors.

Since opening in April 2022, this special gallery played an important role in keeping Glenbow connected to our community and sharing meaningful cultural experiences while our main museum is closed for renovations.

This initiative was made possible through The City of Calgary's Downtown Strategy, which seeks to revitalize and transform downtown into a culturally vibrant and thriving destination. The City provided funding support for Glenbow to convert an empty office suite on the Plus 15 level of The Edison into a Class A museum space, complete with the necessary HVAC systems and climate controls. Glenbow at The Edison was also made possible with generous support from Mobsquad.

The gallery offered free admission to all visitors thanks to support from the Calgary Downtown Association and Calgary Foundation. As a free attraction, Glenbow at The Edison provided a glimpse into how Glenbow's new free admission model – thanks to the \$25 million JR Shaw Free Admission Endowment – will be enjoyed by visitors upon the museum's reopening.

With Glenbow at The Edison now closed, Glenbow's focus is on developing the 50+ new spaces that will become galleries and other public areas in our revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture. This includes 35 new exhibition spaces, five back-of-house museum experiences, as well as dedicated spaces for programming, community engagement, and research.

Future Experience

Glenbow is reimagining its role as a museum by placing community at the centre of everything we do. This means building lasting, reciprocal relationships with the diverse cultural and social communities we serve.



L to R: Gerald McMaster, Kent Ayoungman, and Jerry Potts in Glenbow's collections.
Photo: George Webber

A Reimagined Blackfoot Gallery

Reimagining of the Blackfoot Gallery has continued over the past year, led by Niitsitapi/Blackfoot Elders and Knowledge Keepers from Siksika Nation, Piikani Nation, Kainai Nation, and the Amskapi Piikani Nation in present-day Montana. Siksika band member, curator, and scholar Gerald McMaster is working with the Elders and Knowledge Keepers in support of their vision, along with Glenbow's curatorial team.

This community-led process ensures the exhibition reflects Niitsitapi/Blackfoot perspectives, histories, and ways of knowing. Over the past year, the focus has been on exhibition design and developing an interpretive plan, laying the foundation for a meaningful and authentic experience that centers Niitsitapi/Blackfoot voices.



L to R: Indonesian community members Ratna Wynne and Cindy Halim in Glenbow's collections.

Co-Created Community Exhibitions

When Glenbow reopens in its revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture, visitors will experience a compelling new exhibition co-created with members of Calgary's Indonesian, Ethiopian, and Mexican communities. This collaborative approach highlights the diversity of collections in Glenbow's care and reflects the museum's commitment to telling meaningful, community-driven stories. Planning of these exhibitions continued this year, with each community working closely with Glenbow's team to select art, objects, and belongings that represent and celebrate their cultural heritage.

Glenbow's co-created community exhibitions are just one example of the museum's renewed commitment to community. We look forward to fostering a space where diverse communities are celebrated and shared for generations to come.

Indigenous Engagement

Glenbow continues to work in close collaboration with Indigenous communities to guide our Indigenous engagement and reconciliation efforts. As we reimagine the museum's future, we are committed to centering Indigenous voices, supporting self-representation, and ensuring Indigenous knowledge systems are reflected across our exhibitions and programs.

This year, we were honoured to host visits from Nations and groups including Niitsitapi, Nêhiyawak, Tsuut'ina, Inuit, Tsimshian, Îyârhe Nakoda, Yaqit'a-knuqti'it, the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, and many others. These visits are an essential part of the ongoing relationships that inform our work and shape Glenbow into a more inclusive, respectful, and responsive organization.

Buffalo Treaty Signing

In September 2024, Indigenous Nations gathered in Stand Off, Alberta to mark the 10th anniversary of the Buffalo Treaty, an Indigenous-led agreement first signed in 2014 to help restore and protect buffalo and their cultural significance across North America. Hosted by the Kainai Nation, the event brought together over 40 Nations and tribes from across the continent to renew their commitments, welcome new signatories, and share knowledge with global Indigenous communities.

Glenbow was honoured to attend and sign the treaty as a supporter, as we did at the original signing. Our presence reflects our longstanding partnership with Blackfoot communities and our commitment to supporting the cultural, educational, and ecological goals of the treaty. We continue to invite communities to engage with buffalo-related and other belongings in Glenbow's care and are actively working to repatriate sacred and ceremonial belongings, upholding a spirit of collaboration and respect as we reimagine the museum through a decolonized lens.

"It's important to show we're there as witnesses and we honour the treaty. As partners with Blackfoot communities, which Glenbow has been for a long time, it's important to make connections and show we support their goals."

Joanne Schmidt, Glenbow's Curator,
Indigenous Studies & World Cultures



Joanne Schmidt, Glenbow's Curator, Indigenous Studies & World Cultures, signs the Buffalo Treaty.



L to R: Mackenzie Brown, Glenbow's Executive Advisor, Indigenous Engagement; Blackfoot Knowledge Keeper William Singer III; Maya Lin; and Cecil Howell, Maya Lin Studios Landscape Designer at Naapi's Garden.



Mackenzie Brown, Glenbow's Executive Advisor, Indigenous Engagement.

Native Plants on the Rooftop Terrace

In July 2024, we were thrilled to welcome artist Maya Lin back to Calgary as planning continues for her design of the new 13,000-square-foot rooftop terrace at Glenbow's revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture. During her stay, Lin visited Naapi's Garden in Kainai to consult with Blackfoot Knowledge Keeper William Singer III and learn more about native species of plants, efforts to revitalize these plants, and their role in Blackfoot cultures and sustainability.

Many of these plants will comprise the natural elements Lin plans to emphasize in her landscape design. Their presence will help visitors learn about traditional Blackfoot stories, harvesting practices, and reciprocal relationships with Mother Earth. Sharing these stories through plants is one small way Glenbow is reimagining a museum space that honours the traditional stewards of the land.

Hiring of Executive Advisor, Indigenous Engagement

Glenbow was excited to announce Mackenzie Brown as Executive Advisor, Indigenous Engagement in August 2024. In this role, Mackenzie is guiding the development of both short- and long-term strategies to ensure Indigenous knowledge, values, and practices are meaningfully integrated across the organization. Her work is essential to Glenbow's ongoing efforts toward decolonization and collaboration with Indigenous communities.

Mackenzie is a member of Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation (Treaty 8) and is well-known across Alberta for her community engagement and advocacy for Indigenous makers and businesses. She is also a multidisciplinary artist, drummer, and storyteller. We are thrilled to have Mackenzie on our team as we work to build a more equitable and just institution to serve our diverse community.

Glenbow at Calgary Pride

Glenbow believes art is for everyone. The museum isn't just a place to display art, culture, and history – it's a place where stories are told, identities are affirmed, and communities can see themselves reflected.

In 2024, we were proud to once again participate in Calgary Pride. With limited edition “Art is for Everyone” buttons and plenty of community spirit, our team was honoured to celebrate and reaffirm our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and belonging.

As we look toward reopening in our revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture, Glenbow's commitment to inclusion also means we are dedicated to fostering an environment where 2SLGBTQIA+ people feel safe, respected, and empowered to be themselves. We look forward to sharing more of our plans for an inclusive and accessible museum experience as we get closer to reopening.



L to R: Mila Datta, Glenbow Visitor Experience & Engagement Host; and Kimmy Fung, Glenbow Visitor Experience & Engagement Host; participate in Glenbow's Calgary Pride 2024 parade entry.

Future Experience

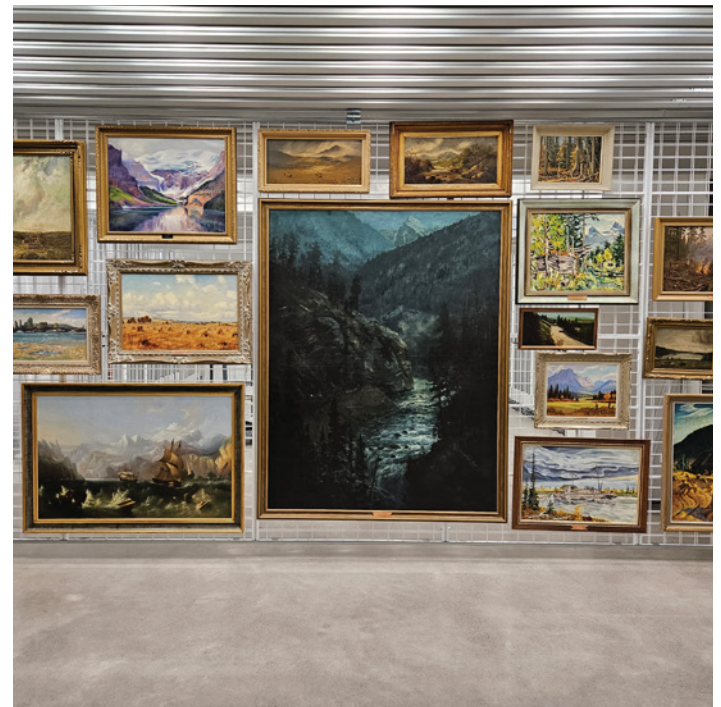
As Glenbow looks toward reopening, we're not only transforming our building – we're also growing our collections and creating new ways for the public to access and engage with them. This year saw major progress, from the successful relocation of our extensive art collection into visible storage to remarkable acquisitions that expand and enrich our offerings. These efforts reflect a bold new approach to collections stewardship – one that places accessibility and community at the heart of the visitor experience.

Art Collection Move

Throughout 2024 and culminating in winter 2025, Glenbow's team undertook the monumental task of rehousing the museum's art collection – the largest public art collection in Western Canada, with over 30,000 paintings, sculptures, and works on paper – in its brand-new visible storage area.

Visible storage means when Glenbow reopens in its revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture, visitors will have a special opportunity to see behind the scenes. Unlike traditional storage, visible storage allows the public to view art and object storage areas that were previously obscured, offering new ways to engage with the collection.

The relocation of Glenbow's art collection marks a key milestone in the museum's transformation and is the last major collection move to take place inside the building. With artworks now housed in visible storage, visitors can look forward to greater access than ever before – an exciting step toward a more open, accessible, and inspiring future.



Visible art storage in Glenbow's revitalized home, the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture.

Acquisitions

Collection	Gifts	Purchases	Total
Art	246	6	252
Cultural History	156	0	156
Indigenous Studies	101	6	107
Library & Archives	5,261*	0	5,261
Total	5,764	12	5,776

*This gift constitutes the Reid Library, a collection of publications on art in Canada donated by the family of acclaimed Canadian art scholar Dennis Reid (1943-2023).

East and Southeast Asian Indigenous Textiles

Glenbow was honoured to receive a rare and significant donation of Indigenous textiles and adornment from Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, Yunnan (China), and Vietnam, generously gifted by collectors Jason Schoonover and Susan Hattori. Collected from communities such as the Karen, Akha, Flower Hmong, Mien/Yao, Khmu, Lanten, Tai, and Thai Dam, the items are accompanied by extensive notes, provenance, and photographs, making them an exceptional resource for research and education.



A selection of items from the East and Southeast Asian Indigenous textile acquisition.

This stunning collection offers deep insight into the cultural traditions, stories, and techniques of each community. More than decorative art, these textiles are visual records of identity, land, and heritage. The donation also opens doors for future programming focused on cultural resilience and the preservation of textile traditions such as indigo dyeing and weaving.

TAILBITER / I Tried and The Wellspring by DaveandJenn

Celebrating artists from our community has always been one of Glenbow's highest priorities. In 2024, we acquired *TAILBITER / I Tried* and *The Wellspring*, two remarkable works donated by Alberta artists DaveandJenn. *The Wellspring* was first exhibited at Glenbow in 2017–18 as part of our *One New Work* series curated by Nancy Tousley. We are so pleased to welcome it – together with *TAILBITER / I Tried* – into our permanent collection.

These sculptures represent a powerful fusion of nature and myth, decorative art and popular culture. Together, they showcase DaveandJenn's inventive approach to sculpture – one that's writing a new chapter for the medium in Alberta and bringing a bold and imaginative voice to the province's artistic landscape.



DaveandJenn, *TAILBITER / I Tried*, 2016, Collection of Glenbow. Gift of the artist.



DaveandJenn, *The Wellspring*, 2017, Collection of Glenbow. Gift of the artist.

Ukrainian Woven Wool Bag

In 2024, Glenbow was pleased to welcome a Ukrainian woven wool bag, or taistra (тайстра), to the collection. Traditionally, the taistra was an accessory in Ukrainian folk dress, carried by both men and women to compensate for the absence of pockets in clothing. This taistra came to us from the Musée St. Paul Museum in St. Paul, Alberta, which acquired it from the Vegreville Regional Museum in Vegreville, Alberta.



Taistra, date unknown, Collection of Glenbow. Gift of People's Museum, St. Paul, Alberta.

The taistra is an example of the cultural traditions preserved and passed on by Ukrainian immigrants in Alberta, where today over 9% of the population is of Ukrainian heritage – a number that has grown with the arrival of recent refugees. This acquisition not only expands Glenbow's folk dress collection, which includes several embroidered Ukrainian folk garments, but also strengthens our ability to reflect the vibrant and growing Ukrainian community in Alberta.

Future Experience

In 2024 and 2025, Glenbow made significant strides in defining its future experience through the development of three key vision documents: a Visitor Experience Vision, an Accessibility Vision, and a Programming Vision. These documents were shaped through a process supported by research and consultation with external partners. Together, the visions provide a roadmap for Glenbow's continued transformation into a more inclusive, accessible, and visitor-centered museum.

Visitor Experience Vision

Finalized in March 2025, Glenbow's Visitor Experience Vision was developed as a guiding framework for how people will engage with the museum. The vision was grounded in extensive research into visitor experience best practices, emerging trends, and audience behaviours across local, national, and international museums.

At the heart of the vision is a simple but powerful statement from the perspective of a visitor: "I had the experience that was right for me." This statement reflects Glenbow's commitment to ensuring every visitor feels their unique interests and needs are met. The vision is also supported by a set of clear goals, including attracting a wide and diverse audience, encouraging repeat visits, and creating a welcoming, accessible, and safe environment for all. We look forward to bringing this vision to life as we prepare for reopening.

Accessibility Vision

Glenbow's Accessibility Vision was finalized in July 2024 to ensure barrier-free participation and engagement for the widest community possible. The vision is organized around five focus areas:

- **Economic:** Addressing barriers related to socio-economic marginalization
- **Cultural & Social:** Offering a safe space for connection, discussion, and expression of identities and cultures
- **Emotional:** Offering a safe space to explore emotional connections to a range of subjects, as well as contributing to well-being
- **Cognitive, Knowledge & Communication:** Encouraging learning and engagement regardless of prior knowledge, education, neurodiversity, or language barriers
- **Physical & Sensory:** Incorporating a meaningful accessibility approach to design of experiences and spaces

Following creation of the vision, Glenbow partnered with Canadian Equality Consulting to host focus groups representing each focus area. These consultations helped prioritize next steps and grounded the work in the voices of those most impacted.

Programming Vision

Glenbow's Programming Vision was developed in 2024 to align public programming best practices with the museum's Curatorial Vision while advancing mission-driven and revenue generation goals.

Central to the vision is the idea that programming invites you – the visitor, participant, or community member – to make meaning of museum content in your own way. No matter the visitor, Glenbow's programming is designed to meet audiences where they are. The vision seeks to ensure that programming:

- Makes audiences feel comfortable experiencing museum content in their own way
- Is always connected to museum content
- Encourages first-time and repeat visits
- Helps audiences feel a sense of belonging
- Brings Glenbow to life for visitors
- Is developed by relevant voices and knowledge experts

Programming is now being developed to serve a wide range of familiarity and comfort with museum content – from those stepping into a museum for the first time to those deeply engaged with museum offerings.

Education Programming

Glenbow's Programming & Education team concluded their outreach programs and community engagement in June 2024 to refocus their efforts on research and development of future programming.

Through our outreach programming in 2024-25, Glenbow continued to deliver enriching, hands-on learning experiences rooted in diverse perspectives, including Indigenous voices and histories, settler narratives, and artistic exploration. This program delivery format, adopted in the early stages of our renovation, allowed us to maintain strong ties with schools and uphold our commitment to educational excellence.

With school programs now paused, the team is focused on planning for the future. We are developing new approaches to programming that deepen connections with Glenbow's collections, reflect current trends in museum education, integrate curriculum priorities, and prioritize meaningful, high-quality visitor experiences. As we look ahead to reopening, we remain committed to delivering inclusive, innovative, and community-connected programming that builds on Glenbow's longstanding educational legacy.

1,842

student participants

68

school programs delivered, including:

- **60** Indigenous programs
- **7** settler history programs
- **1** art program

The JR Shaw Institute for Art in Canada celebrates art in Canada by engaging communities in creative exhibitions and programs, advancing artistic practices, fostering research and inquiry, and providing opportunities for diverse voices. Over the past year, this included developing a new internship program that supports the next generation of arts and culture professionals.

The JR Shaw Institute for Art in Canada Internship Program

This year, Glenbow developed the JR Shaw Institute for Art in Canada Internship Program, a new initiative established to give students museum-focused educational opportunities. By working with team members across the museum, conducting in-depth research on art in Canada, and exploring current issues facing art galleries and museums across the country, interns will develop foundational skills and knowledge for their future careers. Positions are funded through a generous gift from the Shaw Family Foundation.

Reporting to the Director of the JR Shaw Institute for Art in Canada, interns will work extensively with Glenbow's collections and archives. Immersed in Glenbow's dynamic environment, they will contribute to the museum's efforts toward radical accessibility, inclusive engagement, and reimagining what a museum can be.

The internship consists of three core components: department projects, in which interns work on initiatives led by departments across the museum; research study, in which interns develop research projects that explore key areas of Glenbow's art collection; and decolonization and reconciliation, in which interns participate in sessions that explore reconciliation in museums through activities such as land-based learning, time with Elders, and studying decolonization principles. The inaugural internship cohort, joining Glenbow in summer 2025, will focus their research projects on Glenbow's extensive collection of watercolour paintings by artists in Canada.



Marion Nicoll, *Untitled*, 1948,
Collection of Glenbow.

Glenbow's transformation and continued operations are made possible thanks to the generosity of our community, including individuals, corporations, foundations, and all orders of government. We extend our deepest thanks to everyone who has supported the *Glenbow Reimagined* campaign, as well as to the annual donors and sponsors whose contributions from April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025 help bring art and culture to life for all.

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