

**JOAN MITCHELL
FOUNDATION**

Vision, Priorities, Strategies

2020–2024





INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to share here the Joan Mitchell Foundation's strategic plan, developed in 2019 for the period 2020–2024.

We began our planning for this period by affirming and clarifying the Foundation's vision and values through a collaborative process with all staff and board, facilitated by Yancey Consulting. Mitchell's commitment to artistic practice was central in these discussions, with the idea that the Foundation carries that commitment forward from one artist to many.

With the refreshed vision and values in mind, we then worked across all areas of the Foundation to outline the intentions, priorities, and key strategies that will define the Foundation's work from 2020 to 2024, with support and facilitation by Anne Dunning of Arts Action Research. Some key questions we asked were:

- How can we ensure the Foundation is a lasting manifestation of Joan Mitchell's legacy?
- What impact do we want to have in the world?
- How can we help create a more equitable art world?

The resulting strategic plan focuses on ensuring balance while striving for maximum impact with the resources we have.



Affirming Our Vision

The Foundation supports research, scholarship, and exhibitions to ensure Joan Mitchell is widely recognized as a significant artist.

The Foundation's grants, residencies, and related initiatives recognize artistic excellence and elevate a wide range of visual artists and practices. We work to actively expand the visual arts to better reflect the diverse world in which we live.

The Foundation serves as an evolving example and resource for how an artist's generosity can impact future generations of artists.



What We Value

Being Artist Centered

The Foundation was established by an artist for artists. We trust that artists know what they need to best support their practices; their voices and feedback guide our work.

A Culture of Generosity

Joan Mitchell was generous to other artists during and beyond her lifetime. The Foundation carries forward her generosity by giving, sharing, and making connections with intention.

Commitment to Equity

We believe that our work is richer when diverse perspectives are fully engaged. Through ongoing inquiry, dialogue, and action on issues of equity, the Foundation strives to remove barriers to sustained artistic practice and careers in the visual arts.

Five-Year Priorities

2020–2024

1

Recognize & Connect Artists

2

Cultivate & Share Knowledge

3

Value Artists' Legacies

4

Strengthen Equity in the Visual Arts

5

Focus Our Resources & Capacity

Recognize and Connect Artists

We recognize the value of artists and their practices and are deepening our commitment to unrestricted support with the following strategies:

Invest more deeply in artists working in the evolving fields of painting and sculpture through a multi-year fellowship program

Diversify the range of visual artists who are recognized and supported on a national level

Integrate professional development and networking into each core area of support to ensure artists are connected with the people, opportunities, and resources that will further their goals and contributions



Stacy Lynn Waddell, photograph by Reginald Eldridge, Jr.

“Earmarking ‘uninterrupted’ time and money consumes a great deal of an artist’s headspace. The challenge becomes a never-ending balancing act.”

STACY LYNN WADDELL

2010 Grant Recipient
2017 Artist-in-Residence



Joan Mitchell, c. 1951, photographer unknown,
Joan Mitchell Foundation Archives

“This really feels like Mitchell’s moment and a collective gathering of recognition of her stature as an enormous figure.”

KATY SIEGEL

The Art Newspaper interview, 2018¹

Cultivate and Share Knowledge

As a central resource for the study of Joan Mitchell’s life and work, we have unique opportunities to support research and cultivate scholarship. As a small foundation focused on individual artists, we see a responsibility to explore, advance, and share our model for unrestricted artist support. In the coming years, we will:

Facilitate research and scholarship in support of Mitchell-focused exhibitions, publications, and educational materials, particularly the Joan Mitchell retrospective (Fall 2021–Winter 2023)

Develop new points of access to the Foundation’s archives and artwork collections

Continue and expand artwork loans from the Foundation’s collection with the aim of broadening public access to Mitchell’s work and encouraging close, in-person experiences

Pro-actively collect artist insights, outcomes, and feedback to assess and understand the Foundation’s impact

Share artists’ voices and our model of support to advocate for the value of artists in society

Value Artists' Legacies

As an artist-endowed foundation, Mitchell's legacy is a connecting point for all of our work. As her legacy grows and evolves, our understanding of the complexities artists face in crafting their own legacies also deepens. We will leverage our unique position to:

Continue research for Joan Mitchell Catalogue Raisonné with the purpose of providing more nuanced understanding of Mitchell's paintings and their continued significance

Deepen research on Mitchell's works on paper, which merit increased scholarly focus and contextualization

Galvanize the visual arts field to engage with and innovatively support artist legacy planning

Develop and widely share guides, resources, and tools to help artists honor and preserve their life's work through intentional legacy planning



Marcos Dimas, *Creating a Living Legacy (CALL)*
Artist, photograph by Alexandra Unthank

“Ars longa,
vita brevis.”

Art is lasting,
life is short.

HIPPOCRATES



Maia Cruz Palileo, 2008 and 2018 Grant Recipient, 2015 Artist-in-Residence, photograph by Reginald Eldridge, Jr.

“Am I a feminist?

I am.

But I really like painting, whoever does it.”

JOAN MITCHELL

Interview with Stephen Westfall,
Art in America, June 1985²

Strengthen Equity in the Visual Arts

Grounded in our work stewarding the legacy of a female artist, we are strengthening our commitment to:

Engage in critical conversations about access, equity, diversity, inclusion, and privilege, particularly as it relates to who becomes an artist, who is recognized, and who is remembered

Ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion are manifest in our internal working culture and our programs

Consider equity as a key component of all partnerships and business strategies

Focus Our Resources and Capacity

The Foundation has committed to an organizational structure that will allow us to meet the goal of building an investment portfolio to sustain our mission-focused operations in perpetuity. Doing so requires that we regularly evaluate impact and outcomes for mission alignment and the best use of our resources. In 2020–2024 we will:

Sunset Emergency Grants program and invest more deeply in unrestricted artist support

Conclude Early Art Practitioners pilot programs and determine our future support model for early career artists

Review and update long-term operating and financial model for Joan Mitchell Center residency program to ensure best use of resources for artists

Define the Foundation's long-term approach to honoring Mitchell's legacy with planning models for the Catalogue Raisonné and other legacy work

Implement proactive systems for developing and maintaining facilities and technologies



Mel Chin, photograph by Reginald Eldridge, Jr.

“Joan Mitchell certainly captured light in her art, and her thoughtful legacy created the capacity for another type of illumination to be placed on the works of future generations of artists.”

MEL CHIN

1997 Grant Recipient, Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) Artist

CITATIONS

1. Stapley-Brown, Victoria, *The Art Newspaper*, 14 June 2018, theartnewspaper.com/news/major-survey-of-joan-mitchell-s-work-to-open-in-2020.
2. Westfall, Stephen, "Then and Now: Six of the New York School Look Back" *Art in America*, June 1985, vol. 73 no. 6, pages 112–121.



JOAN MITCHELL

Untitled, 1992. Pastel on paper, 29 1/2 x 21 3/4 inches (74.9 x 55.2 cm).
Collection of the Joan Mitchell Foundation, New York. © Estate of Joan Mitchell.

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