

# PLAINS ART MUSEUM

## Plains Art Museum Celebrates Groundbreaking of Opening the Vault: A Legacy Begins

**Press Release**  
**For Immediate Release (June 2026)**

Fargo, ND, June 2026 - Plains Art Museum will celebrate the groundbreaking of their new permanent collection storage facility on **Thursday, June 11th from 1:30-3:30 pm**. The groundbreaking marks the beginning of Phase 1 of the *Connections Campaign*, which in addition to opening the vault, seeks to construct a new Welcome Center, expand gallery space, and improve the visitor experience. Phase 1 will transform the museum's collection facility, nearly doubling the square footage and creating an open storage concept that will allow public access to the permanent collection of art for the first time. Only 18% of art museums in the United States offer open collection storage, making this a cutting edge project and cementing Plains' position as a leader of the arts in the Upper Midwest.

Plains houses more than 6,000 works of art held in trust for future generations. As an accredited art museum, Plains stewards these works as part of the museum's core mission. The collection includes a broad range of works by international, national, and regional artists, with an emphasis on Indigenous art. Recent major gifts of art include the collection and archive of master printmaker Steven M. Andersen and objects and artworks from regional Native American tribes from the Ralph T. Coe Center for the Arts. Individual works of art include a monumental sculpture by Aaron Spangler, a lithograph by Wendy Red Star, currently on view in the exhibit *Wiwahokichiyapi: They Promised Things to Each Other*, and a large-scale painting by Brad Kahlhamer. These works are just a sampling from the 450+ pieces accessioned in the last two years. The new collections facility will allow Plains to continue to grow the permanent collection, while providing access to world class works of art for Fargo Moorhead residents and visitors from the region and beyond.



The new facility is designed by renowned museum architecture firm Olson Kundig, with JLG serving as the Architect of Record and Mortenson Construction as the Construction Manager at Risk. The groundbreaking celebration will feature remarks beginning at 2 pm from JLG, Mortenson, and Brian Hayer, the largest donor in Plains' history. The FMWF Chamber will provide a ribbon cutting. A reception will follow remarks.

Plains Art Museum is the only American Alliance of Museums accredited art museum in North Dakota. As of this past October, Plains also became the first and only Smithsonian Affiliate in the state. Plains' mission is to connect people to art, and to each other, and is proud to offer free general admission, seven days a week.

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Above: A conceptual rendering of the updated permanent collections vault.

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