

PRESS RELEASE

Whitney Museum
of American Art
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CELEBRATING TWO YEARS OF FREE ADMISSION WITH GIVEAWAYS, DANCE CLASSES, LIVE MUSIC, AND MORE AT THE WHITNEY MUSEUM



Kick off 2026 at the Whitney with free celebrations and programs for all ages, including dance classes with Ailey Extension instructors, live music with DJ April Hunt and Dave Guy, sunset views in the theater, and more!

New York, NY, January 8, 2026 — The Whitney Museum of American Art is offering **free admission, live music, celebrations, artmaking activities**, and much more throughout the month during [Free Friday Nights](#) and the January edition of [Free Second Sundays](#). Marking two years since the Whitney's expanded free admissions programs launched, the Museum will host a [**special celebration on Friday, January 16 with giveaways, cake, cocktails, and dancing!**](#) This is also the last chance to experience [Sixties Surreal](#) before the exhibition closes on January 19 and [Shifting Landscapes](#) before it closes on January 25. There's no better way to begin the new year than gathering with friends and family at the Whitney Museum.

In addition to Free Friday Nights and Free Second Sundays, the Whitney launched the Free 25 and Under program, providing free admission every day to all visitors 25 years and younger. The expansion of the free programs has significantly transformed the Whitney's audience, reaching younger and more diverse visitors each year, with many citing free admission as the key reason in choosing to visit the Museum for the first time. The Whitney has something for everyone at any age all year long.

Friday, January 9

From **5–10 pm**, all visitors can enjoy **free admission, art, drinks, and city views**. Beginning at **5 pm**, enjoy the [**Sunset Lounge**](#) in the **third-floor theater**. Relax and recharge while taking in the sunset views of the Hudson River with playlists curated by Brooklyn-based music and performance venue Public Records. At **6 pm** and **8:30 pm**, visitors of all ages can join [**pop-up dance classes**](#) in the **lobby** taught by **Ailey Extension instructor TweetBoogie**. Guided by a Whitney Museum Educator, [**Art + You: Gallery Conversations for Younger Adults**](#) will be offered in the **sixth-floor galleries** from **6:30–7:30 pm**. This session invites younger adult visitors to reflect on select works from *Shifting Landscapes* through close looking and dialogue.



Sunday, January 11

On **Sunday, January 11**, the Whitney is offering **free admission** from **10:30 am–6 pm** for visitors of all ages during **Free Second Sunday**. At **11 am** in the Museum's **lobby**, visitors can drop by [**Sunday storytime**](#) with Latanya DeVaughn, CEO of Bronx Bound Books, a mobile bookstore bringing literature to the Bronx and now the Whitney. From **11 am–3 pm** in the **third-floor Artspace**, artists of all ages can contribute to a [**collaborative magnetic mosaic**](#) inspired by artist Dyani White Hawk's *Nourish*, a site-specific installation on the eighth floor. In the **third-floor theater** from **11 am–4 pm**, visitors are invited to [**create works of art with rubber stamps**](#). Drawing inspiration from Andy Warhol's *Green Coca-Cola Bottles*, on view in "*Untitled*" (America), visitors can experiment with different stamps, colors, and repeated images.



Friday, January 16

To celebrate **two years of free admission** at the Whitney, the Museum will host a [**special edition of Free Friday Nights**](#) on January 16. The evening will feature cakes, cocktails, giveaways, a photobooth, and more. As part of the celebration, visitors of all ages and skill levels are invited to participate in an **Afro-Dance class** taught by **Ailey Extension Instructor Judith McCarty** at **6 pm** in the **third-floor theater**. Visitors can also watch the sunset and soak in the stunning river views in the Museum's theater. On the occasion of the final weekend to

catch *Sixties Surreal*, guests will enjoy **[Sixties Surreal B-Side with Dave Guy and April Hunt](#)** in the **lobby** from **5–10 pm**. Taking inspiration from the Sun Ra sounds of the sixties, this immersive collaboration includes live, improvised performances on the hour and musical interludes throughout the evening. Known for his work with The Roots and Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings, trumpeter Dave Guy will play live, intertwined with an Afrofuturist DJ set by Mixtape creator April Hunt.

Friday, January 23 and Friday, January 30

Offering **free admission from 5–10 pm**, the Whitney's Free Friday Nights features **art, drinks, special programming, music**, and more. The latest information about Free Friday Nights programming is always available on [whitney.org](#).

Ongoing Exhibition Tours

A variety of free exhibition tours led by Whitney educators, ranging from family-focused to 15-minute tours, are offered during Free Friday Nights and Free Second Sundays. For further details on upcoming tours, please visit [whitney.org/events](#).

While general admission to the Whitney is free every Friday from 5–10 pm and all day on Sunday, January 11, **tickets are still required, and capacity is limited. Advance booking is strongly recommended, and tickets can be reserved at [whitney.org/admission](#).**

Free Admission Offerings at the Whitney

The Whitney Museum offers free admission to all visitors 25 years of age and younger. The Free 25 and Under program builds on the Museum's popular Free Friday Nights and Free Second Sundays initiatives. With the addition of free admission for visitors 25 and under, the Whitney—already a leader in the field, providing free admission for visitors 18 and under for over a decade—offers one of the broadest and most comprehensive free admissions programs among museums in New York and the United States, affirming the Whitney's commitment to broadening access to American contemporary art and culture, and to reaching new audiences. Free 25 and Under is made possible with the generous support of two three-year gifts from Whitney Museum Board members, longtime supporter Susan Hess, and artist Julie Mehretu.

Free Second Sundays at the Whitney help connect more people to the Museum and its mission of celebrating contemporary American art and artists. Second Sundays is made possible by a generous three-year grant from the [Art Bridges Foundation's Access for All Program](#), which supports increased access to museums across the country and fosters engagement with local communities by focusing on common barriers to access. The program and another Whitney initiative, [Free Friday Nights](#), both aim to reduce barriers to access, removing admission fees and offering programs that are entry points for anyone interested in visiting.

Photo and video assets from previous Free Friday Nights and Second Sundays at the Whitney can be found at [whitney.org/press/free-days-and-nights](#).

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ABOUT THE WHITNEY

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for ninety years. The core of the Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

Whitney Museum Land Acknowledgment

The Whitney is located in Lenapehoking, the ancestral homeland of the Lenape. The name Manhattan comes from their word Mannahatta, meaning "island of many hills." The Museum's current site is close to land that was a Lenape fishing and planting site called Sapponckanikan

(“tobacco field”). The Whitney acknowledges the displacement of this region’s original inhabitants and the Lenape diaspora that exists today.

As a museum of American art in a city with vital and diverse communities of Indigenous people, the Whitney recognizes the historical exclusion of Indigenous artists from its collection and program. The Museum is committed to addressing these erasures and honoring the perspectives of Indigenous artists and communities as we work for a more equitable future. To read more about the Museum’s Land Acknowledgment, [visit the Museum’s website](#).

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Public hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:30 am–6 pm; Friday, 10:30 am–10 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, 10:30 am–6 pm. Closed Tuesday. Visitors twenty-five years and under and Whitney members: FREE. The Museum offers FREE admission and special programming for visitors of all ages every Friday evening from 5–10 pm and on the second Sunday of every month.

Image credit:

Lead image: Decade Downtown Dance Party at Free Friday Nights, May 16, 2025. Photograph by Summer Surgent-Gough

Left to right: Free Friday Night, September 19, 2025. Mixtape Vol. 2. Photograph by Trevor Felder; Second Sunday, September 14, 2025. Photograph by Filip Wolak; Second Sunday, September 14, 2025. Photograph by Filip Wolak

Left to right: Free Friday Night, September 26, 2025. Sixties Surreal B-Side. Photograph by Summer Surgent-Gough; Free Friday Nights, September 6, 2024. Photograph by Summer Surgent-Gough; Installation view of *Shifting Landscapes* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, November 1, 2024–January 2026). From left to right: Teresita Fernández, *Fire (America) 3*, 2016; Amalia Mesa-Bains, *Cihuateotl with Hand Mirror from Venus Envy Chapter III: Cihuatlampa, the Place of the Giant Women*, 1997–2022. Photograph by Matthew Carasella

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