

# WHITNEY

Whitney Museum  
of American Art  
Press Office

99 Gansevoort Street  
New York, NY 10014

pressoffice@whitney.org  
(212) 570-3633

## PRESS RELEASE

### FREE DANCE CLASSES LED BY AILEY EXTENSION DURING EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT THE WHITNEY MUSEUM



*Enjoy a series of free pop-up dance classes led by Ailey Extension instructors every Friday night of February at the Whitney to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Black History Month.*

**New York, NY, February 5, 2026** — The Whitney Museum of American Art is offering **free admission, Ailey Extension dance classes, exhibition tours, music,** and much more throughout the month during [Free Friday Nights](#) and the February edition of [Free Second Sundays](#). In celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Black History Month, the Whitney and Ailey Extension will host **[free pop-up dance classes every Friday night!](#)** As part of the February Free Friday Nights, the dynamic classes will be led by Ailey Extension instructors, and **each class explores a different dance genre.** Ranging from Swing Dance to West African, the energetic classes are open to dancers of all ages and experience levels. This is also the last chance to experience [Grace Rosario Perkins: Circles, Spokes, Zigzags, Rivers](#) and [Ken Ohara: CONTACTS](#) before the exhibitions close on Sunday, February 8. Later this month, the new exhibition [Mabel Dwight: Cool Head, Warm Heart](#) will open on Friday, February 20. Celebrating one of the most notable American printmakers of the 1920s and 1930s, this exhibition is the

artist's first solo museum show, and foregrounds Dwight's vivid and elegantly composed portrayals of New York's people, theaters, streets, and everyday rituals, rendered through a democratic print medium.

### **Friday, February 6**

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 **6:30 pm** and **8:30 pm**, visitors of all ages can join [pop-up classes focused on Social Dance](#) in the **lobby** taught by **Ailey Extension instructor Matthew Johnson-Harris**. From **6:30–7:30 pm**, [Art + You: Gallery Conversations for Younger Adults](#) will be offered in the **seventh-floor galleries**. Guided by a Whitney Museum Educator, this session invites younger adult visitors to reflect on select works from the Whitney's collection on view in *"Untitled" (America)* through close looking and dialogue. Earlier in the evening, from **4–6 pm**, teens are welcome to join [Open Studio for Teens](#), a free artmaking program the Museum offers on select Fridays. Drawing inspiration from themes and artists featured in the Whitney's collection and exhibitions, teens can engage with hands-on artmaking projects in collaboration with contemporary artists and educators.



### **Sunday, February 8**

On **Sunday, February 8**, 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](#) for a reading of the book *My Block Looks Like* with author and Bronx native Janelle Harper. This storytime program is organized in partnership with Latanya DeV Vaughn, CEO of Bronx Bound Books, a mobile bookstore bringing literature to the Bronx and now the Whitney. Artists of all ages are invited to participate in two artmaking programs inspired by artist Isamu Noguchi, whose work is on view in the seventh-floor galleries in *"Untitled" (America)*. From **11 am–3 pm** in the **third-floor Artspace**, visitors can experiment with balance, form, and structure to [design cardboard creations](#) and contribute to an ever-changing collaborative sculpture that will shift and grow throughout the day. In the **third-floor theater** from **11 am–4 pm**, participants can [make their own layered collages](#), balancing forms and exploring how shapes relate to one another in a two-dimensional composition. This Sunday is also the final day to catch *Grace Rosario Perkins: Circles, Spokes, Zigzags, Rivers* and *Ken Ohara: CONTACTS* before the exhibitions close.

### **Friday, February 13**

Offering **free admission from 5–10 pm**, the Whitney's Free Friday Nights features **art, drinks, special programming, music**, and more. At **7:30 pm**, visitors of all ages can join a [Boots on the Ground line dancing class](#) in the **lobby** taught by **Ailey Extension instructor Pilin Anice**. Earlier in the evening, from **4–6 pm**, teens are welcome to join [Open Studio for Teens](#), a free artmaking program the Museum offers on select Fridays. Drawing inspiration from themes and artists featured in the Whitney's collection and exhibitions, teens can engage with hands-on artmaking projects in collaboration with contemporary artists and educators.



### **Friday, February 20**

From **5–10 pm**, all visitors can enjoy **free admission, art, drinks, and city views**. At **6:30 pm** and **8:30 pm**, dancers of all ages can join [pop-up West African dance classes](#) in the **third-floor theater** taught by **Ailey Extension instructor Maguette Camara**. The exhibition *Mabel Dwight: Cool Head, Warm Heart* also opens on February 20, and visitors can enjoy after-hours access to the galleries to experience the new show.

### **Friday, February 27**

Offering **free admission from 5–10 pm**, the Whitney's Free Friday Nights features **art, drinks, special programming, music**, and more. At **7:30 pm**, visitors of all ages can join a [class focused on Swing Dance](#) in the **lobby** taught by **Ailey Extension instructor Sam Coleman**. The latest information about Free Friday Nights programming is always available on [whitney.org](http://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](http://whitney.org/events).

While general admission to the Whitney is free every Friday from 5–10 pm and all day on Sunday, February 8, **tickets are still required, and capacity is limited. Advance booking is strongly recommended, and tickets can be reserved at [whitney.org/admission](http://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](http://whitney.org/press/free-days-and-nights).

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## PRESS CONTACT

For press materials and image requests, please visit our press site or contact:

**Meghan Ferrucci, Senior Publicist**  
(212) 671-8346  
[Meghan\\_Ferrucci@whitney.org](mailto:Meghan_Ferrucci@whitney.org)

**Whitney Press Office**  
[whitney.org/press](http://whitney.org/press)  
(212) 570-3633  
[pressoffice@whitney.org](mailto:pressoffice@whitney.org)

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## PROGRAM SUPPORT

Major support for Free 25 and Under is provided by Susan and John Hess and Julie Mehretu. Significant support is provided by Judy Hart Angelo.

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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](#).

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## 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: Celebrating Two Years of Free Admission at Free Friday Nights, January 16, 2026. Photograph by Trevor Felder

Left to right: Second Sunday, December 14, 2025. Photograph by Filip Wolak; Celebrating Two Years of Free Admission at Free Friday Nights, January 16, 2026. Photograph by Trevor Felder

Left to right: Installation view of *"Untitled" (America)* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, July 5, 2025-). Robert Henri, *Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney*, 1916. Photograph by David Tufino: Mixtape Vol. 3 at Free Friday Nights, January 23, 2026. Photograph by Filip Wolak

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