



Museums are special places. They can take many forms, and one of the most common is as a space to hold and display works of art. The New Mexico Museum of Art is a state museum, which means it belongs to everyone who lives in New Mexico. Staff at the Museum work hard to take care of and share with everyone the treasures that live in the Museum's collection.

Museums are not the only places that show works of art. Many people collect artwork and objects to display in their homes. From handmade coffee mugs, to children's drawings, to precious stones, to paintings and more, people tend to surround themselves with works that are pleasing to look at, or make them think in a new way, or that remind them of an important event or person. There is no one reason why people collect and appreciate art, but it is a very important part of life!

In this activity series, we will help you to pretend that your home is a museum! Part one showed you how to create display labels for the artwork in your home. In this activity (part two), we will tell you how to curate your own exhibition with the objects in your collection. Check back for more in this series to learn how you can act as a docent and give tours to your family, pets, and more. Finally, we will have an easy craft to share with you that will allow you to make your own object display case.

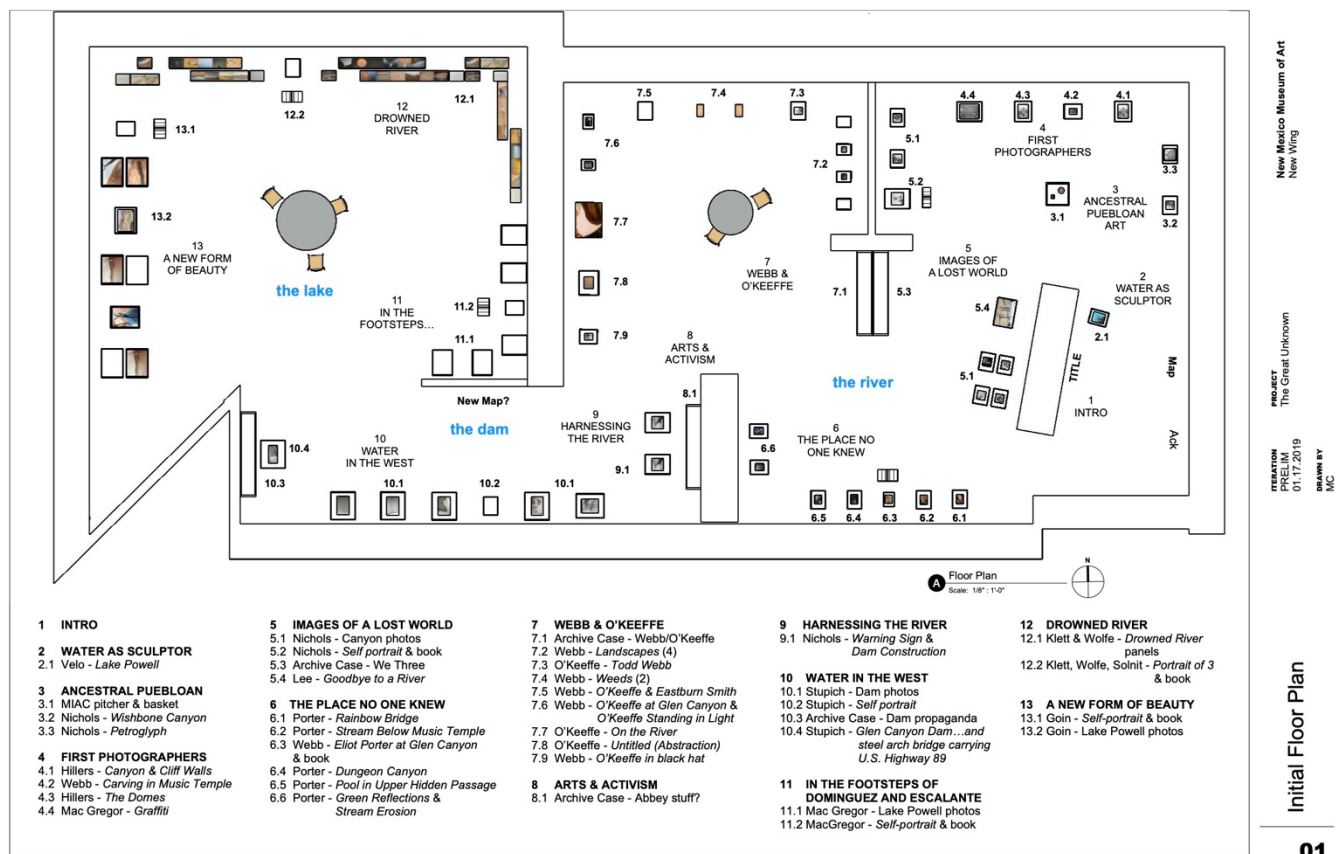
# New Mexico Museum of Art

# What is a curator?

When you visit a museum, do you ever wonder about who gets to decide what is put on display? Well, that would be the curator's job! Art museums are not the only ones who have curators; science museums, natural history museums, and even children's museums all employ curators to create exhibitions!

At the New Mexico Museum of Art, we have three curators, and their expertise reflects what we have in our collection. There is a Curator of 20th Century Art, a Curator of Photography, and Curator of Contemporary Art.

Now that you have explored your own home collection of art and objects, it's time for you to become a curator.



Exhibition floor plan for *The Great Unknown: Artists at Glenn Canyon and Lake Powell*, curated by Katherine Ware

- 1. Pick a theme:** There are many ways to put together an exhibition of artwork. You could explore themes such as shape, color, or a specific subject like landscapes. Your exhibition can also tell a story or explore an abstract concept (an idea that is not physical/can't be touched) such as love, sadness or hope.
- 2. Plan it out:** Using the labels you created in the last activity, or just by making a list, start planning your exhibition. Think about in what order you want the work displayed. Is it

important for two works to be next to each other to tell the story? Do you need to make sure a smaller drawing is not overshadowed by larger works?

3. **Commission a work of art:** Is something missing? You can also ask your family and friends to create new work if you need something to make your show stronger....this is called commissioning a work of art!
4. **Request to loan artwork:** If you need to move or “borrow” artwork from your family around the house, be sure you ask for permission. You can include a credit on your label to thank them! Curators often borrow works of art from different museums or people’s private homes. Sometimes they borrow entire exhibitions.
5. **Create a floorplan:** Try it out for yourself. You can make lists of more than one exhibition idea. If you have a blank piece of paper, pretend it is a room in your home where you want to display your show. Sketch little images or write the name of the works around the paper to mark where you want them in the room. If you can, ask a parent or guardian to help you create your exhibition in the room. If not, you have your layout or paper plan to use in the future.