

HOUSATONIC MUSEUM OF ART

For Immediate Release

For More Information:
(203) 257-0031

HOUSATONIC MUSEUM OF ART AWARDED \$15,000 OPERATING GRANT FROM THE HELEN FRANKENTHALER FOUNDATION

BRIDGEPORT, CT (4/28/2026)- The Housatonic Museum of Art, located at CT State Community College Housatonic, has received a generous grant of \$15,000 from The Helen Frankenthaler Foundation to support its ongoing mission to expand access to the arts for campus college students and the greater Bridgeport community.

HMA is one of only three community college museums in the nation selected for this funding, alongside the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art in Overland Park, Kansas; and the Vincent Price Art Museum in Monterey Park, California. At the HMA, the grant will support expanded student engagement initiatives, including strengthened career development opportunities that directly connect students to careers in museums and the broader creative sector.

The grant comes as the HMA and partner institutions continue to advance the national conversation around the importance of community college museums and galleries. The HMA is part of a growing network of institutions working to increase student engagement and deepen the connection between students, campuses, and community through the arts. That work will continue in October 2026, when the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art hosts a national gathering of community college museum leaders to focus on advancing the field nationally.

Established by the artist during her lifetime and active since 2013, the New York-based Helen Frankenthaler Foundation extends the artist's legacy of innovation and creative experimentation, and supports the visual arts and arts education nationwide, while investing in teaching museums and academic institutions that preserve access to exhibitions and collections. The Foundation also prioritizes collaboration among museums and their academic partners, strengthening student learning, and professional development in the arts.

"This support is deeply meaningful, we are so thankful for the Frankenthaler Foundation's investment in our work," said Jennifer Reynolds-Kaye, Director of the Housatonic Museum of Art. "Community college museums like ours are essential cultural hubs. This grant provides us with the ability to connect students to art as an academic experience, a cultural experience, and even a possible profession. Through exhibitions and related programming, students can explore creativity, learning, and belonging in ways that stay with them beyond the classroom."

HMA is committed to creating accessible, high-quality arts experiences through exhibitions, campus programming, community partnerships, and student-centered engagement. Through its ongoing efforts, the museum continues to demonstrate how community college museums serve as powerful models for cultural access, education, and public interaction.

This funding comes at a critical moment while teaching museums and visual arts programs across the country are navigating increasing pressures to ensure that students have meaningful access to the arts. Experiential, exhibition-based learning and cross-disciplinary collaboration remain central to a strong academic environment, particularly at community colleges, which serve some of the most diverse student populations in the country.

“As institutions navigate increasing threats to funding, the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation is honored to support teaching museums and visual arts program such as the Housatonic Museum of Art during this critical time,” said Helen Frankenthaler Foundation Executive Director Elizabeth Smith. “As part of the Foundation’s commitment to resiliency in the visual arts, we awarded this operating grant to assist these organizations to continue their important work in advancing experiential learning and cross-disciplinary collaboration.”

For more information about the Housatonic Museum of Art, visit [HousatonicMuseum.org](https://www.housatonicmuseum.org).

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About the Housatonic Museum of Art

The Housatonic Museum of Art (HMA) holds one of the largest art collections of any community college in the United States with over 7,000 artworks. The focus of the HMA is modern and contemporary American and European art, including Pablo Picasso, Andy Warhol, Romare Bearden, Cindy Sherman, and Jenny Holzer. The collection also includes artwork from Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Unlike most campus museums, the HMA displays selections of its collection throughout CT State Housatonic. Visitors also enjoy the special exhibitions and programs offered in the Burt Chernow Galleries. Free and open to the public. For more information, visit [HousatonicMuseum.org](https://www.housatonicmuseum.org).

About the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation

Established and endowed by Helen Frankenthaler during her lifetime, the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation is dedicated to promoting greater public interest in and understanding of the visual arts. The Foundation advances the artist’s legacy and inspires a new generation of practitioners through a range of philanthropic, educational, and research initiatives. Since becoming active in 2013, the Foundation has continued to strategically expand its program, which includes organizing and supporting significant exhibitions of the artist’s work, fostering new research and publications, advancing educational programs in partnership with arts organizations around the world, and launching groundbreaking initiatives that foster systemic change in the field. As a primary resource on the artist, and a steward of her collection and archive, the Foundation holds an extensive selection of Frankenthaler’s work in a variety of mediums, her collection of works by other artists, and original papers and materials pertaining to her life and work. For more information, visit [frankenthalerfoundation.org](https://www.frankenthalerfoundation.org).

About the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art

The Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art at Johnson County Community College (JCCC) serves as a cultural leader, facilitating deeper understanding of our world and contemporary issues through their exhibitions and permanent collection. The collection focuses on works by international, national, and regional contemporary artists. In addition to gallery spaces within the Nerman Museum, over 300 works from the collection are installed across campus, facilitating educational access and integrating art into the daily lives of its campus and local communities. For more information, visit [nermanmuseum.org](https://www.nermanmuseum.org).

About the Vincent Price Art Museum

The Vincent Price Art Museum (VPAM) at East Los Angeles College serves as a unique educational resource for the diverse audiences of the college and the community through the exhibition, interpretation, collection, and preservation of works in all media of the visual arts. VPAM provides an environment to encounter a range of aesthetic expressions that illuminate the depth and diversity of artwork produced by people of the world, both contemporary and past. By presenting thoughtful, innovative, and culturally diverse exhibitions and by organizing cross-disciplinary programs on issues of historical, social, and cultural relevance, VPAM seeks to promote knowledge, inspire creative thinking, and deepen an understanding of and appreciation for the visual arts. Learn more about VPAM at [vpam.org](https://www.vpam.org).

