

PE|M
Peabody Essex Museum

THE SALEM
WITCH TRIALS
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Peabody Essex Museum

**FY25
IMPACT
REPORT**

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Director's Welcome

“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.”

—JOEL ARTHUR BARKER, FUTURIST

Welcome, everyone, to the Peabody Essex Museum's first impact report, which covers our fiscal year 2025 from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

What you are about to read is not the usual annual roundup of facts and figures. Instead, we are emphasizing the museum's collective impact through PEOPLE, PROGRAMMING, and PLACES.

We believe that creativity is an intrinsically human thread that binds and unites us, guiding our search for meaning across the past, present, and future. We strive to offer stimulating, life-enhancing experiences and credible knowledge through our exhibitions, collections, programming, community engagement, and scholarship. We value openness in recognizing the spectrum of human achievement that art, culture, and the sciences make possible.

As we achieve the impact-oriented goals set out in our PEM *FORWARD* strategic plan, we help to build bridges and foster a sense of belonging and lifelong learning to enhance our community's quality of life and connect with people across cultures and generations. This resonates with the generosity of spirit and civic-mindedness that are central to PEM's origin story, when Salem's entrepreneurial global traders founded a society of wonder and discovery in 1799 for their city as well as our then young nation.

To each and every person — our board leaders, executive team, staff, visitors, supporters, community members, and colleagues — I offer deep and profound thanks for helping make the substantial impact conveyed here possible, and for partnering with us to enhance our ability to make a meaningful difference in people's lives.



Lynda Roscoe Hartigan

The Rose-Marie and Eijk van Otterloo
Executive Director and CEO

Mission + Vision

Mission

PEM boldly honors creativity as a nourishing force in people's lives.

We offer thought-provoking experiences of the arts, humanities, and sciences to activate understanding of our shared humanity and to empower imagination and learning through experimentation. We steward, build, and make our collections accessible to encourage appreciation of the interconnected histories and creativity of people in our complex, always-changing world.

“I often walk away from the museum in awe and inspired by the opportunity to be challenged, to indulge our curiosity and to make wonderful new friendships.”

—LESLIE SCANLON, PEM GUIDE

Vision

We will be a magnetic, human-centered gathering place — locally, globally, and virtually — where people are inspired to learn and connect as they experience wonder, joy, and comfort.

Being a human-centered museum means focusing on people as the source of creativity as well as encouraging people to embrace this powerful agent for change and connection. The local and global crosscurrents of creativity are central to PEM's story. Our collection and exhibitions are a treasure trove of stories about the distinctiveness and universality of human achievements and struggles across time and place. We will lift up and share these stories through multiple entry points to engage broad audiences with each other and in the life of the museum. We will achieve this vision through expanded innovation and openness in our exhibitions, programming, collections, publishing, and relationships with communities and partners near and far.

PEM will continue to grow as a leader in our community and among museums.



Read more about PEM's core values and commitments





PEM FORWARD Strategic Plan

“For me, the human-centered piece is what makes PEM special, rooted in our maritime history and the founders’ spirit of exploration. We’ve been able to, through the strategic plan *PEM FORWARD*, really tie back to our history, but also look to the future to reconnect with our audiences and build on that strong history of creativity and curiosity.”

—JENNIFER M. BORGGAAARD, CHAIR OF THE BOARD



Fiscal year 2025 closed out the first year and a half of *PEM FORWARD*, our strategic plan that extends through fiscal year 2028. Four core strategic goals guide us in our work:

- Infuse all PEM experiences with unexpected, inclusive approaches that emphasize storytelling and the power of human creativity across cultures and time.
- Create innovative, accessible gateways to learning that empower audiences, community, and staff.
- Maximize the collections, including our Phillips Library, historic properties, and arboretum, to tell compelling human stories.
- Advance a sustainable infrastructure and secure resources to support our mission and vision.

The progress made during FY25 testifies to PEM’s ongoing efforts to provide meaning, inspiration, and authenticity as an ambitious, human-centered museum of global art and culture and the sciences.

We focused on expanding our current and potential audiences, with an emphasis on how best to serve and benefit them.

We reaffirmed the importance of creating a holistic PEM experience — one that unites all facets of the museum, from dynamic exhibitions and collection galleries to strategic long-term programming, expanded access to our museum and library collections, and a comprehensive assessment and activation of our campus.

Similarly, we established PEM as an inviting, responsive community member through new and sustained partnerships and timely topical gatherings. We have steadily outfitted our new James B. and Mary Lou Hawkes Collection Center, along with relocating, cataloging, and digitizing parts of the collection.

Undergirding all of this have been concerted efforts to support, develop, and retain our staff; to create community; to increase our earned and contributed revenues; and to enhance the volunteer leadership of our Boards of Trustees and Advisors.



Read more about
PEM’s strategic plan

Quantifying Engagement + Economic Impact

Engagement

More than 250,000 onsite visitors: a 10% increase from FY24 and a return to pre-pandemic numbers.

26,500 visitors under 17 years old	5,000 patron and membership event participants
24,000 public program and event participants	4,000 visitors to PEM's Ropes Mansion
12,000 Salem residents	2,500 walking tour participants
10,000 PEM Shop customers	2,000 adult group tour participants
9,000 school group tour participants	400 Phillips Library Reading Room visitors
6,500 function rental and private event guests	300 children and caregivers participating in PEM Pals

Nearly 1.3 million virtual visitors to pem.org: a 57% increase from FY24

Virtual visitors spend an average of **8.5 minutes** engaging with content on pem.org, which is **4x the median of industry peers**

Content reached **12.7 million people** through Instagram and Facebook

Economic Impact

PEM conducted its first Economic Impact Study to evaluate how its operations and visitors position the museum as a driving economic force in the region — delivering significant value as an employer, community anchor, cultural destination, educator, and venue.

\$44.6 M generated in direct spending in Essex County through operational expenditures and visitor spending	\$14.5 M total tax impact generated by PEM, including \$5.5 million in state and local tax revenues, including \$500,000 for the City of Salem
68% of PEM's \$37.5 million operational expenditures were spent within Essex County	35% of PEM visitations included an overnight stay in Essex County
93% of PEM's 254 employees live in Massachusetts and 74% live in Essex County	584 full-time and part-time jobs in Massachusetts and 484 jobs in Essex County supported by PEM activities

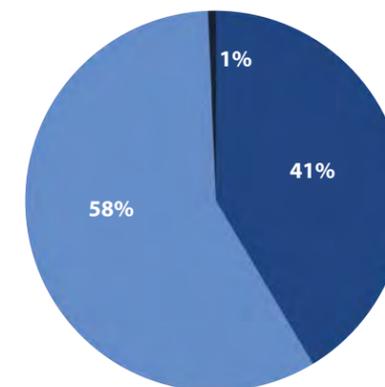
PEM's total economic impact — inclusive of direct, indirect, and induced effect — was \$92.1 million in Massachusetts and \$69.8 million in Essex County



Explore PEM's entire Economic Impact Study

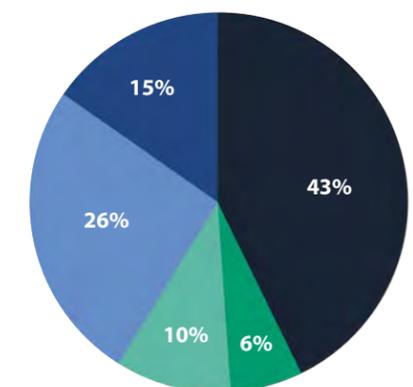
FY25 Financials

OUR INVESTMENT BY PROGRAM AREA
Percentage of Programming Budget



■ Sponsorship ■ Public Programs & Community Engagement ■ Exhibitions

HOW WE USE OUR RESOURCES
Percentage of Operating Budget



■ Administration ■ Programs ■ Retail & Event Operations ■ Development ■ Facilities & Security

People

At the heart of PEM's mission and impact are the people who animate and sustain it.

From loyal and new visitors, dedicated staff, and passionate volunteers and interns to committed board and community leaders and generous donors, so many people bring the museum's mission to life. Together, we help inspire curiosity, deepen understanding, and foster connection across cultures and generations. Whether guiding a tour, attending an exhibition, supporting a program, or shaping PEM's future, our contributions ripple far beyond our walls. We honor our collective energy, generosity, and belief in the power of art and culture to inspire, transform, and build a more connected world.

Recognition

Lynda Roscoe Hartigan, PEM's Rose-Marie and Eijk van Otterloo Executive Director and CEO, was named to *Boston Common Magazine's* Power Players list and PEM was recognized among the Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts by *The Women's Edge* and *Globe Magazine*.

Petra Slinkard, The James B. and Mary Lou Hawkes Chief Curator, The Nancy B. Putnam Curator of Fashion and Textiles, was named a Top Influencer on the North Shore by *Northshore Magazine*.

“I give myself the gift of coming to the Art and Nature Center to do art making, and I can feel the stress start to melt away.”

—LONGTIME MUSEUM VISITOR
AND MOTHER OF TWO

By the Numbers

254	full-time and part-time employees
101	volunteers
34	paid interns
13	paid fellows
6,687	donors who support PEM's vital work
17	trustees
8	trustees emeriti, 1 trustee ex officio
47	advisors
476	patrons
4,833	members, including 1,578 new members and 131 gift memberships
47	GenPEM members



PEOPLE

Staff, Interns, Fellows, Volunteers



PEM thrives because of the dedicated individuals who contribute their time, talent, and perspectives as staff, interns, fellows, and volunteers.

In FY25, this vibrant community of learners, educators, and emerging professionals helped bring PEM's mission to life in transformative ways.

PEM partnered with CBIZ Consulting to conduct the museum's first comprehensive Compensation and Benefits Study. This foundational effort assessed whether employee pay and benefits were aligned with market standards and how PEM could sustain a fair, consistent, and competitive approach in today's dynamic talent environment. In addition to benchmarking pay grades, salary bands, and hiring ranges, the study evaluated factors such as pay compression, equity, tenure, performance, and market fluctuations. The findings will guide the ongoing review and refinement of PEM's pay and benefits practices.

Through PEM's Professional Engagement Program (PEP), the museum has embarked on a multiyear professional development initiative that strengthens our staff's capacity

to serve our community with expertise and excellence. This program focuses on supporting staff in their professional growth and varied learning, working, and management styles through developing and implementing a learning agenda for all staff members while establishing a leadership management training program for all managers, as well as staff members interested in becoming managers.

PEM's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) work continued apace, with staff-facilitated working groups meeting regularly to advance key priorities and foster accountability across the museum. These groups hosted dialogue sessions, trainings, and learning opportunities that encouraged reflection and skill-building at all levels. Together, these efforts are helping to strengthen a culture of inclusion, respect, and shared responsibility.

Our Classic Guides, PEM's volunteer docent corps, played a vital role in shaping meaningful visitor experiences. Sixty volunteers led tours for more than 9,000 students and teachers, offering accessible and engaging interpretations of the museum's exhibitions and collection galleries. This year, PEM completed its first new guide recruitment in nearly a decade, welcoming a new cohort of volunteers eager to support lifelong learning and cultural exchange.

PEM was awarded a generous grant in 2023 from the Alice L. Walton Foundation that enabled the museum to hire its first Manager of Internships and Fellowships. In FY25, this role was instrumental in strengthening and expanding the impact of PEM's internship and fellowship program. PEM has also worked consistently to increase stipends to help support the rising generation of museum workers. This past year, our internship program expanded to include more than 30 paid interns working across 12 departments, from Curatorial and Collections to Marketing, the Art & Nature Center, and the Phillips Library.

Interns gained valuable professional experience, explored career pathways, and provided feedback that informed and enriched PEM's work. Interest in our Emerging Arts Leaders high school program also reached a record high, enabling us to expand the cohort to 10 students per session. Through structured learning, mentorship, and behind-the-scenes access, PEM continues to inspire and learn from the next generation of museum professionals.

PEM's Native American Fellowship (NAF) program, now in its second decade, continues to support Indigenous leadership and advancement in the museum field. NAF provides opportunities to gain hands-on experience,

engage with PEM's world-renowned collection of Native American and Indigenous art, and work alongside curators, scholars, and mentors. In FY25, NAF Summer Fellows worked on assembling archival material for the Exhibition Planning department, researched Indigenous artists and makers for a potential curatorial project, and created an acquisition list of Indigenous publications and art books for the Phillips Library collection.

During FY25, the Phillips Library hosted 35 visits from five fellows from the New England Regional Fellowship Consortium (NERFC), working on research topics as varied as how families dealt with the absences of people away at war or sea; labor in early America; and songs and poetry written on whaling ships. Two Frances E. Malmey Research Fellows reviewed archival material related to the history and culture of the Rurutu Island community in the South Pacific and conducted research for a dissertation on embroidered silk garments made in China for the Parsi community of Western India.



Apply to become a PEM intern, fellow, or volunteer at pem.org/careers.



PEOPLE

Visitors

In FY25, PEM welcomed a vibrant mix of in-person and virtual visitors who connected with the museum in meaningful and lasting ways.

Our visitors come seeking inspiration, discovery, and connection — and we're committed to understanding their needs and motivations. Through ongoing market research, surveys, and visitor interviews, we're learning more about what draws people to PEM, how they experience the museum, and what keeps them coming back. This data fuels our strategies for engagement, accessibility, and audience development, helping us evolve to meet visitors where they are — physically, emotionally, and intellectually.

Our relationship with visitors doesn't begin and end at the museum's doors. Hundreds of thousands explored our exhibitions, attended programs, and engaged with our historic campus, while many more joined us online through our website and digital channels. PEM participates in the Collaboration for Ongoing Visitor Experience Studies (COVES), using shared visitor surveys and insights from peer museums to better understand our audiences. Supported by Art Bridges, this project helps us create engaging programs, build stronger connections with our community, and cultivate a welcoming environment.

PEM remains deeply committed to providing welcoming experiences for all. In FY25, we expanded our accessibility offerings to better support visitors of all abilities. This important work was made possible, in part, by the Mass Cultural Council.

We once again partnered with KultureCity to offer sensory-inclusive bags equipped with noise-canceling headphones, fidget tools, and other supportive items. Visitors who are colorblind can now borrow EnChroma glasses, enhancing their ability to fully experience the colors of objects on view. These resources, along with accessible tours, digital tools, and multilingual offerings, reflect our ongoing efforts to ensure that everyone can engage with art on their own terms.

PEM remains in active exchange with our community before, during, and long after a visit through personalized email campaigns, social media interaction, and digital storytelling. Our blog, Connected, and podcast, the PEMcast, offer behind-the-scenes access, curator insights, artist interviews, and thought-provoking perspectives that expand the conversation and invite global audiences to dive deeper into what PEM offers.

Digital content not only serves as a rich resource for lifelong learners and curious minds everywhere, but also reinforces PEM's role as a human-centered, global museum. Whether through a shared moment of wonder in a gallery, a thoughtful exchange on Instagram, or a deep listen to a podcast episode, PEM is committed to offering content and experiences that resonate across time, place, and platform.

In every interaction, we aim to spark curiosity, build belonging, and celebrate creativity as a vital, unifying force.



Learn more about how PEM offers visitors EnChroma glasses

PEOPLE

Board Leadership

PEM's Board of Trustees and Board of Advisors are essential to the museum's strength, vision, and momentum.

Their collective wisdom, generosity, and advocacy provide critical guidance and support across every facet of the museum's work. In FY25, more than 70 Trustees and Advisors served PEM, sharing their philanthropy, time and talents to help advance our mission and deepen our impact.

This year, we proudly recognized a historic leadership milestone with the appointment of Jennifer M. Borggaard as Chair of the Board of Trustees; she is the first woman to hold this role in the museum's 225-year history. A long-serving Advisor, Trustee, and passionate advocate for PEM, Ms. Borggaard brings exceptional dedication, business acumen, and a deep commitment to equity and innovation. Her appointment reflects the museum's ongoing evolution and the importance of diverse leadership in shaping our future.

We are also grateful for the dedicated leadership of all the Trustee Committee Chairs, who support the board and the museum to ensure strong governance, strategic direction, and risk management, as well as the Board of Advisors' strong commitment to their role as institutional ambassadors. The partnership of our Trustees and Advisors empowers PEM to boldly honor creativity as a vital force in people's lives and to serve as a vibrant gathering place for inspiration, connection, and learning.

FY25 Board of Trustees

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Ana B. Colmenero
Molly Cook, Psy.D.
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Jurrien Timmer

FY25 Trustee Ex Officio

Ellen G. Hoffman

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Jurrien Timmer



Watch a Fireside Chat with PEM's Board Chair

FY25 Board of Advisors

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Mallie Pratt
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Molly Ryan
Joycelyn Snell
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William S. Strong
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George Gibson
Elizabeth S. Gillespie
Constance Rudnick Grayson
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Elsbeth Pratt
Mallie Pratt
Abigail Record
Howard Rich
Susan T. Robie
Jacqueline M. Rosenthal
Joycelyn Snell
Anne-Marie Soullière
Meg Sullivan
William S. Strong
Hoyt W. van Otterloo
Gail von Metzsch





“Art has the power to open minds, build bridges, and change the way we see the world. Our gift to the Peabody Essex Museum ensures that its talented team of curators have the resources to make a difference: to create thought provoking exhibitions that inspire, challenge, and connect us all.”

—ANGUS & LESLIE LITTLEJOHN



PEOPLE

Donors + Members

As we reflect on FY25, we are filled with gratitude for the generosity of PEM’s donor and member communities.

Their support fuels every aspect of our work, from groundbreaking exhibitions and educational programs to ambitious acquisitions and long-term care for our collections. This community includes supporters at every level. The following stories spotlight just a few of the ways they have helped bring PEM’s mission to life.

The power of connection was felt on November 9, 2024, when nearly 900 guests gathered to support PEM’s annual fundraising gala, which honored longtime Trustee and former Board Chair Stuart W. Pratt, whose 40 years of service were pivotal in shaping the museum’s strategic vision and long-term success. Drawing inspiration from PEM’s exhibition *Conjuring the Spirit World: Art, Magic, and Mediums*, the immersive evening was filled with performances, illusions, and feats of artistic wonder. More than just a dazzling night, the gala raised nearly \$800,000 — critical support that sustains our exhibitions, community partnerships, educational programming, and much more.

PEM’s Visiting Committees drew in motivated donors to connect with the museum on a deeper level. East India Marine Associates at the Curator’s Circle level and above were invited to foster their interest in a specific collection area. Committee members met with curators and special guests throughout the year and were invited for special viewings of the PEM collection and trips to other

cultural organizations. Beyond these experiences, Visiting Committee members played a vital role as trusted advisors, sharing perspectives that helped curators understand audience interests. They also served as valued ambassadors, extending PEM’s reach and impact within the broader community.

On May 17, 2025, PEM celebrated the opening of the Yu Kil-Chun Gallery of Korean Art and Culture, home to the museum’s remarkable Korean Art collection. This was made possible thanks to support from the Korea Foundation; Samsung Foundation of Culture, Korea; the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation; the Overseas Korean Cultural Heritage Foundation; and other generous donors including the National Museum of Korea, which also supported PEM’s Curator of Korean Art and Culture position. In total, 94 donors contributed to the project, 73 of whom were first-time donors to PEM. The opening was preceded by a major public program co-hosted with the Consul General of the Republic of Korea and Salem’s mayor, signaling the broad enthusiasm and civic pride surrounding this landmark achievement.

The power of creativity was uplifted with Carl and Betty Pforzheimer’s generous gift of works of modern and contemporary studio glass and companion funding. Their gift enabled the movement of the works to the James B. and Mary Lou Hawkes Collection Center, comprehensive cataloging, and the opening of the new Pforzheimer Gallery in May 2024. Their support ensures that PEM remains a leading destination for the appreciation of studio glass.



Find a full list of all of PEM’s FY25 patrons and supporters

Programming

Programs have the ability to spark curiosity, foster dialogue, and bring our mission to life in real time.

From thought-provoking exhibitions and transformative acquisitions to community-centered learning experiences and civic-minded events, these programs shape how we engage with the world — and with one another.

PEM's robust exhibition program introduces fresh perspectives and timely themes through bold storytelling and innovative design. Our dynamic collection continues to grow, with key acquisitions that reflect a commitment

to historical depth, contemporary relevance, and cultural diversity. Through initiatives led by teams across the museum, we create welcoming spaces for education, expression, and connection, reaching learners of all ages through school partnerships, creative residencies, and hands-on programming.

Together, our programming initiatives and thought leadership deepen PEM's role as a source of inspiration, inquiry, and impact. We honor the creative and scholarly collaborators, community partners, and audiences who make this work possible and continue to shape the museum's evolving story.

By the Numbers

406	public programs
195	walking tours
254	objects added to the collection
78	onsite workshops and classes
40	offsite and in-school workshops and classes
17	lectures and symposia
13	publications and scholarly essays
8	new exhibitions
8	hybrid and virtual events

Recognition

The New England Museum Association (NEMA) awarded PEM's *Bats!* exhibition design suite Best in Show, as well as design honors for the gala invitation and development materials, Bat Box pop-up shop, and Bat Quest gallery activity.

PEM received a 2024 MUSE Gold Creative Award for the Witch Trials Walk audio guide for outstanding achievement in experiential storytelling.

Conjuring the Spirit World: Art, Magic, and Mediums received a Gold Award in the Foreword INDIES Book Awards.



“The highlight of the day was the Indigenous and early American art gallery, where my son was completely transfixed by the pieces. He was so moved that he chose to write a message in the guest book at the end. Please know that this is not the norm for him. He hates writing and will almost never pick up a pencil without a bribe. The museum helped him feel like learning can be fun, and engaging, and perfect for him and his interests.”

— EMILY C., VISITOR



PROGRAMMING

Exhibitions

PEM's exhibitions are a core expression of our mission: creating unexpected experiences that center storytelling and celebrate human creativity across cultures and time.

Through award-winning installations, scholarship, and publishing, PEM invites visitors to engage with art in ways that are intellectually rich and emotionally resonant. Our exhibitions highlight the multifaceted and evolving nature of humanity, connecting past and present through bold ideas and visual narratives. Visitor touchpoints include interactive digital media, artist conversations, and intimate curator-led tours.

Conjuring the Spirit World: Art, Magic, and Mediums concluded its wildly popular presentation at PEM before traveling to The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Florida. The museum also presented *Jung Yeondoo: Building Dreams*, showcasing contemporary Korean photography that blends fantasy and reality, and *Making History: 200 Years of American Art from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts*, which offered a deep dive into American identity through two centuries of painting and sculpture. The new Yu Kil-Chun Gallery of Korean Art and Culture expanded PEM's ongoing gallery presentations through fresh interpretation of one of the nation's earliest and most distinguished Korean collections.

Other FY25 planning set the stage for traveling and special exhibitions, including *Andrew Gn: Fashioning the World*, organized in collaboration with the Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore and celebrating the opulent work of the designer, global fashion icon, and generous PEM donor, and *Knowing Nature: Stories of the Boreal Forest*, presented in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution Traveling

Exhibition Services. Planning also advanced for solo artist exhibitions *Edmonia Lewis: Said in Stone*, co-organized with the Georgia Museum of Art at the University of Georgia, and *Isamu Noguchi: "I am not a designer"*, organized by the High Museum of Art, as well as an upcoming exhibition about the expressive and inventive world of origami.

Staff also prepared for a robust slate of upcoming projects. Central to these efforts is the reimagined interpretation of East India Marine Hall — PEM's original exhibition space and a National Historic Landmark — which will highlight some of the museum's earliest collected objects. As part of citywide Salem 400+ celebrations in 2026, PEM will present *Beyond the Broom: Salem Short Films*, a showcase of documentary films produced by community artists and filmmakers, and initiate a major rotation in the Fashion and Design gallery to spotlight Salem's rich history and dynamic community. PEM will also join the nation's commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution through *Pressing Importance: Salem and the Declaration of Independence*, an exhibition exploring the local legacy of the Declaration through materials drawn from PEM's Phillips Library, one of the oldest research libraries in the United States.

Visitors can anticipate a new interpretive gallery for Yin Yu Tang: A Chinese Home, as well as installations of new acquisitions and rotations of light-sensitive materials across the museum.

Through contemporary and historic expressions of art as well as immersive storytelling, PEM's exhibition program brings people and ideas together — connecting audiences through creativity, curiosity, and the enduring power of human expression.



Explore all of PEM's current and upcoming exhibitions

PROGRAMMING

Acquisitions

PEM continued to strengthen and amplify our collection through a mission-aligned acquisition strategy led by the museum's curators, working in concert with the Board of Trustees' Collections Committee.

This group evaluates works for their ability to deepen PEM's interpretive capacity; reflect the dynamic intersections of global art, history, and culture; and represent a wider range of creativity.

In FY25, acquisitions spanned time periods, media, and the globe, adding exceptional depth to our historical and contemporary collections. Highlights among two-dimensional works include Robert Salmon's *Boston Harbor, Long and Central Wharves* (1832); Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun's (Cowichan and Okanagan) *Fire Landscape Painting* (2023), a vivid, charged reflection on environmental justice; Joe Diggs' *Dreads* (2018); and Archy LaSalle's *Charles River Esplanade* (1993). Together, these works expand the perspectives of our American Art collection.

PEM also enhanced its three-dimensional holdings through major acquisitions in fashion, sculpture, and design. The fashion collection has continued to grow with standout works like Wonju Seo's *Bojagi Dress* (2022) and a bold evening gown by Christopher John Rogers from his acclaimed 2024 collection. These pieces reflect the vibrancy of global fashion and its relevance to contemporary art and culture.



Explore the PEM collection online

Sky Dances Light (Companions), PEM's recent commission by Marie Watt (Seneca Nation), represents the catalytic intersection between community engagement and creative expression. This interactive, suspended, biomorphic sculpture was assembled from thousands of metal jingle cones by museum visitors and community members. The museum also acquired *Ceramic Vessel* (2002) by Nam June Paik, the Korean-born founder of the video art movement. As a multinational and multicultural artist, Paik continuously challenged himself and the art world to adapt creatively to changing technological and media environments. In the work, currently on view in the Yu-Kil Chun Gallery of Korean Art and Culture, Paik uses video feedback to suggest a dynamic forcefield around a celadon vessel.

An exceptional collection of Japanese cloisonné and related ephemera donated by renowned collector and scholar Fredric T. Schneider significantly enhances PEM's Japanese art and library holdings. Other notable acquisitions include an 18th-century Japanned high chest from Colonial Massachusetts; a 17th-century Spanish Colonial barniz de Pasto chest; and a striking 18th-century figurehead from the ship *Tamerlane*.

Each new acquisition helps PEM tell richer, more engaging stories, connecting audiences to creativity across time, culture, and context.

IMAGES (clockwise): Robert Salmon, *Boston Harbor, Long and Central Wharves* (detail), 1832. Oil on panel. Museum purchase, made possible by an anonymous donor. Joseph Gott, *Hagar and Ishmael*, about 1834. Terra-cotta, on a nero portoro marble base. Museum purchase, made possible by the Anna Pingree Phillips Fund. Marie Watt (Seneca Nation), *Sky Dances Light (Companions)* (detail), 2024. From the *Sky Dances Light* series, 2022-ongoing. Tin jingles, cotton twill tape, polyester mesh, and steel. Fredric T. Schneider Collection of Japanese Cloisonné and Related Ephemera, Attributed to Ōta Toshiro, *Vase with Design of Egrets Flying above Reeds*, 1910–20. Plique-à-jour enamel and silver. Fredric T. Schneider Collection, Gift of Fredric T. Schneider and Lynn Whisnant Reiser. Attributed to Jeremiah Dodge, Figurehead from the ship *Tamerlane* (detail), 1824. White pine and paint. Museum purchase, made possible by the Maritime Visiting Committee. 2025.4.1 Image courtesy of Ryan M. Cooper Nautical Antiques & Art.





PROGRAMMING

Public Outreach + Community Engagement

PEM's public programs and events are all about creating meaningful connections among people, art, ideas, and the world around us.

We aim to inspire creativity, curiosity, and care by offering a welcoming third space beyond home or work, where visitors can learn, play, gather, and feel nourished by the arts.

In FY25, the museum launched new offerings and reimaged others. Our Music in the Atrium live performance series enlivens the museum experience with weekly concerts, while PEM Presents offers a platform for artist residencies, theater and dance performances, lectures and symposia. PEM Reads expands the museum's collaborative book club readings and author events; Creative Foundations hands-on art workshops foster creativity for all abilities. We continued PEM Pals, our beloved storytime for young children and their caregivers, and expanded our programming for PEM's annual Lunar New Year celebration and Haunted Histories, an immersive theatrical program exploring Salem's storied past. In total, we hosted more than 400 programs that reached more than 25,000 people.

In FY25, we experienced important growth — not only in sheer visitor numbers, but also in depth and purpose. Our Learning & Community Engagement department strengthened relationships with 11 community partners, including the Salem YMCA, Punto Urban Art Museum, Artists for Humanity, LEAP for Education, EforAll/ EparaTodos, and Raw Art Works (RAW). Through in-school and after-school programming, our teaching artists reached more than 300 public school students, bringing creative learning directly into classrooms and community spaces.

The Art & Nature Center (ANC) continued to encourage wonder and connection through hands-on experiences. More than 8,500 participants joined ANC staff for exhibition activations and creative, family-friendly drop-in activities in The Pod and throughout the museum.

Behind every number is a person who chose to spend their time with us, creating, reflecting, celebrating, and connecting. As we look ahead, our commitment remains steadfast: to create programs that invite people in, make them feel and learn something new, and foster a greater sense of connection — to art, to each other, and to PEM.



“What we’re discovering through these collaborative events with PEM is something our region has been missing: authentic spaces where we can hear directly from creative entrepreneurs about what they need to thrive... We’re collectively realizing that when we center the voices of our creative community in these conversations, we uncover solutions that benefit everyone.”

— JOHN ANDREWS, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, CREATIVE COLLECTIVE



Explore all of PEM's upcoming public programs

PROGRAMMING

Thought Leadership + Networking

PEM extends our commitment to public dialogue through networking events, lectures, and convenings. The museum strives to provide a platform for exploring pressing issues of our time, including climate change, equity, and the evolving role of museums.

In FY25, PEM hosted the first North American Conference for FutureMuseum, a global consortium dedicated to redefining museums' impact in today's rapidly changing society. Our Chief Marketing Officer and in-house Neuroscience Researcher shared how PEM is integrating neuroscience with audience research, uncovering how visitors seek meaning and how exhibitions can be designed to spark deeper emotional connections. PEM's innovative approaches were also recognized by ReMuseum, a national think tank, and in two case studies highlighting best practices in audience development and marketing.

PEM curators are actively sharing their thought leadership nationally and internationally through various engagements, including significant participation in major conferences, workshops, and publications. Presentations were delivered at various venues, such as the International Congress of Maritime Museums biennial congress in Rotterdam, the Fashion Institute of Technology, the

Massachusetts Historical Society, and the Center for Creative Photography, along with a lecture on *Draw Me Ishmael: The Book Arts of Moby Dick* at the 2024 Boston Book Fair. The museum extended our scholarship to wider audiences through the publication of three exhibition catalogs. Other publications and contributions included *Gathering: The Carl and Betty Pforzheimer Collection of Studio Glass*, a special issue of *Dress* on "Reframing Fashion in the Museum," and *Fighting for Freedom: Black Craftspeople and the Pursuit of Independence*, as well as essays on Indigenous Futurisms and the Hood Museum of Art's traveling exhibition *Cara Romero: Panûpünüwügai (Living Light)*. Curators engaged in professional development, including attending the prestigious Attingham Summer School program, leading a three-week workshop on "Edmonia Lewis and the Expanding Field of American Sculpture," and accepting an invitation to a Korea Foundation-sponsored program for contemporary art curators in Seoul.

We continue to convene critical conversations locally through our annual Preservation in a Changing Climate conference, held in partnership with Salem stakeholders. This annual gathering examines mitigation and adaptation strategies for historic buildings, cultural landmarks, and landscapes, with a focus on renewable energy and sustainability.



PEM serves as a meaningful bridge for important conversations by hosting a series of networking and legislative events with leaders across the creative and public sectors. With an aim of fostering dialogue, building partnerships, and sparking civic engagement, these gatherings bring together artists, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and cultural advocates for panel discussions and roundtables to consider how creativity can serve as a catalyst for community resilience and social progress. Featuring representatives from federal, state, and local government alongside cultural leaders, these convenings, organized in partnership with Creative Collective, have drawn hundreds of participants who come together to explore bold solutions to shared challenges and affirm the transformative power of the arts in civic life.

Our gatherings advance the PEM FORWARD strategic plan by underscoring the museum's role as a human-centered institution grounded in relevance, equity, and connection. They also deepen PEM's relationships with policymakers, funders, and local stakeholders, reinforcing our dual role as cultural hub and civic anchor. With support from Creative Collective and other partners, PEM will continue to provide forums for reflection, sharing ideas, and visionary planning.



Learn more about PEM's Neuroscience Initiative

Places

“What a magical place. The garden was spectacular. We also had the extreme honor of witnessing a sun halo while we were there. It honestly just added to the pure magic that is Salem.”

— VISITOR TO PEM'S ROPES MANSION GARDEN

The extraordinary places that support and expand our mission are foundational to the PEM experience.

We are committed to creating accessible environments that inspire and welcome. From the state-of-the-art James B. and Mary Lou Hawkes Collection Center and Phillips Library Reading Room to the living landscape of our Level II Arboretum-designated campus and our remarkable collection of historic houses, PEM's spaces are central to how we preserve, present, and reimagine art and culture. Whether safeguarding fragile works for future generations, inviting reflection beneath a canopy of trees, or sharing four centuries of Salem architecture, each special place on PEM's campus reflects our commitment to innovation, sustainability, and access.

A pioneer in historic preservation, PEM today stewards 15 historic structures. For more than two centuries, the museum has played a significant role in shaping the region's architectural landscape and green spaces through acquiring, restoring, commissioning, and caring for irreplaceable structures and sites. In FY25, PEM advanced this legacy with significant repairs to several buildings, including Yin Yu Tang, the 18th-century Chinese merchant's home re-erected in Salem. Marking the 20th anniversary of its arrival from Anhui Province, the preservation of Yin Yu Tang addresses the challenges

of New England's climate through roof tile repairs, brick replacement, and the renewal of its traditional white lime render coating — efforts that ensure the home's long-term stability and integrity. Elsewhere on PEM's campus, significant restoration work was completed on the grounds and structure of the Cotting-Smith Assembly House, and the Ropes Mansion greenhouse has been enhanced to support the cultivation of more than 1,000 plants each year.

Just as PEM invests in protecting its historic properties, we are also strengthening the infrastructure that supports our people. In FY25, space above 175 Essex Street was successfully renovated to create new staff offices. The project creates a direct connection to the main museum building while providing thoughtfully designed meeting spaces and staff amenities. Equally important is the ability to bring critical departments into closer proximity, fostering greater collaboration and a more cohesive, connected work environment.

Together, these environments — whether historic homes, collection centers, gardens, or staff spaces — are not only where we preserve stories but also where we make them. They embody the vision and stewardship that have shaped PEM across the centuries, and play a vital role in ensuring the museum remains responsive, forward-looking, and deeply connected to the people we serve.



By the Numbers

650,000	square feet of museum and operational spaces
120,000	square feet in the James B. and Mary Lou Hawkes Collection Center
50	acres across PEM's Salem and Rowley campuses
29	buildings
4	centuries of architecture
9	acres of gardens and green space
5,000	flowers planted annually in the Ropes Mansion Garden
720	individual trees and woody plantings representing 138 species in PEM's Arboretum
1	130-year-old beloved copper beech tree
100%	of PEM's annual electricity consumption in Salem offset by renewable energy credits
7,000	metric tons of CO2 emissions reduced by PEM's Climate + Environment Initiative

Recognition

PEM was named Best Museum by *Northshore Magazine*, receiving the Editors' Choice and Readers' Choice designations. On a global scale, the museum earned a Tripadvisor Travelers' Choice Award, placing it among the top 10% of attractions worldwide based on visitor reviews.

The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and the Morton Register of Arboreta elevated PEM's arboretum designation from Level I to Level II.



PLACES

Comprehensive Campus Assessment

“From a small group of sea captains and merchants to the world-renowned museum of art and culture that it is today, PEM’s growth and success have contributed to Salem’s growth and success. As we prepare for 2026, when Salem turns 400, the connection between PEM and our city is especially powerful, as an institution that tells our stories and has, for centuries, itself shaped those stories. We’re fortunate to have an institution like PEM as a partner and a cultural anchor for our community.”

— MAYOR DOMINICK PANGALLO, CITY OF SALEM

In FY25, PEM undertook its first Comprehensive Campus Assessment to evaluate the condition, capacity, and alignment of its facilities with its mission and long-term strategic priorities.

This vital initiative, led by Annum Architects in collaboration with experiential design firm OverUnder, reflects the museum’s commitment to being a more inclusive, visitor-centered, and sustainable institution. As the museum continues to implement our PEM *FORWARD* strategic plan, this assessment provides a foundation for informed decision-making regarding capital investments, operational efficiencies, and visitor experience enhancements across the entire campus.

The assessment encompasses all museum-owned properties, including galleries, offices, collections storage, historic structures, grounds, and public spaces, as well as support buildings and infrastructure. This in-depth work identifies opportunities to improve accessibility, environmental sustainability, and energy performance while also addressing deferred maintenance and space utilization challenges. By incorporating stakeholder input, industry best practices, and data-driven analysis,

the assessment generated a roadmap for phased improvements that support programmatic excellence and long-term resilience.

Importantly, the assessment also explores how physical spaces can better reflect PEM’s values and encourage creativity, cultural understanding, and meaningful community engagement. Outcomes will include reimagined gathering spaces, enhanced educational environments, and infrastructure that supports hybrid programming and evolving audience needs.

The Comprehensive Campus Assessment will guide a new era of stewardship, ensuring that PEM’s facilities support its role as a leading international museum for decades to come. This investment strengthens the museum’s sustainability, relevance, and ability to deliver transformative experiences for future generations.



Do you love PEM’s campus? Explore our wedding and event rentals



PLACES

Hawkes Collection Center

Since its opening in 2018, the James B. and Mary Lou Hawkes Collection Center (HCC) has solidified PEM's national leadership in the care and stewardship of museum and library collections.

Designed to meet the highest standards of accessibility and preventive conservation, the HCC serves as a critical foundation and a forward-looking model for the future of collections management.

In FY25, we welcomed more than two dozen tours of the facility, engaging researchers, students, members, donors, and museum professionals from the Greater Boston area and around the world. We consistently received positive feedback from these tours, underscoring the visible care, thoughtful organization, and deep expertise that define our evolving storage systems. For many, touring the HCC transforms the often unseen work of collections stewardship into something tangible, active, and integral to the museum's mission.

The relocation of PEM's collection from Salem to Rowley is well underway, beginning with the Fashion and Design collection. More than 7,400 objects were moved, rehoused in new cabinets, documented, and digitized. In parallel, 950 pieces of Hawaiian barkcloth were relocated into new NEH-funded cabinetry acquired in 2023, reinforcing our commitment to long-term preservation. In spring 2025, PEM began offering member tours and programs in this newly activated space.

Significant strides were also made in our next storage zone. The fit-out of Museum Storage One introduced 53 rows of 12-foot-high compact shelving, now ready to house small-to medium-sized objects from across multiple collection areas. We began with the Native American and Oceanic collections, and work on the American Decorative Arts and Korean collections will begin in 2026. Plans are in place to outfit two additional rooms with cantilevered shelving and specialized racks for large objects, paintings, and textiles.

These physical upgrades are paired with a broader strategic evolution. The HCC's enhanced infrastructure supports not only better care and access but also increased opportunities for research, interdisciplinary collaboration, curatorial exploration, and public programming. From hosting scholars and students to engaging members in behind-the-scenes experiences, the HCC is becoming a dynamic site for inquiry and inspiration.

Colleagues across the region and beyond are increasingly looking to PEM as a model for best collections practices. The HCC addresses today's most pressing challenges — space, preservation, access, and sustainability — through an integrated, mission-driven approach. It is more than a storage facility; it is a teaching tool, an innovation hub, and a key driver of PEM's vision for the future.

With continued investment in infrastructure and digitization, the HCC is well positioned to support the goals of PEM *FORWARD*. We are preparing, protecting, and positioning our collection not just for today, but for generations to come.



**Learn more about the
Hawkes Collection Center**

Environment + Arboretum



Climate + Environment Initiative

PEM's Climate + Environment Initiative advances the museum's commitment to sustainability, resilience, and creative climate engagement. We integrate environmental awareness into exhibitions, programs, and our daily operational practices in order to spark dialogue and inspire action.

Through changing interactive exhibitions, hands-on learning, and art making, The Dotty Brown Art & Nature Center welcomes curious art lovers of all ages and grows an awareness of nature by tapping into creativity. In FY25, we deepened our climate-focused offerings through exhibitions, such as *Narwhal: Revealing an Arctic Legend*; campus greening efforts; and collaborative partnerships with artists, scientists, and community leaders.

Gourmet Caterers, the family-run catering operation behind PEM's Atrium Café, furthered sustainable food production with a hydroponic growing operation that produces fresh greens, herbs, and edible flowers year-round. Museum staff also participated by joining our group of Climate Ideators to investigate ways the museum can better respond to the climate crisis. Our popular Freecycle

event invited staff to swap clothing, books, and household items, and a staff distribution list now encourages continued upcycling of gently used goods.

Our steady shift toward renewable energy and adaptive infrastructure reflects a commitment to climate-conscious operations. At the end of FY25, PEM recommitted to a three-year renewable energy agreement, which purchases renewable energy credits to match 100% of the annual electricity consumption for our Salem campus. Through the dedication of PEM's staff and contractors, we have even advanced sustainable efforts to reduce and repurpose exhibition design materials without compromising the visitor experience.

PEM Arboretum

PEM earned Level I Arboretum accreditation from ArbNet in 2023 and advanced to a Level II status in March 2025, recognizing the museum's campus as a thoughtfully curated and actively managed living collection. This prestigious designation highlights PEM's commitment to environmental stewardship, education, and community engagement.

PEM's arboretum space encompasses hundreds of trees and woody plants across our Salem and Rowley campuses, representing more than 138 species. Standout

specimens of native and introduced plants include sourwood, magnolias, ginkgos, katsuras, and Princeton elms. Many are located in the museum's public Ropes Mansion Garden, which is integrated into the grounds of our historic properties and visible from neighborhood sidewalks, offering opportunities for discovery and reflection at every turn.

Interactive digital maps help visitors engage with plants on our campus to better understand their botanical, ecological, and cultural significance. QR-coded signage placed throughout the arboretum offers additional information for self-guided exploration, and the "Meet Our Trees" webpage extends the experience online. Staff-led tours, seasonal programming, and interpretive signage further enhance visitors' experience of this living landscape.

We are committed to maintaining the health and diversity of our tree population through responsible care, replanting efforts, and community education. The arboretum also connects with PEM's Climate + Environment Initiative, offering a space where art, science, and the natural world intersect.



Meet PEM's trees and consider becoming a garden volunteer



PLACES

PEM Shops

“Stylish, timeless, and good for the environment. It’s just one of the ways the Peabody Essex Museum is reinventing the gift shop experience.”

—JARED BOWEN, WGBH *THE CULTURE SHOW*

In FY25, PEM reimagined museum retail as a platform for creativity, experimentation, and community connection.

From bold new concepts in our flagship store to immersive pop-up experiences across campus, PEM’s retail offerings are expanding how audiences engage with us while generating mission-critical revenue to support the museum’s programs and initiatives. With an enhanced digital presence, the launch of a holiday shopping catalog, and the addition of new product lines, PEM retail initiatives in FY25 broke all previous records, grossing nearly \$2 million.

At our Susan Esco Chandler and Alfred D. Chandler Shop, located at 161 Essex Street, PEM introduced refreshed product lines and seasonal installations that connect directly with exhibitions, local makers, and global artisans. From contemporary design objects to books, jewelry, and PEM-exclusive merchandise, the shop continues to surprise and delight visitors while supporting local and sustainable sourcing and packaging whenever possible.

In August 2024, PEM launched Marine Hall Mercantile, a satellite retail space at 177 Essex Street. The Mercantile specializes in maritime-inspired home goods, fine board games and puzzles, and heritage crafts, all chosen to reflect PEM’s rich maritime collection and Salem’s seafaring legacy. Creative collaborations with local creators include a partnership with Picker Packer and Grumb, a vintage clothier whose curated collection is as expressive as it is wearable. Choosing vintage means using what’s already in

the world, giving beautiful garments new life and avoiding the waste and environmental damage that comes from overproduction and disposable trends.

PEM also reactivated its pop-up shop series at 135 Essex Street, featuring a rotating retail concept that creates immersive experiences aligned with PEM exhibitions. FY25 pop-ups included the Ghost Box, a mystical, Salem-themed boutique inspired by *Conjuring the Spirit World: Art, Magic, and Mediums*, and the Bat Box, a Halloween pop-up celebrating PEM’s Art & Nature Center *Bats!* exhibition and local wildlife conservation efforts. These pop-ups have proven to be wildly popular with visitors and locals alike, attracting new audiences and expanding PEM’s reach beyond traditional museumgoers.

Our themed pop-ups have continued with the Brick Box, which showcases LEGO brand products and more. The Brick Box is created through a partnership with LEGO and LEGO master builder Jeff Chapman, who has been commissioned to create a series of original builds inspired by PEM’s extensive architecture collection and popular historic house walking tours.

Collaborations with local artists like Jenni Stuart Fine Jewelry, Queen Adeline, and We Dream In Colour remain central to these experiments, and PEM retail continues to embody the museum’s human-centered mission: valuing innovation and storytelling while stimulating unexpected connections all along the museum journey.



Treat yourself while supporting the museum

Onward

With an impactful FY25 under our belts, we are energized to ensure that FY26 continues the momentum of our PEM FORWARD strategic plan.

In the year ahead, we are focused on several key priorities: implementing more thoughtful and unified PEM experience criteria to continually refine our offerings; developing sustainable strategies to guide our collecting and programming; deepening audience engagement; accelerating the collection move and documentation efforts; advancing campus activation planning; and shaping our AI strategies alongside the development of a new Research and Innovation Center.

The progress we have made — and the impact we will continue to deliver — is possible only through the remarkable partnership and support of so many. The generosity, commitment, and leadership of our Trustees and Advisors, executive team, staff, patrons, community members, and colleagues are immeasurable and invaluable as the lynchpins of why and how we can make a difference in people's lives.

Truly, thank you, and indeed, onward together!



Lynda Roscoe Hartigan

The Rose-Marie and Eijk van Otterloo
Executive Director and CEO

“We are living in contested times, witnessing cultural narratives and the historical legacy of America being rewritten, denied, ignored, and banned into a realm of invisibility. PEM’s mission to celebrate works of art, its creative makers, and most importantly, stories and exhibitions that will empower the vast range of human experiences, must be prioritized.”

— DR. LESLIE KING HAMMOND,
PEM BOARD MEMBER, SCHOLAR,
CURATOR, AND ARTIST





All images courtesy of Peabody Essex Museum.
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