



Annual Report 2022

MISSION

The National Nordic Museum shares Nordic culture, values, and ideas with people of all ages and backgrounds to create connections, generate dialogue, and inspire new perspectives.

Cover image: Gov. Jay Inslee in the *From Dawn to Dusk* exhibition.

From Hans Aarhus, President, Board of Trustees

Our strategic goals for transforming the Museum into a cultural leader continue to develop under Executive Director/CEO Eric Nelson and his team. The quality of our exhibitions and programs demonstrate that we are becoming a premiere destination in Seattle for national and international visitors.

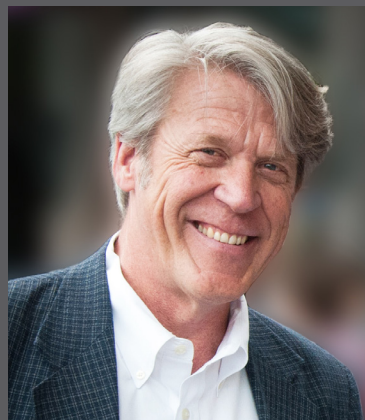
Board development was a major focus of the year. We welcomed five new Board members in 2022: Laurie Black, Elisabeth Bodal, Outi Mäkiniemi, David Nelson, and Tor Tollessen. The Board completed two important workshops to advance our DEAI governance priorities, and we established committees focused on national outreach, collections, and advancement.

I close with a heartfelt thank you to retiring Trustees Maria Staaf and Tom Malone for their wonderful service to the Museum.



Top: Lone Dencker Wisborg, Ambassador of Denmark and Eric Nelson, Executive Director/CEO in front of Thomas Dambo's Swan.

Bottom: Gov. Jay Inslee, Executive Director/CEO Eric Nelson, and HRH Prince Daniel of Sweden.



From the Executive Director/CEO Eric Nelson

In 2022, the National Nordic Museum saw an unprecedented number of distinguished guests from the Nordic countries, as well as local, state, and national government officials who attended events at the Museum.

Our Nordic Innovation Summit returned as an on-site event with a virtual component and was rated a resounding success. This event, like no other, showcases the Museum's commitment to the future generations by fulfilling our mission to inspire dialogue through important discussions with the C-suite leaders, policymakers, and scholars from both the Nordic countries and the Pacific Northwest. Ambassador of Finland Mikko Hautala's visit in the fall, on the brink of Finland's historic decision to join NATO, was one of our best attended fireside chats and has become a top-rated video on the Museum's YouTube channel and Gather Library.

We brought iconic works of art from a leading Nordic museum to North America through the landmark exhibition *From Dawn to Dusk: Nordic Art from Sweden's Nationalmuseum*. A thought-provoking cross-cultural examination of Norwegian and American photography of the late 19th and 20th century drew parallels between the two regions in the rapid development of infrastructure, exploitation of natural resources, and tourism influx. We finished out the year with the popular and moving exhibition *Mygration*, showcasing two contemporary artists' reflections on a moment in Sámi and American history.

The Museum continues to grow its digital infrastructure, and is well-positioned to become a national and international cultural leader through many partnerships and relationships cultivated during these past years.

From Earl Ecklund, Treasurer, National Nordic Museum

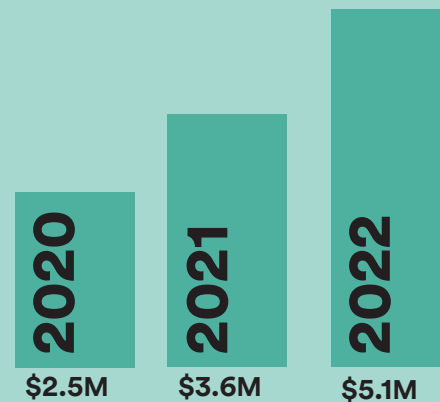
The return of the in-person Northern Lights Auktion was a resounding success in 2022, exceeding our original goals. Thank you to the Auktion Committee and Board for their commitment to the Museum.

Through diligent control of expenses and continued development of new sources of revenue, both earned and contributed, we remain fiscally sound. Excess income over expenses back-filled losses seen in 2020, and Membership ended the year above 2019 levels. We enter into the new year in a healthy financial condition but need to remain mindful of the impact of inflation on operating costs throughout the coming year.

In 2022, grants and sponsorships comprised \$1.8 million of the \$3.7 million revenue generated by fundraising and membership, including more than \$1 million in COVID relief funding from King County and the City of Seattle.



GROSS PROFIT 2020–2022



	2020 ACTUALS	2021 ACTUALS	2022 ACTUALS
INCOME			
Contributed	\$1,077,017	\$1,986,055	\$2,358,768
Earned	\$974,174	\$1,268,794	\$1,630,954
Program	\$91,955	\$88,282	\$114,062
Special Event	\$430,301	\$303,218	\$1,016,488
GROSS PROFIT	\$2,573,447	\$3,646,349	\$5,120,272
EXPENSE			
Overhead	\$721,699	\$709,265	\$1,095,111
Program	\$311,639	\$316,380	\$871,612
Payroll Expenses	\$2,139,602	\$2,188,221	\$2,582,510
Special Event	\$52,261	\$100,073	\$270,596
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$3,225,201	\$3,313,939	\$4,819,829
ADJUSTED NET	(\$651,754)	\$332,410	\$442,972

Special Exhibitions



From Dawn to Dusk: Nordic Art from Sweden's Nationalmuseum

The year opened with the Museum's largest and most important showing of 19th and early 20th century art from the Nordic countries. Fifty-six paintings by Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish artists traced a period of radical development in Nordic art.

From Dawn to Dusk was one of few North American exhibitions with European loans during this time — many museums focused on shows drawn from their permanent collections. The Museum's strong international relationships coupled with a practiced and professional team made this fine art exhibition possible.



Images, opposite page, clockwise from top:

Aalto-designed swimming pool by photographer Janne Tuunanen.

H.E. Mikko Hautala with Janne Tuunanen at the opening of Aalto exhibition.

Across the West and Toward the North in Osher Gallery.

From Dawn to Dusk in Osher Gallery.

Across the West and Toward the North

The Museum welcomed an important collection of 19th-century photography that documented the changing landscapes of the American West and Norway. Drawing from the collections of Ron Perisho, the Picture Collection at the University of Bergen Library, and the Norwegian Museum of Cultural History, *Across the West and Toward the North* investigated how two countries responded to the tourism influx, infrastructure changes, exploitation of natural resources, and resulting effects of mapping and exploration.

To complement the exhibition and complicate the narratives told in these convincingly “documentary” images, the Museum commissioned three Indigenous artists to organize gallery tours and create a performance piece that reflects on the 19th-century photographers’ work, expansion, and ethno-tourism. The week-long programming was titled Indigenous Corps of Discovery presents, “Don’t Go North!” and culminated with a community celebration open to all.



Alvar Aalto’s Jyväskylä by Janne Tuunanen

This photography exhibition featured in the Fjord Alcove, opened in October in connection with the visit from Ambassador of the Republic of Finland to the United States of America H.E. Mikko Hautala.



Special Exhibitions

Mygration

The year ended with the well-received exhibition of works by Tomas Colbengtson and Stina Folkebrant. Reflecting on a nearly forgotten piece of local and Sámi history — the importation of reindeer to Alaska in the 19th century — the exhibition sparked engaging programming for K-12 students and adults, and meaningful discussions with members of the Sámi-American community. The Sámi Film Festival, rescheduled to align with Sámi National Day, highlighted personal, authentic, and insightful stories told by women directors. The inaugural guest curator of the festival was Sámi filmmaker, Katja Gauriloff.

As the first North American venue for *Mygration*, the Museum garnered international press attention and connected the artists to additional venues, allowing the exhibition to tour following its time at the Museum.

In early 2023, the Museum commissioned Stina Folkebrant (b. 1968) to paint a mural memorializing *Mygration*. Folkebrant, who paints in grayscale, depicts two male reindeer (or bulls) fighting for a mate, who awaits the outcome on the periphery of the composition.



Mygration in Osher Gallery.



Left: Stina Folkebrant, the 9th *Mygration* painting, *Autumn Flight*. Medium: acrylic spray paint, 2023.

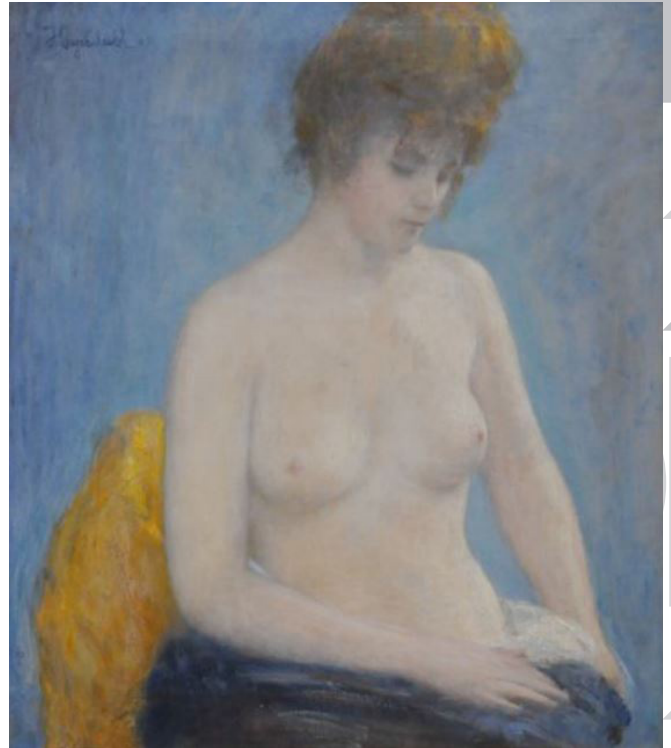
Opposite page: Tomas Colbengtson, *Sámi Dájvan/Sámi Land* from the exhibition *Mygration*.

Collections

The Museum acquired numerous works by significant Nordic artists in 2022, as a result of the expansion of our exhibition program and presentation of fine art exhibitions on loan from national galleries in the Nordic countries. Three significant acquisitions from 2022 are highlighted here.

A half-length nude by Swedish-born, Norwegian artist Hans Heyerdahl (1857 – 1913). Heyerdahl was known for painting scenes of everyday life, landscapes, and portraits; some of his works are represented in Norway's Nasjonalmuseet. This painting was created after the artist spent considerable time in Paris near the end of his life, and it bears a relationship to the pastel palette of contemporaneous French artists. The painting was once featured on PBS's *Antiques Roadshow*.

The radical expression of self-taught Icelandic artist Gunnar Örn (1946 – 2008) contrasts with Heyerdahl's subdued naturalism. The painting focuses on the primordial forces that shape the Icelandic landscape, symbolized in the distorted human form. This painting dates to the 1980s, when Örn experimented with bold colors and loose brushwork.



Hans Heyerdahl, *Untitled*, 1908, Oil on canvas. Gift of Annichen Kassel.



Among the pieces in *Mygration* were Tomas Colbengtson's ceramics, which are printed with historic photographs of Sámi reindeer herders and their families from Nordic and North American archival collections. The Museum has purchased one of these works for its permanent collection.



Gunnar Örn, *Untitled*, 1987 – 1991, Oil on canvas. Gift of Parks and Ginger Anderson.

Programs

The Museum offered 132 programs in 2022, welcoming over 14,000 program attendees during the year. In-person and virtual programming ranged from multi-day programs (like the Nordic Innovation Summit and the Nordic Lights Film Festival) to special exhibition tours, including curator-led and Indigenous Corps of Discovery tours.

The chart below illustrates the breadth of programming offered by the Museum over the course of the year.



- Art & Craft Classes 24%
- Youth Activities: 15.3%
- Guided Tours: 13.7%
- Lectures: 13%
- Genealogy Sessions: 10.7%
- Film Screenings: 8.4%
- Book Talks: 7.6%
- Musical & Theatrical Performances: 6.9%



Operations

In 2022, attendance at the Museum saw an encouraging increase. Paid admission was up 16% compared to open days in the previous year and total admissions revenue was up 30% over 2021. The Museum's Store sales grew steadily with a 6% increase over the previous year. Improvements to the Store's website enhanced our ability to serve guests outside the local area. Venue rentals also rebounded in 2022, with the return of weddings and corporate events.

Volunteers Make a Difference

Volunteers contributed **5,968 hours** to the operation of the Museum in 2022. We are grateful to all our volunteers and wish to say a special thanks to "top performers" Gail Blaine, Sharon Lucas, and Greg Henrikson. The Museum continues to attract Teens in Public Service and Service-Learning hours and interns from the Museology Master of Arts Program at the UW.

Philanthropy Supports Recovery and Fuels Exceptional Exhibitions and Programs

Thanks to continued support from our community and public funding for COVID relief and recovery, the Museum was able to present world-class exhibitions and programs during 2022 while continuing to work towards recovery.

While overall attendance at museums and cultural organizations nationally continued to recover in 2022, both Membership and President's Club ended the year above pre-COVID (2019) levels.

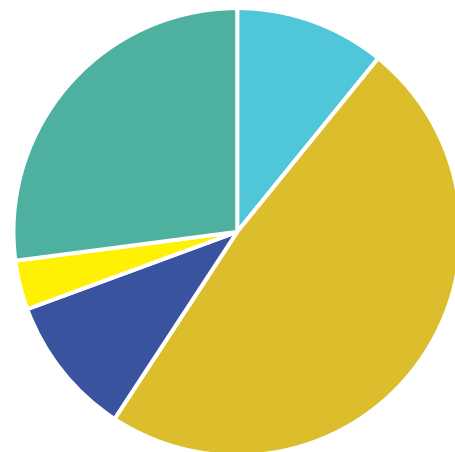
Following a two-year hiatus from gathering in-person, the Northern Lights Auktion was a huge success and exceeded pre-COVID results—with 32% growth over 2019.

Grants and sponsorships comprised \$1.8 million of the \$3.7 million revenue generated by fundraising and membership. This included more than \$1 million in COVID relief funding from King County and the City of Seattle. Corporate sponsorship enabled the Nordic Innovation Summit to present a highly compelling international program that drew a global audience.

The Museum's and community's much-loved Julefest celebration drew a record 14,000 attendees over one weekend in November (an increase of 2,000 over the prior year.)

An additional \$1.1 million in restricted (endowment) and temporarily restricted (capital projects) funding was received above and beyond the \$3.7 million of operating support and membership in 2022.

The Museum is most grateful to our worldwide community of supporters who enable the Museum to make an impact while serving our community, region, and nation.

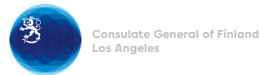
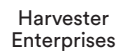
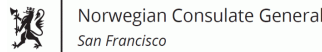


- Grants/Sponsorship: \$1,817,497
- Special Events: \$1,016,488
- Donations: \$407,798
- Membership: \$381,235
- President's Club: \$133,473



Charity Navigator, the world's largest and most utilized independent nonprofit evaluator, has awarded its prestigious Four-Star rating to the National Nordic Museum.

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From the Executive Director/CEO Eric Nelson



**National
Nordic
Museum**

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