

# NEW MUSEUM

## Search for the Toby Devan Lewis Director, New Museum New York City

### NEW MUSEUM

The New Museum's mission is simply "New Art, New Ideas." Since its founding in 1977, the New Museum has consistently made history by leaning into the future and is known for its experimentation, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit. Unafraid to commit to the unexpected and reposition the previously familiar, it is known in the field for bold thinking and execution and has become internationally recognized for its adventurous programming. The New Museum focuses on emerging and historically underrecognized voices who define this cultural moment and is often the first museum to give artists major museum presentations. The Museum challenges the perceived stiff institutionalization of an art museum while its programming promotes the free exchange of ideas that present the forefront of contemporary art in ways that engage and encourage visitors to explore the art and ideas of our time.

Remarkably, the New Museum opened its first permanent home, the SANAA-designed building on the Bowery, in 2007. Unique among its peers, it has had only two directors (Founder Marcia Tucker 1977; Lisa Phillips 1999) and three board chairs. In that time, it has presented more than 175 exhibitions featuring over 700 artists from 70+ countries, as well as over 2,000 public programs, performances, and online programs. Together these programs have an annual reach of more than one million that spans the globe.

An avowedly non-collecting institution, The New Museum is defined by its programming. The exhibition program is distinguished for its global scope, commissioning of new works, and focus on living artists. The 2023-2024 exhibition program, as example, included major survey presentations of Theaster Gates, Wangeci Mutu, and Judy Chicago, solo exhibitions of the work of Mire Lee, Pepón Osorio, and Tuan Andrew Nguyen, and new commissions by Vivian Caccuri and Miles Greenberg and Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo), among others. The New Museum's signature Triennial will launch its sixth edition in winter 2027.

Early and consistently, the New Museum forged a strong presence where art and technology converge. Rhizome, an affiliate of the New Museum since 2003, has championed born-digital art and culture since 1996 and seeks to enrich our understanding of digital culture's past, present, and future through commissions, discussions, preservation, and technology initiatives. Rhizome's programs can be found

online as well as IRL at the New Museum and other partner venues. In 2014, New Museum launched NEW INC, the first museum-led incubator. NEW INC fosters creative practitioners working at the intersection of art, design, and technology through a yearlong program that advances pioneering exploration in the field of art & tech. NEW INC's community of over 800 members and alumni have created 686 new jobs and 370 business in NYC, generated more than \$45M in revenue, and are recognized as leaders in fields as diverse as biotech, AI, MR/VR/AR, architecture and sustainable design. Additionally, the 7,500-item database New Museum Digital Archive provides accessibility to primary sources from Museum exhibitions, publications, and programs.

One cannot fully appreciate the New Museum without considering its global reach. The Museum has been expansively, intentionally international in its leadership, community, program, focus, and mindset. In addition, the Museum has launched innovative partnerships with organizations around the world which has further strengthened the expansion of its international profile over the last decade. At times, its profile worldwide exceeds its regional one and many who are deeply involved are both active and overseas.

Board culture is diverse, democratic, engaged, collaborative, and passionately committed to the Museum's mission. Relationships are valued and nurtured. Similarly, many on the 9-member senior leadership team are long-tenured with more than a few 'boomerangers' who returned after time elsewhere. Various invitation-only councils play active roles that extend the sense of community, relationships, and contribution to the New Museum's mission and a vibrant global community.

In Spring 2026, the Museum will double in size with the opening of a new 60,000 square foot addition designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects OMA / Rem Koolhaas and Shohei Shigematsu. Seamlessly joined to its current SANAA designed flagship building by another Pritzker Prize-winner, it will double the exhibition spaces, support a new Artist Studio, a new media lab, fabrication lab, and collaborative workspace for NEW INC, have new education, public program, and event spaces, as well as an outside plaza, an onsite restaurant, and a redesigned lobby. This expanded campus signals an exciting transformational chapter for the Museum, opening opportunities for exhibitions and programs at a grander scale and advancing the Museum's mission of presenting the best of new art and new ideas by the artists who are defining this cultural moment. Conscientious plans were made to help prepare the institution for its expanded operational systems, management, and fundraising needs, acknowledging that they, and administration generally, will consequently demand greater time and attention from the new Director.

The New Museum has raised \$130M for the expansion that includes hard and soft costs. An endowment drive will continue into 2027 -- the Museum's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. The Museum's annual operating budget will increase by 25% upon reopening to \$20M, and staffing will also increase to 130, which includes members of the Union, local 2110. The annual budget starts afresh each July and relies primarily on individual contributions and fundraising. Planning for the new building has leaned into more diversified funding, events, and various established and new earned revenue sources.

The Director of the New Museum will inherit a new and larger home in New York City where its programs and constituent affiliates can work together under one roof, a deeply dedicated board, an expanded team, a vibrant international community, and most critically, a mission and reputation for innovation, intellectual independence, and bold action on behalf of artistic integrity and New Art, New Ideas. To learn more, please visit <https://www.newmuseum.org>.

## **THE TOBY DEVAN LEWIS DIRECTOR**

The Toby Devan Lewis Director ('Director') is the chief executive of the New Museum, responsible for setting and advancing a compelling institutional vision, ensuring its fiscal and cultural health, and upholding the mission and values of the Museum. The Director is an ex-officio member of, and partners closely with, the Board, the Senior Leadership Team, staff, artists, and donors to position the New Museum at the forefront of contemporary art. Like all chief executives, the Director is responsible for the day-to-day successful operation of the Museum, including its expanded facilities and administration, employees, volunteers, partners, financial operations, fundraising, public profile, and scholarship.

## **QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

While no one individual will embody every quality, the successful candidate will bring many of the following professional and personal qualifications:

- An irresistible passion for the new, art, artists, and ideas with a clear sense of direction.
- An innovator by nature who thrives with risk, experimentation, and presenting what is, indeed, 'new' in its myriad manifestations: program, operations, internal culture, resources, and education--and remains undaunted by its execution.
- Respected, intellectually curious, bold, internationally at ease, and practiced at how to assess and embrace risk.
- Institutional experience in a leadership capacity, including knowledge of museum best practices, educational and outreach programs, operations, diplomacy, and governance structures.
- A record of success in fundraising and relationship building with individuals, corporations, government, and institutional funders and skilled in leading a development team and donor relations.
- An ability to both recruit and forge strong collaborative relationships with Board members.
- Able to provide vision and a clear strategic direction separate from the predecessor's yet that builds upon her notable success. Capable of defining, communicating, and executing clear priorities without succumbing to bureaucratic muddle.

- Proven financial acumen and aptitude to manage large and complex budgets.
- Significant background and grasp of managing important curatorial programs and publications, with a current remove appropriate of a leader who delegates well.
- Experience establishing high-impact collaborations, capitalizing on, and effectively participating in New York City's unique cultural ethos and dynamic.
- Exceptional communication skills, whether in the press, elevator, or at the podium.
- A fair, collaborative, direct, and transparent leadership style that engenders trust and support among the New Museum staff while holding the team, self and, as appropriate, the Board accountable to professional standards and deliverables.
- A record of dedication to and success in advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Ability to model and establish a culture of mutual respect, transparency, and empowerment.

#### **COMPENSATION AND LOCATION**

This is a permanent, full-time position in New York City with a targeted starting salary range of \$500,000 - \$700,000.

#### **APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS**

The New Museum has retained Isaacson, Miller to assist with this recruitment. Please direct all inquiries, nominations, and applications electronically and in confidence to:

Sarah James, Claire Hennessey, Siobhan Hanley  
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/new-museum-contemporary-art/toby-devan-lewis-director>