



## Homecoming: Museum's Entire Collection Returns to Santa Fe in Preparation for the Future

*Curatorial team has begun planning the gallery experience for the New O'Keeffe*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—June 18, 2025—(Santa Fe, NM)—For the first time in nearly 28 years, the entire collection of the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum has returned to Santa Fe. The moment marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter as the Museum prepares for the opening of the New O'Keeffe—a reimagined campus that will more than double the current gallery square footage.

In recent years, pieces from the Museum's collection of paintings, drawings, watercolors, personal materials, art materials, and more have traveled extensively, reaching new audiences through acclaimed exhibitions. Recent highlights include *Georgia O'Keeffe: To See Takes Time* at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, *O'Keeffe and Moore* organized by The San Diego Museum of Art, and the Art Institute of Chicago's *Georgia O'Keeffe: "My New Yorks."*

In preparation of the opening of the New O'Keeffe, the Museum has instituted a loan moratorium to allow time for pieces to be returned, conserved, documented, and for the Curatorial team to examine each work in person.

"When I joined the Museum last August, fifty-one paintings were out on loan," said Dr. Laura Wertheim Joseph, Director of Curatorial Affairs. "While photographs can serve as important research tools, they can't fully communicate the scale, texture, or material presence of these works. Seeing them in person brings the research to life."

The return of the collection also highlights a key motivation behind building the New O'Keeffe: the need for more space—not just for public galleries but also for conservation, storage, and research. Asked whether the entire collection can be stored in the Museum's current spaces, Registrar Judy Chiba Smith responded with a single word: "Barely."

Smith, who personally accompanies works around the world as they make their way to borrowing museums, views loaning to traveling exhibitions as essential for ushering O'Keeffe's story through the 21st century.



“The increased exposure to O’Keeffe’s work and life is in lockstep with the Museum’s mission,” Chiba Smith said. “Many people learn about O’Keeffe without ever visiting New Mexico, mostly through loans and traveling exhibitions.”

While the collection is secured in Santa Fe for the next few years, Joseph and her team will begin to focus on curatorial planning. “We are excited to be able to share artworks that have been out on loan with audiences here in Santa Fe. Having our entire collection onsite also allows our team the access we need to plan the gallery spaces for the New O’Keeffe,” Joseph said. “The New O’Keeffe’s opening on the horizon marks a new chapter for us as a curatorial team. We are focused on situating O’Keeffe within the context of place here in New Mexico, past and present. We will again lend widely, but right now we are prioritizing a place-based approach that starts here, with our own projects.”

Construction of the New O’Keeffe is set to begin in the summer of 2025, with an anticipated opening date in 2028. The Georgia O’Keeffe Museum at 217 Johnson Street in Santa Fe remains open to visitors seven days a week from 10:00 AM–5:00 PM. Advanced reservations are recommended and are available at [gokm.org](http://gokm.org).

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**ABOUT THE GEORGIA O’KEEFFE MUSEUM:** Since 1997, the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum celebrates the art, life, and independent spirit of Georgia O’Keeffe. Located in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where Georgia O’Keeffe lived the final decades of her life, the O’Keeffe has sites and experiences in two historic destinations, Santa Fe and Abiquiú. For more information, please visit [gokm.org](http://gokm.org)

**ABOUT THE NEW O’KEEFFE:** The Georgia O’Keeffe Museum is building a new campus in downtown Santa Fe to achieve three powerful goals: a new and innovative museum worthy of the finest art, civic revitalization, and a deepened commitment to Northern New Mexico. The new campus will include a 54,000-square-foot building on a one-acre lot and almost an acre of community green space located just steps from the historic Santa Fe Plaza. Construction is set to begin in the summer of 2025, and the New O’Keeffe is set to open in 2028. For more information, please visit [okeeffemuseum.org/new-museum/](http://okeeffemuseum.org/new-museum/)