

## Major Native Art Collection Plans Upstate New York Space

Laura Phipps, a former Whitney Museum curator, will lead the Gochman Family Collection.



Rachel Martin, *Gochman Family Chalk drawings* (2022). Site-specific. Photo by: Alon Koppel Photography.

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The **Gochman Family Collection**, a key supporter of Native art, is planning major new exhibition spaces in the Upstate New York town of Katonah, about 40 miles north of Manhattan, and it has tapped **Laura Phipps**, a former **Whitney Museum** associate curator, to be its director.

The spaces, totaling 10,000 square feet, will present exhibitions built from the collection's holdings of more than 750 artworks, and are scheduled to debut this fall.

Founded in 2021 by philanthropist **Becky Gochman** and former Manhattan gallery owner **Zach Feuer**, the collection has loaned work to more than 100 shows around the world, by its count. The two also started **Forge Project**, an independent Native-led nonprofit in New York.

"Ever since this whole endeavor began, we have used private spaces and homes that have become somewhat public," Gochman said in a phone interview. "We invite museum curators, directors, artists, and different groups to come in and take tours. This new space allows us to do that on a larger scale."

The collection's holdings have been increasing quickly. A 2022 *New York Times* profile said it had 230 artworks by 42 artists from the United States and Canada, including revered figures like **Wendy Red Star** and **Edgar Heap of Birds**.

Gochman, who lives between New York and Bedford, a hamlet near Katonah, has watched the town "grow in a positive way," attracting younger entrepreneurs, she said. The town's library is just a few doors down, and the **Katonah Art Museum** is not far from the forthcoming venues.

The organization got "a little more serious" about an official public space about three years ago," Gochman said, and when one became available, "literally 150 yards from the train station," she and her team knew the time was right. Manhattanites will be able to walk from the Metro-North railroad station.



Cara Romero, *When Animals Were People (A Study), Untitled #2* (2025). Image courtesy the artist.

The collection first bought a 5,000-square-foot space, a former clothing shop, located near a local hardware store, which is a fitting neighbor, Gochman said. "Artists love hardware stores!" It then added another space nearby with the same amount of space. "All of a sudden we have 10,000 square feet," she said.

Beyond collecting, the collection also directly supports artists, and Forge sponsors an annual fellowship and residency program.



Beau Dick, *Hamat'sa Bear Headdress* (circa 1998). Image courtesy of Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York

Gochman's said that Phipps's comes as "we are expanding our public programming." She and her staffers—all women—felt it "was important to bring on a director who has a deep understanding of artists and institutions alike," she said. "She has an amazing ability to translate our mission into something meaningful and accessible for a broader public."

Phipps got to know the organization while curating her landmark 2023 **Jaune Quick-to-See Smith** retrospective at the Whitney. "It's nice to come into something I have awareness of, and understanding of what the goals are," Phipps told me by phone. "It's not all totally brand new but pretty exciting,"

She's enthusiastic about the Katonah space. "It can be hard to get people to Bushwick," said. "Just steps from the train station means wonderful accessibility."

**Update:** The location of one of the spaces purchased has been corrected.



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