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Michael R. Mayton Announced as Chair of the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts Foundation

Larry Middleton, Mary Ritchey, and Miles Stephens Join the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts Foundation

Harriet Stephens and Warren Stephens Named AMFA Foundation Director Emeriti

March 18, 2025 (LITTLE ROCK, Ark.) – The Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts (AMFA) announces Michael R. Mayton as Chair of the AMFA Foundation. In addition, Larry Middleton, Mary Ritchey, and Miles Stephens join the AMFA Foundation as new Directors. Harriet Stephens and Warren Stephens are both named AMFA Foundation Director Emeritus.

These announcements accompany the resignations of Warren Stephens as Chair of the AMFA Foundation and Harriet Stephens as Foundation Director and Chair of the Governance Committee.

“Harriet and I are honored to have served the Museum in many different leadership capacities over the years. With the transformation and opening of the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts building and grounds, we are confident that AMFA has a bright future that will continue to educate and inspire all Arkansans and visitors to our state,” said Warren Stephens.

Harriet and Warren have been instrumental supporters of AMFA for over 40 years, most recently as Co-Chairs of the “Reimagining the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts” Capital Campaign, which raised \$176.6 million to support the construction and opening of the new AMFA while strengthening the critical funding needed for future operations.

In addition to their previous roles on the AMFA Foundation, Harriet and Warren both formerly served on AMFA’s Board of Trustees as President and Chair. Harriet chaired the AMFA Building Committee, which for seven years has been integrally involved in every aspect of the new building’s design, construction, and relaunch.

In recognition of their longstanding dedication to AMFA, Harriet and Warren were awarded the organization’s Winthrop Rockefeller Memorial Award in 2005. Named for the former governor of Arkansas, an instrumental figure in AMFA’s establishment, the award is the highest honor

for service bestowed by the museum. In 2025, Harriet and Warren Stephens each received the title of AMFA Foundation Director Emeritus for their commitment and service.

“Warren and I are delighted the Directors appointed Mike Mayton as the incoming Chair of the Foundation,” said Harriet Stephens. “In my capacity as Chair of the Building Committee, on which Mike served for seven years, I can speak firsthand to his dedication, perseverance, and knowledge of the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts. This experience combined with his roles as Foundation Director and Chair of the Art Committee uniquely positions him to lead the Foundation and support the work of the Museum.”

“AMFA has a special role in our community and state. The Museum is not only an arts and culture hub, but it serves as a place to inspire the next generation through visual, performing, and educational experiences. I look forward to continuing to serve on the AMFA Foundation and now as Chair in support of the Museum’s mission,” said Mayton.

The AMFA Foundation is a nonprofit entity that owns the 14,000 works of art in the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts Foundation Collection. The Foundation board manages the endowment’s investments, supports the museum’s ongoing operations and growth, and oversees art acquisitions and care of the collection.

AMFA Foundation Directors include: Michael R. Mayton, Chair; Ben Hussman, Vice-Chair; George O’Connor, Treasurer; Victoria Ramirez, Secretary; Terri Erwin; Larry Middleton; Mary Ritchey; Miles Stephens; Robert W. Tucker; Darrell Walker; John Ed Anthony, Advisor; Le’Kita Brown, AMFA Board of Trustees President.

Michael R. Mayton

Michael R. Mayton is a native Arkansan and a resident of Little Rock. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Administration with honors from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville in 1973 and a law degree from the University of Arkansas School of Law in Fayetteville in 1976, where he served as Associate Editor of the Arkansas Law Review.

He was a lawyer in private practice for 47 years specializing in insurance defense litigation. While in private practice he was selected for inclusion in Best Lawyers in America, Best Lawyers of Arkansas and the Mid-South Super Lawyers List. He is past chairman of the Workers’ Compensation Section of the Arkansas Bar Association. He has served twice as Special Chief Justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court by appointment of the Governor in 1995 and 2007. In February 2023, he was appointed by the Governor to serve as the Commissioner of the Arkansas Workers’ Compensation Commission representing management.

He currently serves as President, CEO and Senior Trustee of the Stella Boyle Smith Trust, as an ex officio member of the board of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, and Chair of the Foundation Board and Art Committee of The Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts. In 2020, he was the recipient of the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts Foundation’s Winthrop Rockefeller Memorial Award. He is the Chairman of the Arkansas Governor’s Mansion Commission by appointment of the Governor.

He is a member of the Board of Directors of the National Symphony Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra National Trustees at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. He is serving on the National Symphony Orchestra Executive Committee and Audience

Development Committee. He is the past Chairman of the National Symphony Orchestra National Trustees.

He has previously served as a board member of the Arkansas Museum of Discovery, The Old State House Museum Associates, Wildwood Park for the Performing Arts, The University of Arkansas Board of Advisors, Crittenden County Fine Arts Council, the Arkansas Arts Center, the Arkansas Governor's Mansion Commission and the League of American Orchestras. He is a member of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral where he has served on the Vestry and Foundation Board. He is married to Catherine Hamilton Mayton who is the Vice-Regent for Arkansas to the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

Larry Middleton

Larry Middleton graduated in 1984 from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville with a bachelor's degree in Finance and Banking. He began his career in 1985 at Merrill Lynch as a Financial Consultant. In May 1990, he joined Stephens Capital Management, a division of Stephens Inc. Mr. Middleton is an Executive Vice President of Stephens Inc. He currently serves in an advisory capacity to pensions, trusts, endowments, foundations and municipal special purpose funds. Mr. Middleton has served on the AMFA Board of Trustees since 2020.

Mary Ritchey

Mary B. Ritchey has over 20 years of experience in the visual arts collaborating with leaders in hospitality, corporate and residential design, and development. Mrs. Ritchey holds a degree in fine arts and communications from Northwestern University with continued education at the Corcoran College of Art and Design. Prior to curating in Washington, DC, she was an art consultant for Kay-Hannah Associates in San Francisco and freelance art advisor for Charles Schwab, Inc. Nationwide. She previously served on the board for the Washington Project for the Arts. Mrs. Ritchey has served on the AMFA Board of Trustees since 2023.

Miles Stephens

Miles Stephens is Co-Chief Executive Officer of Stephens Inc. Mr. Stephens was previously the President and CEO of Stephens Insurance. Prior to his role at Stephens Insurance, Mr. Stephens served as a Senior Vice President in the Investment Banking division of Stephens Inc. Before joining Stephens Inc., he held research positions at Hotchkis & Wiley Capital Management and Lehman Brothers. Mr. Stephens is a graduate of Dartmouth College and received his MBA from Columbia Business School.

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About the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts:

Founded in 1937, the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts is the largest cultural institution of its kind in the state, offering a unique blend of visual and performing arts experiences. AMFA is committed to featuring diverse media and artistic perspectives within its permanent collection of 14,000 works of art as well as through rotating temporary exhibitions. AMFA's international collection spans eight centuries, with strengths in works on paper and contemporary craft, and includes notable holdings by artists from Arkansas, the South, and across the United States and Europe.

With a vibrant mix of ideas, cultures, people, and places, AMFA extends this commitment to diversity through its dynamic children's theatre and performing arts program, the innovative Windgate Art School, and community-focused educational programs for all ages. Located in Little Rock's oldest urban green space, MacArthur Park, AMFA's landmark building and grounds are designed by Studio Gang and SCAPE, in collaboration with Polk Stanley Wilcox Architects.