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[Press Kit and Images](#)

**Stefanie Kirkland Named New Windgate Foundation Curator of Contemporary Craft at the
Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts**

Kirkland's First Curatorial Project Is an Exhibition of Artwork Donated by Robyn and John Horn

Dec. 1, 2025 (LITTLE ROCK, Ark.)—[The Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts \(AMFA\)](#) announces **Stefanie Kirkland** as the new Windgate Foundation Curator of Contemporary Craft and a new exhibition, [Material Nature: The Robyn and John Horn Collection](#), opening on August 22, 2026, under Kirkland's curatorial direction. The exhibition features a selection of sculpture donated from the Horns' personal art collection – including works in clay, metal, wood, and glass – that significantly strengthen AMFA's nationally renowned collection of contemporary craft.

As the Windgate Foundation Curator of Contemporary Craft, Kirkland brings a collaborative approach to the growth, research, presentation, and interpretation of AMFA's collection of contemporary craft while expanding programmatic synergies between the museum's curatorial department, Windgate Art School, and public programs to enhance AMFA's overarching educational mission.

"Contemporary craft is an important area of focus for AMFA, both in the Foundation's collection and within the Windgate Art School's classrooms. Stefanie's passion for craft, along with her genuine interest in collaborating with artists and experience in all aspects of curation and programming, was clear from our very first conversation. She brings bold ideas to AMFA, and we are delighted to welcome her to Arkansas's creative community," says Dr. Victoria Ramirez, Executive Director at AMFA.

Kirkland received her master's degree in painting from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. She holds a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University and was previously the director of programming at The Sheldon in St. Louis from 2021 to 2025, and the deputy director and director of exhibitions and the artists-in-residence program at Craft Alliance from 2005 to 2021.

Dedicated to local and regional arts, Kirkland has served on grant review panels and been a guest lecturer at the Contemporary Art Museum, the Regional Arts Commission, Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts, and other organizations across the St. Louis metro area. She has also juried exhibitions both regionally and nationally.

Kirkland's first curatorial project at AMFA, *Material Nature: The Robyn and John Horn Collection*, will be presented in both the Robyn and John Horn Gallery in the Windgate Art School from August 22, 2026, until April 25, 2027, and on view in the Governor Winthrop Rockefeller Gallery from March 14, 2026, until March 7, 2027.

"I am delighted to work with the Horns' expansive collection and ignite AMFA's Windgate Art School with even more conversations about the possibilities of making. I know getting the chance to view even a small part of this collection will spark inspiration and curiosity for our students, guests, and the craft community at large," shares Kirkland. "AMFA is very fortunate to not only have the support of the Horns, but to have such a personal relationship with them as well."

Robyn and John Horn built their collection on personal artistic inspiration, a devoted relationship with the craft community, and lifelong friendships. They started purchasing work with no intention of amassing an extensive craft collection.

Robyn Horn was exploring her own artistic pursuits and was in search of forms that inspired her. She began to immerse herself in a community of makers. The craft community is a welcoming and generous space where many artists share their knowledge. Learning from her peers allowed her to find her own voice as an artist. During their exploration of craft, the Horns met artists who would become lifelong friends. They acquired work that inspired them, and they recognized that purchasing art was an important way to support artists, giving them the financial means to keep working in the studio. Their home is filled with memories, stories, and beloved works of art.

Craft is deeply rooted in tradition. Historically, objects were made by highly skilled artisans creating furniture, textiles, utilitarian ceramics, glassware, and silver service sets. Since the mid-19th century, artists have been pushing the materials beyond traditional techniques and elevating them to complex sculptural forms. In the 20th century, craft began to split into two directions: functional objects and nonfunctional works.

The Horns have generously gifted over 250 works to AMFA, most are non-functional, sculptural works; exploring how materials are pushed, explored, and reimagined into forms that embody mass, movement, and sophistication. Their collection ranges from the pioneers of the Studio Craft Movement in the 1950s

and 1960s, with works by Toshiko Takaezu, Ed Rossbach, Stephen de Stabler, and Dale Chihuly, to the current voices of Hoss Haley, Michael Peterson, Todd Hoyer, Thomas Spleth, Mary Giles, and more.

This expansive craft collection demonstrates the devotion of skilled artists who explore an innovative approach to traditional materials. The works in the Robyn and John Gallery show a wide range of techniques and materials from the collection. The objects reflect the expertise and precision of each artist and serve as inspiration for the students in the Windgate Art School and for all who visit AMFA.

The Horn collection works on view in the Governor Winthrop Rockefeller Gallery continues to showcase the depth of Horn's contemporary craft collection and places the work in conversation with the Museum's permanent collection, creating a dialogue about artistic expression and the history of 20th and 21st-century art.

For more information about AMFA or *Material Nature*, visit arkmfa.org.

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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 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 the innovative Windgate Art School, a dynamic children's theatre and performing arts program, 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.