

Press Contacts:

Courtney Starlard, Marketing Coordinator
cstarlard@arkmfa.org | (501) 372-0323

Malina Tabor, Director of Marketing
mtabor@arkmfa.org | (501) 837-6566

**The Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts Receives Gift of 119 Modern and Contemporary Works from
Art Collector Martin Muller**

The San Francisco-Based Gallerist to Co-Host Event for Museum Donors on April 22, 2026



March 4, 2026 (LITTLE ROCK, Ark.) — The [Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts \(AMFA\)](#) announces a significant donation of 119 artworks from San Francisco-based gallerist and collector Martin Muller. The gift includes works by modern artists Oleksandr Bohomazov, Natalia Goncharova, and Mikhail Larionov; Dadaist and fashion photographer Erwin Blumenfeld; socio-political artist Gottfried Helnwein; realist John Register; formal abstraction artist James Hayward; sculptor Kristine Mays; and Pop artist Mel Ramos, among many others. To commemorate the occasion, AMFA is hosting an [exclusive conversation with Muller for its Collectors Group donors](#) on April 22, 2026.

“The AMFA Foundation Collection has grown in number and quality over the years, partially due to the generosity of collectors who gift works to the collection,” notes Dr. Victoria Ramirez, executive director of AMFA. “We are so appreciative of Martin's generous and extraordinary gift, as it enhances several key areas of our collection and allows us to showcase more eras of art history that the community may not have seen before.”

Muller is the founder and owner of [Modernism](#), a contemporary and modern art gallery in San Francisco that has presented over 500 exhibitions of painting, photography, sculpture, new media, and more since 1979. Notable examples include the first major Bay Area exhibition of Andy Warhol's work in 1982 and the first solo exhibition in the United States for Swiss architect and artist Le Corbusier in 2003. Modernism also has a strong focus on Ukrainian and Russian avant-garde art from 1910 to 1930, being the first gallery in the country to present such works outside New York in 1980. In addition, throughout Modernism's 46 years, it has maintained a scholarly publishing program with over 70 titles to date.

Prior to opening Modernism, Muller lived in Little Rock. The Swiss-born art enthusiast moved to Arkansas in 1975 to work for hotelier Jacques Tritten and began using the library at AMFA (then, the Arkansas Arts Center) to research and study art, befriending Townsend Wolfe, the executive director at the time.

Over the years, Muller has maintained a close relationship with AMFA and local art collectors, co-organizing the museum's 2018 exhibition *Independent Vision: Modern and Contemporary from the Martin Muller Collection*. The exhibition featured nearly 90 works from Muller's personal collection by artists such as American photographers Diane Arbus and Robert Mapplethorpe; modernist masters Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse; pioneers of the Russian avant-garde Kazimir Malevich and Oleksandr Bohomazov, and El Lissitzky; and pop artists Andy Warhol, Mel Ramos, and Edward Ruscha. Muller also lent works by Marc Chagall and Pablo Picasso to AMFA for its 2025 blockbuster exhibition, *Rivera's Paris*.

In recognition of his contributions to furthering the arts and culture in France and throughout the world, Muller was first awarded the distinction of Chevalier (Knight) des Arts et des Lettres in 2010 by the French Minister of Culture and was elevated to Officier des Arts et des Lettres in 2023. He also received an honorary doctorate degree from the Modern Art Research Institute (MARI) of the National Academy of Arts in Kyiv under the MARI Academic Council resolution on June 9, 2015.

On October 24, 2026, *Soviet Cinema: Mikhail Dlugach and 1920s Poster Design* opens at AMFA, showcasing a selection of the Ukrainian artist's Soviet-era film poster designs included in Muller's gift to the museum. This exhibition is organized by AMFA and is on view through March 14, 2027.

Dr. Catherine Walworth, the Jackye and Curtis Finch, Jr., Curator of Drawings at AMFA, explains: "I am particularly delighted that Mr. Muller's gift includes modern Russian and Ukrainian artists who worked in the theater and graphic design, and were also part of historic avant-garde circles and movements such as Suprematism. His gift is transformational to this area of our permanent collection, and I could not be more thrilled to share my deep interest in this area of art history with museum guests."

Before *Soviet Cinema* opens this fall, museum guests can enjoy a first glimpse of Muller's gift when James Hayward's monochromatic abstract painting *Athenian (Naples Yellow/Cerulean Blue/Phthalo Green/Mars Orange)* goes on view in the Harriet and Warren Stephens Galleries starting April 11, 2026.

###

Artwork

Gottfried Helnwein (Vienna, Austria, 1948 -), *Portrait of Martin Muller*, 1996, gelatin silver print, 11 5/8 x 7 7/8 in.

###

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.