



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 29, 2025

Media Contacts:

Lauryn Cantrell, 202.387.2151 x235

lcantrell@phillipscollection.org

Third Eye

Tyler Mahowald, 212.335.9009

tyler@hellothirdeye.com

Online Press Room:

www.phillipscollection.org/press

The Phillips Collection Announces Julie Garcia as Chair of the Board of Trustees

John Despres named Chair Emeritus after years of dedicated service.



Washington, DC—The Phillips Collection is pleased to announce the election of philanthropist, artist educator, and retired attorney Julie Garcia as Chair of the Board of Trustees. A Trustee since 2018, Garcia brings a deep commitment to the museum's mission and philanthropy, as well as a strong record of leadership, having chaired the Governance Committee during a period of Board expansion and the Centennial Gala in 2022. Garcia succeeds John Despres, who has been named Chair Emeritus in recognition of his years of devoted service to the museum. His legacy of stewardship helped position The Phillips Collection for a vibrant and sustainable future.

"Julie brings the insight, passion, and creative vision to advance our work and continue the museum's commitment to giving voice to powerful artistic expression rooted in community," said **Jonathan P. Binstock, Vradenburg Director and CEO of The Phillips Collection**. "I am thrilled that Julie Garcia will take the reins and lead the Phillips into a new era, especially as we move forward with the implementation of a new strategic plan."

Garcia brings a diverse background to her leadership. She spent nearly a decade at AOL and AOL Time Warner, retiring as Corporate Vice President for International Public Policy, and later consulted for Chevron Corporation. Her legal career included roles at Piper & Marbury LLP and Fisher Wayland Cooper

Leader & Zaragoza LLP. After transitioning from law and corporate work, Garcia has dedicated herself to book arts and printmaking and has taught bookmaking at George Washington University and The Waldorf School. She and her husband, Jon Garcia, are active philanthropists and co-founders of the Garcia Family Spotlight Foundation, where Julie serves as Board President. The Foundation supports causes including the arts, education, social justice initiatives, and animal welfare.

“I am honored to serve as Chair and to help steward the next chapter of The Phillips Collection,” said **Julie Garcia**. “It’s a privilege to support such a vital and innovative cultural institution, one that has long championed the power of art to inspire connection. I look forward to working with my fellow Trustees and staff leadership to ensure that Duncan Phillips’s founding vision continues to evolve in bold and inclusive ways.”

John Despres has served on the Board of Trustees since 2008 and was elected Chair in 2022, following the tenure of longtime Chair Dani Levinas. A native Washingtonian and passionate arts advocate, Despres has played a central role in the museum’s strategic direction, guiding it through leadership transitions, supporting financial growth, and shaping initiatives aligned with Duncan Phillips’s founding vision of “an intimate museum combined with an experiment station.” During his tenure, he championed artist-driven programming, inclusive community engagement, and acquisitions that reflect pressing cultural and social issues, with a focus on contemporary painting and photography. “John’s leadership came at a critical time for the Phillips,” said Binstock. “He helped ensure a strong foundation for the museum’s next chapter and leaves a legacy of integrity, vision, and deep commitment to the Phillips’s mission.”

The Phillips Collection also announced new Board officers: Robert Drumheller and Akio Tagawa as Vice Chairs, Jeff Whitaker as Treasurer, and Jane Lole as Secretary. The Board expressed its gratitude to outgoing Chair John Despres and Vice Chairs Barbara Hall and Sala Patterson for their instrumental roles in onboarding new leadership and shaping the museum’s strategic plan.

Beloved and long-serving Trustees Barbara Hall and Lynne Horning concluded their service and have been named Trustees Emeritae for their decades of leadership and generosity. Lynne and Joe Horning established the museum’s Horning Chair for Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion position, endowing the first Chief Diversity Officer role at an art museum in the nation, and helped launch Phillips@THEARC. Hall played a central role in growing contributed revenue for the museum, notably by co-chairing the Eliza Laughlin Society for legacy giving, leaving a transformative impact on the institution.

IMAGE GALLERY

High-resolution press images are available upon request. Please contact lcantrell@phillipscollection.org.

IMAGE: Julie Garcia

ABOUT THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION

Founded in 1921, The Phillips Collection is a welcoming home for all where the vision and spirit of artists thrive in intimate settings. As the first museum of modern art in the United States, the Phillips houses one of the world's most celebrated Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, and modern art collections, and continues to grow its permanent collection with the work of important living artists. Its distinctive domestically scaled architecture combines three structures built over more than 125 years, among them the former home of the founders, Duncan and Marjorie Phillips. The Phillips's impact extends nationally

and internationally through its diverse, scholarly exhibitions; award-winning education programs for educators, students, and adults; and renowned Phillips Music series. Popular and impactful programs include those focused on art and wellness, its festive monthly Phillips after 5 events, and intimate Living Room talks. Through authentic programs and partnerships at Phillips@THEARC, the museum's satellite location in Southeast DC, the Phillips extends its reach into Wards 7 and 8 and Prince George's County, Maryland. The Phillips Collection is a private, non-government museum, supported primarily by donations.

#