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June 10, 2026

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## **The Phillips Collection Announces Landmark \$15 Million Gift to Advance Its Future**

*Transformative support strengthens the museum's strategic initiatives, infrastructure, and long-term resilience under Director Jonathan P. Binstock.*



WASHINGTON, DC— The Phillips Collection today announced a \$15 million gift from the Sherman Fairchild Foundation—the largest in the museum's history. This landmark investment provides critical leadership funding for advancing the museum's 2025–29 Strategic Plan and its highest priorities: preserving and enhancing physical spaces for collections, exhibitions, staff, and guests; investing in staff, with a special emphasis on sustaining excellence in art conservation; modernizing digital infrastructure to strengthen workplace capabilities and operational efficiency; and deepening connections with DC communities through responsive and enriched programming. The gift affirms and reinforces the museum's position as a dynamic, forward-looking cultural institution—one that continues to evolve its stewardship of art, engagement with audiences, and role in civic and cultural life.

The donation marks a significant milestone in Vradenburg Director and CEO Jonathan P. Binstock's tenure and builds on a comprehensive strategic planning process launched in 2023 to position the museum for the future while reaffirming its legacy. Of the \$15 million grant, \$11.75 million will significantly strengthen the Phillips's endowment, including permanent funds dedicated to conservation

leadership, sustained investment in the museum’s staff, and support for a newly established capital reserve. Together, these investments will provide the museum with greater stability and agility to address essential infrastructure needs in the years ahead. The grant also funds the first comprehensive facilities needs assessment within the museum’s current footprint, which will guide long-term planning for maintenance, enhancement, and strategic adaptation of the Phillips’s historic and modern spaces.

“This is a transformative moment for the Phillips,” said **Vradenburg Director and CEO Jonathan P. Binstock**. “The Sherman Fairchild Foundation’s extraordinary gift enables us to do what great museums must: strengthen our infrastructure, invest in our exceptional staff, and plan boldly for the future. I’m deeply grateful for the dedication and creativity of our staff and Board of Trustees, whose work continues to move the museum forward every day. Duncan Phillips envisioned a welcoming home for all, a place where the spirit of artists thrives in intimate settings. This gift ensures that we can honor that vision while expanding our ability to serve our community and steward our collection for generations to come.”

The Strategic Plan outlines new approaches to programming, operations, and audience engagement, while remaining rooted in the museum’s founding principles of fostering intimate, meaningful encounters with art. Since 2023, the museum has advanced this work by updating its mission, declaring its values, and expanding public programming to broaden access and deepen engagement with diverse audiences.

As part of the effort to better reflect this mission in practice, the grant will enhance programming that seeks to engage audiences of all kinds. This summer, funds from the grant position Phillips@THEARC to serve multigenerational audiences more effectively in Southeast DC as a one-of-a-kind arts destination for communities across the region. Specifically, the newly announced Art-Play-Practice immersive installation series at Phillips@THEARC invites guests to participate in hands-on, experiential learning environments; the inaugural installation is inspired by Sam Gilliam’s *Broad Cape* (1972) from the museum’s permanent collection.

In addition to addressing critical facility improvements, the grant will accelerate upgrades to digital systems and operational platforms that enhance coordination and day-to-day operations across curatorial, collections management, marketing and communications, guest services, finance, and fundraising. These improvements will create a more seamless and welcoming experience for guests and strengthen the museum’s ability to engage meaningfully with donors and members.

Upgrades to core data and digital asset management systems will strengthen collaboration across departments and expand access to collections and archives, supporting both onsite and online engagement and reinforcing the Phillips’s role as a dynamic, forward-looking institution.

Institutional capacity has also grown since Binstock’s arrival through the addition of 22 new Trustees and five senior leaders across advancement, curatorial, operations, and music, supporting energized programming and organizational stability.

This momentum is reflected in the museum’s recent impact: in 2024–25, the Phillips welcomed 135,301 guests, presented 359 public programs for 31,248 attendees, and led 90 school tours and 772 adult tours, reflecting a return to pre-COVID peak levels of visitation and engagement. The museum also

hosted 62 programs at Phillips@THEARC for 1,835 participants, underscoring its role as a vital cultural resource in Washington, DC.

The Phillips continues advancing its Strategic Plan through initiatives that expand access, deepen public engagement, and strengthen its role as a place for artistic exchange.

**IMAGE GALLERY:**

High-resolution press images are available upon request. Please contact Lauryn Cantrell, [lcantrell@phillipscollection.org](mailto:lcantrell@phillipscollection.org).

**IMAGE:** The Phillips Collection, Photo: Mariah Miranda Photography

**ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

The plan's development involved a coordinated effort among the museum's staff, Board of Trustees, and community stakeholders, ensuring a broad range of perspectives were represented. Under the guidance of Michael Kaiser and the DeVos Institute of Arts Management, this 10-month process was informed by selected readings from the more than 400 essays and seven books of Duncan Phillips, as well as essays about the Phillips by art historians, critics, and scholars.

**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.

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