WASHINGTON—The Phillips Collection announced that Dani Levinas has been elected to serve as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Levinas succeeds George Vradenburg, who has served as a Trustee since 2001, and became Chairman in 2003. Vradenburg assumes the title of Honorary Chairman, Trustee Emeritus.

In addition, two new Vice Chair positions, occupied by Lindsay Ellenbogen and Scott Spector, were created to reflect interdisciplinary topics that sweep across the institution. Further, Carol Melton assumes the role of Secretary, and George D. Swygert, Jr. the role of Treasurer. All four are currently Trustees of The Phillips Collection.

On June 6, the Board also approved four new trustees. The election of two new trustees, John Lauer and Nancy Clarvit, reflects the University of Maryland’s partnership with the Phillips. Lauer serves on the Foundation Board Committees for the UMD College Park Foundation. Clarvit is a member of the UMD College Park Foundation Board of Trustees, and holds a number of key leadership positions. Additionally, development expert Barbara Hall and former High Museum Director Michael Shapiro were approved as Trustees. Earlier this year, Dale Lefebvre, Melton, Harvey Ross, and Elizabeth Williams also became Trustees.

“Today marks an exceptional new chapter for our institution. This new leadership team is perfectly poised to invigorate and support the Phillips as we take on a range of new challenges and projects leading up to our centennial in 2021,” stated Phillips Collection Director Dorothy Kosinski. “Like Duncan Phillips, Dani is passionate about supporting artists and collecting the art of his time. His love of contemporary art and deep commitment to arts education will be tremendous assets to our organization. Lindsay and Scott bring a dynamic suite of skills, in the arts, communications, and business development, to round out our Board leadership.”

“I am thrilled to take on the role of Chairman at such an exceptional institution,” stated Dani Levinas. “The Phillips Collection is a true gift to our city. This is an exciting time to be at the museum, and I look forward to working with the talented staff and my fellow Board members. It’s wonderful to see The Phillips reach beyond its walls and powerfully engage in Washington communities.”

“My time as Chairman has, in truth, been tremendously ‘joy-giving and life-enhancing,’” stated George Vradenburg. “Each time I come to the Collection, I see an old friend on the wall, in a new place, and I smile. It has been a pleasure to serve as a temporary steward of the stunning works in this timeless
collection, which, every day, speak to and move those who come to experience them. I am proud that the Phillips has grown financially, physically, and programmatically during my service on the Board in ways that would have been thought most unlikely 13 years ago. That growth is due to an unusually generous and committed Board of Trustees and an unusually talented staff whose personal love and affection for this museum is quite phenomenal. I look forward to seeing the museum flourish under the guidance of Dani Levinas, Lindsay Ellenbogen, and Scott Spector, and our other esteemed colleagues. I have the utmost confidence in the leadership of our Executive Director Dorothy Kosinski. I am very thrilled to remain connected to this wonderful institution during this transition to new leadership.”

Argentine-born Dani Levinas is an entrepreneur, passionate art collector, and leader in the arts community. He and his wife, Mirella, have an internationally acknowledged contemporary art collection at their Georgetown home, designed by Dani’s brother, architect Salo Levinas. Their extensive collection of predominantly Latin American contemporary art includes many established artists such as Liliana Porter, Ernesto Neto, Valeska Soares, Cildo Meireles, Vik Muniz, Jose Dávila, Arturo Herrera, and Jorge Pardo. Their collection also includes internationally-known artists such as Jenny Holzer, Sigmar Polke, Max Bill, Saint Clair Cemin, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Anish Kapoor, Brice Marden, and Olafur Eliasson, as well as local artists, including William Willis, Dan Steinhilber, and Robin Rose.

The couple has been enthusiastic supporters of the Phillips’s Intersections contemporary art projects, hosting a number of receptions and private dinners, including events honoring Sandra Cinto and Bernardi Roig. They lent their Bernardi Roig work The Man of the Light (2005) for the exhibition NO/Escape in 2014, and also donated Roig’s Insults to the Public (2013) to the Phillips’s permanent collection that same year.

As the museum’s centennial approaches in 2021, the next five years offer a range of opportunities for the institution. Phillips@THEARC, part of a 92,000-square-foot expansion project at Town Hall Education Arts Recreation Campus (THEARC), is scheduled to open in 2017. The Phillips will be a resident partner, offering high quality K-12 arts-integrated programs for DC teachers and students as well as multi-generational art and wellness initiatives for residents of Wards 7 and 8. As part of the partnership between the Phillips and UMD, the institutions plan to develop an innovation teaching gallery and open storage facility in Prince George’s County, slated to open after the museum’s centennial. The new public facility will serve as a cutting-edge modern and contemporary art center, hub for experimentation and innovation, and an artistic laboratory for a global community.

George Vradenburg, along with his wife, Trish, provided instrumental leadership of the museum during his 15 years of Board service. He oversaw the 26,000-square-foot expansion of the museum’s exhibition and program spaces with the addition of the $29 million Sant Building, completed in 2006, and the growth of the endowment from $16 million to over $50 million, putting the institution’s financial foundation on an increasingly solid footing. He also presided over the realization of Duncan Phillips’s dream to create a center for arts research and learning, now known as the University of Maryland Center for Art and Knowledge at The Phillips Collection. His support of the recently created partnerships with the University of Maryland and THEARC, his championship of the growth of the collection, and his espousal of the importance of sharing the museum’s works and its educational initiatives for public benefit both nationally and internationally have been hallmarks of his museum leadership.

“I am personally very grateful to George Vradenburg for his years of tireless service, his thoughtful leadership, and sage advice. We are all pleased that he will stay closely involved with The Phillips Collection in his new roles as Trustee Emeritus and Honorary Chair,” added Dorothy Kosinski.
“The list of accomplishments under George’s tenure at the Phillips is too long to enumerate. His leadership has been beyond measure,” said Phillips Trustee Alice Phillips Swistel, and grandniece of Duncan Phillips. “From the Center for Art and Knowledge, the leaps in technology, the tasty Vradenburg Café, the well-stocked Vradenburg Shop, an increased endowment, and the addition of the Laib Wax Room, it has been a joyous ride. We thank George and Trish for making sure the Phillips is well positioned for the future 100 years.”

ABOUT THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION
The Phillips Collection, America’s first museum of Modern art, is one of the world’s most distinguished collections of Impressionist and Modern American and European art. Stressing the continuity between art of the past and present, it offers a strikingly original and experimental approach to Modern art by combining works of different nationalities and periods in displays that change frequently. The setting is similarly unconventional, featuring small rooms, a domestic scale, and a personal atmosphere. Artists represented in the collection include Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Vincent van Gogh, Edgar Degas, Henri Matisse, Pierre Bonnard, Paul Cézanne, Pablo Picasso, Paul Klee, Claude Monet, Honoré Daumier, Georgia O’Keeffe, Arthur Dove, Mark Rothko, Milton Avery, Jacob Lawrence, and Richard Diebenkorn, among others. The permanent collection has grown to include more than 1,000 photographs, many by American photographers Berenice Abbott, Esther Bubley, and Bruce Davidson, and works by contemporary artists such as Anselm Kiefer, Wolfgang Laib, Whitfield Lovell, and Leo Villareal. The Phillips Collection regularly organizes acclaimed special exhibitions, many of which travel internationally. The Intersections series features projects by contemporary artists responding to art and spaces in the museum. The Phillips also produces award-winning education programs for K–12 teachers and students, as well as for adults. The University of Maryland Center for Art and Knowledge at The Phillips Collection is the museum’s nexus for academic work, scholarly exchange, and interdisciplinary collaborations. Since 1941, the museum has hosted Sunday Concerts in its wood-paneled Music Room. The Phillips Collection is a private, non-government museum, supported primarily by donations.

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