

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Minneapolis Institute of Art Appoints Distinguished Leader and Scholar Katherine Crawford Luber as Director

Luber to begin her new role in January 2020



Photo courtesy of the San Antonio Museum of Art.

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MINNEAPOLIS—October 2, 2019—The Board of Trustees at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) today announced it has elected Dr. Katherine Crawford Luber to be the museum’s next Nivin and Duncan MacMillan Director and President. Luber will succeed Kaywin Feldman, who left Mia in March 2019 to become the director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Luber comes to Minneapolis from the San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA), the only encyclopedic fine art institution in south Texas, where she has served as the Kelso Director for the last eight years.

A committee appointed by Mia’s Board of Trustees identified Luber through an extensive search. The process was diverse by race, gender, LGBTQ+ status, nationality, and geography. On January 2, 2020, Luber will begin her new role as head of Mia, the largest arts institution in Minneapolis, overseeing the museum’s renowned encyclopedic collection and 250-person staff.

“With Dr. Luber, we have selected an exceptional leader to be the twelfth director of the Minneapolis Institute of Art,” said David Wilson, chair of Mia’s Board of Trustees. “Mia is entering a period of transformation as we embark on an ambitious campus rejuvenation and double down on our inclusion, equity, and diversity initiatives to ensure our outstanding art collections and ambitious exhibitions and education programs serve every community. Katie possesses the curatorial and management experience we sought in a leader. She has an authentic, passionate vision for how art can engage, educate, and delight us all.”

Born and raised in Texas, Luber’s pathway to art museum leadership combines traditional educational and work experiences with out-of-the-box aspects that strengthen her management and leadership skills. She has a B.A. in art history from Yale University, an M.A. from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Ph.D. in art history from Bryn Mawr, where her dissertation focused on the paintings of Albrecht Dürer. She was subsequently awarded a Fulbright Scholarship in residence at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna to support this scholarship, after which her dissertation was published by Cambridge University Press. Prior to arriving in San Antonio, Luber’s other art museum positions included serving as a research associate at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and, for nearly 10 years, as a John G. Johnson Curator of Northern Renaissance and Baroque Paintings at the

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Philadelphia Museum of Art, where she oversaw the reinstallation of those collections, engaged with the museum's 19th-century French paintings, researched and installed the museum's collection of Latin American Colonial paintings, and oversaw the installation and mechanical renovation of the building housing the museum's world-famous Rodin collection. Luber also completed an M.B.A. at Johns Hopkins University, and as founder, president, and CEO launched, managed, and ultimately sold a successful start-up company, underscoring her capacity for innovation.

Since she arrived at SAMA in 2011, Luber pursued and implemented significant changes that have raised the museum's profile locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. This began with the launch of a five-year strategic plan in 2013, after which SAMA's annual attendance doubled and its number of member households tripled, in concert with the museum's increased investments both in exhibitions and programs and in its outreach and community engagement initiatives. These activities have been supported by an active approach to fundraising that has brought in more than \$42 million in major gifts, including \$5 million for an endowed curatorial position in American art, nearly \$10 million in infrastructure investments on the museum's campus, and \$4 million to support an expanded roster of exhibitions and programs to celebrate the city of San Antonio's tricentennial in 2018. This includes the museum's internationally recognized exhibition "Spain: 500 Years of Spanish Painting from the Museums of Madrid," organized by Luber, which brought more than 40 works from the Prado and other Spanish collections to San Antonio—as well as a visit from the King and Queen of Spain.

Central to Luber's work in San Antonio has been leading the museum to make greater investments in engaging with and supporting the community. One of these initiatives was to coordinate the work of local public schools and private funders, in tandem with the museum, to support at-risk and underserved Latinx populations in the city's public schools, and to increase their exposure to the arts through supported visits and programs at SAMA. The impact of this work was underscored by an IMLS grant to study the efficacy of arts engagement on the grades of children from underserved communities. More recently, Luber worked with Trinity University to conceptualize and fund a two-year postdoctoral fellowship program that combines research with developing courses—and hands-on instruction at the museum—for undergraduates from underrepresented communities who are interested in exploring careers in art museums. In tandem with these community focused programs, Luber has also overseen the expansion and diversification of SAMA's collections and exhibitions, including shepherding the acquisition of a series of works by African American artists in 2018, along with a range of exhibitions exploring topics as widespread as Mexican art from the 18th century to contemporary Aboriginal art from Australia. SAMA is also home to one the country's most important collections of Latin American art: the Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Latin American Art encompasses more than 12,000 objects in the areas of Ancient America, Spanish colonial, Republican-era, Modern, Contemporary, and Folk Art.

Luber said: "Throughout my career, I have demonstrated the importance and power of art to impact people and communities. During my tenure as Director of the San Antonio Museum of Art, we saw our museum attendance grow substantially as we increased our engagement with and outreach to communities with different motivations, interests, and needs. I am now looking forward to getting to know the diverse communities of the Twin Cities, and to bring my experiences to bear to ensure that Mia continues to be an art museum in which everyone can both learn about diverse cultures as well as see and engage with their own history. I am so excited to build on the tremendous legacy of success and innovation as we move into the next one hundred years at Mia."

A cultural highlight of the Twin Cities, Mia is internationally renowned as one of the great encyclopedic fine art museums. The museum houses a world-class collection of more than 90,000 works of art, representing artistic traditions spanning 5,000 years. Mia is especially recognized for its collection of Asian art, which comprises some 16,800 objects, ranging from ancient pottery and bronzes to works by contemporary artists, with nearly every Asian culture represented, including: China, Japan, India, Himalayas, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Korea. Areas of particular depth include the arts of China and Japan. The museum's commitment to Asian art is evident from the gallery space devoted to its display. At

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present, Asian art occupies 20 percent (32,200 sq. ft.) of the museum's total gallery space (161,000 sq. ft.). Four curators oversee the presentation and growth of the collection.

Mia's original neoclassical building, a landmark of downtown Minneapolis, designed by the preeminent New York firm McKim, Mead and White, first opened its doors in 1915. The museum expanded in 1974 with an addition designed by the late Japanese architect Kenzo Tange. In June 2006, the museum unveiled a new wing designed by Michael Graves. In 2017, Mia announced that it had hired David Chipperfield Architects, the internationally renowned architectural firm, to create a master plan for the museum. The plan will be the first step in Mia's long-term strategy to enhance visitor experience and expand community access to the museum.

With its free admissions policy, Mia is an invaluable resource to its audiences, welcoming approximately 700,000 visitors of all ages each year to enjoy the wonder and beauty of art. With a strong commitment to outreach and education, Mia complements its collection and exhibitions with a wide array of public programs, classes, lectures, and special events. Through the museum's comprehensive school services program, educators and community volunteers annually bring art into the lives of more than 150,000 Minnesota students, through both classroom and museum visits.

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About the Minneapolis Institute of Art

Home to more than 90,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) inspires wonder, spurs creativity, and nourishes the imagination. With extraordinary exhibitions and one of the finest art collections in the country—from all corners of the globe, and from ancient to contemporary—Mia links the past to the present, enables global conversations, and offers an exceptional setting for inspiration. General admission to Mia is always free. Some special exhibitions have a nominal admission fee. For more information, call 612.870.3000 or visit artsmia.org.

Museum Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday 10am–5pm

Thursday, Friday 10am–9pm

Sunday 11am–5pm

Monday Closed

For more information, call + 1 612 870 3000 or visit artsmia.org

