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Cincinnati Art Museum Announces Innovative Academic Leadership Appointments and Curatorial Endowment

CINCINNATI —October 21, 2026—The Cincinnati Art Museum (CAM) has launched an innovative new curatorial leadership model, appointing its first Director of Academic Partnerships & Research and launching an international search for Director of Curatorial Affairs & Initiatives. Honoring a high-impact past director of the museum, Millard F. Rogers, director 1974-1994, CAM also announces a \$4 million anonymous gift to endow the permanent curatorship of European paintings, sculpture and drawings at the museum.

Peter Jonathan Bell, PhD, assumes the new dual role of Millard Rogers Curator and Director of Academic Partnerships & Initiatives at CAM. The museum's work with universities and fellowships expands under this appointment, as does leadership of the Mary R. Schiff Library & Archives. Following a national search, Jennifer Hardin is appointed as Head Librarian and Geoffrey Edwards as Head Archivist as of September 2026. Both bolster and strengthen the museum's public research capabilities in this new structure, reflecting CAM's strategic directions and impacts.

Amplifying the new curatorial endowment, Dr. Bell adds, "the generous donor believes deeply in the role of European art here at CAM. Honoring Millard Rogers with the position's title brings forward another of Cincinnati's most steadfast advocates for European art. I look forward to expanding our work in the footsteps of these champions of our collections and curatorial programs."

Curatorial Endowments

The permanent endowment supports the stewardship of the museum's globally significant European art collection, ensuring its public benefit for future generations. Specifically, the endowment will support curatorial leadership in research, interpretation, display, publication and exhibition organization, as well as guidance of acquisitions and long-term collection development, for the museum's European paintings, sculptures and drawings.

This marks the museum's second announcement of an endowed curatorial position. In July 2025, CAM shared that a \$5 million gift from Mary W. Baskett endows the curatorship of fashion arts and textiles and supports other initiatives around those collections in her honor.

New Leadership Positions

The Director of Academic Partnerships & Research will collaboratively oversee the success and expansion of the museum's external academic partnerships, the Mary R. Schiff Library & Archives, CAM's fellowship program and the integration of research into museum administration and strategy. This role will help CAM engage with communities internally and externally to advance academic work and research initiatives at the museum and with regional partners.

CAM is concurrently undertaking a national search with Nashville-based ThinkingAhead Executive Search for the position Director of Curatorial Affairs & Initiatives as a key collaborative role. The Director of Curatorial Affairs & Initiatives will oversee the museum's curatorial division, help advance institutional projects, establish and coordinate curatorial goals in close partnership with museum leadership and spark museological innovation.

About Peter Jonathan Bell

Dr. Bell joined CAM in 2017. He previously was a curator in the department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He is a fellow of the American Academy in Rome and has served on vetting committees for several international art fairs. Dr. Bell holds degrees from Oberlin College and the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, and earned a Ph.D. in Art History at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.

About Jennifer Hardin

Hardin has worked at CAM since 2011, where she previously served as Information Services Librarian at the Mary R. Schiff Library and Archives. She holds an MA in Art History from the University of Cincinnati College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning, and an MLIS from Kent State University. While pursuing her library science degree, she worked at the Reinberger Children's Library Center, where she was responsible for the Marantz Picturebook Collection for the Study of Picture Book Art.

About Geoffrey Edwards

Edwards joined the Mary R. Schiff Library & Archives at CAM in 2013. Originally trained as an archaeologist, he studied Egyptology at the University of Liverpool and University College London before earning a Master's degree in Archive Administration & Records Management. Prior to joining the museum, Edwards worked at Glamorgan Archives in Cardiff and the Indiana State Archives. He is passionate about preserving and sharing the stories found within the museum's archives, connecting people with the institution's past while ensuring its history remains accessible to future generations.

About Millard Rogers

Millard F. Rogers, Jr. oversaw a period of institutional growth and professionalization at CAM. Rogers received an M.A. in art history from the University of Michigan. He worked at the National Gallery, London, the Toledo Museum of Art, and was Director of the Elvehjem (now Chazen) Museum of Art at the University of Wisconsin before becoming CAM's fifth director in 1974. Rogers professionalized many aspects of the museum's operations, renovating galleries and improving facilities and processes. He appointed the museum's first full-time curators of photography, ancient art, contemporary art and fashion and textiles and oversaw an expanding exhibitions program. He established the museum's archives, systematized the registration files and created the development department. Rogers was a passionate scholar, authoring several books and initiating, with his own catalog on CAM's Spanish paintings, a program to systematically publish the museum's collections that numbered 12 books by the end of his tenure.

Under Rogers' leadership, the museum acquired exemplary works of European art, from Italian Baroque paintings by Guercino, Mattia Preti and Bernardino Mei's memorable *Alexander the Great and the Fates*; to masterpieces by the great British painters William Hogarth and Joshua Reynolds; to two exemplary statuette groups: the iconic Renaissance bronze *Abduction of a Sabine* by Giambologna and Clodion's *Bacchant and Bacchante with Cupid* made in

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Revolutionary France. Cornerstones of CAM's 19th- and early 20th-century collection—Claude Monet's *Rocks at Port-Goulphar* and Ferdinand Hodler's *The Sacred Hour*—were also Rogers-era museum purchases. Rogers identified and deftly negotiated for many of these works; he remembered, as a highlight of his tenure, raising the winning paddle at Christie's for the Monet and finding the Hodler hidden away in an inaccessible room at a venerable dealership before luring it to CAM's collection.

About the Cincinnati Art Museum

The Cincinnati Art Museum features a diverse, encyclopedic art collection of more than 73,000 works spanning 6,000 years. In addition to displaying its own broad collection, the museum conducts extensive research and creates and organizes several exhibitions each year. It also hosts national and international traveling exhibitions. Through these critical projects and art-related programs, activities and special events, the museum contributes to a more vibrant Cincinnati by inspiring its people and connecting its communities.

Cincinnati Art Museum is supported by the tens of thousands of people who give generously to the annual ArtsWave Campaign, the region's primary source for arts funding. The Ohio Arts Council helps fund the Cincinnati Art Museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges operating support from the City of Cincinnati, as well as its members. Free general admission to the Cincinnati Art Museum is made possible by a gift from the Rosenthal Family Foundation. Generous support for the museum's extended Thursday hours is provided by Art Bridges Foundation's Access for All program. Exhibition pricing may vary. Parking at the Cincinnati Art Museum is free. Accessibility accommodations are available. Visit cincinnatiartmuseum.org.

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