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**Alice Walton announces formation of Art Bridges, a nonprofit foundation dedicated to providing access throughout the US to outstanding works of American art****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

(BENTONVILLE, Ark.) – Today, arts patron and philanthropist [Alice Walton](#) announced the formation of Art Bridges, a 501(c)(3) foundation focused on sharing outstanding works of American art. Collaborating with museums and institutions of all sizes and in all regions of the country, Art Bridges will help create and fund exhibitions, bringing together art from museums, private collections, foundations, and a collection established as a part of Art Bridges.

“Our country’s significant works of art should be available for all to see and enjoy,” said Walton. “Outstanding artworks are in museum vaults and private collections; let’s make that art available to everyone, and provide a way to experience these cultural treasures.”

Art Bridges mission of expanding access to American art involves partnering with institutions ranging from large museums with deep collections that they are unable to fully display, to small and mid-sized museums seeking to share a wider range of works of art with visitors.

The exhibitions supported by Art Bridges will range from single-object loans to fully developed exhibitions, and will include funding for in-depth educational and interpretive materials. “We want to support partner institutions in expanding and deepening their connection with audiences,” said Walton. “This is about engaging communities through providing access and learning opportunities, as well as allowing for experimentation in exhibition development.”

As founder and board chairperson of Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas, Walton has seen firsthand how providing access to outstanding art can engage a region. “Since opening the museum in late 2011, more than three million people have visited,” said Walton. “Northwest Arkansas was eager for access to art, and Crystal Bridges shows that a broad range of audiences welcome an arts experience, whether that means walking through an art gallery, listening to an artist lecture, or enjoying an art-making activity. We’ve seen the transformative effect it can have on individuals and communities.”

**Art Bridges Partnerships**

Art Bridges is building partnerships with exceptional museums of all sizes, and beginning to launch several projects.

Brooklyn Museum, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Fisk University Galleries, The Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the New Britain Museum of American Art, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and Yale University Art Gallery are among the first institutions to begin exploring how they can share exhibitions, artworks, and expertise with museums across the country through partnerships with Art Bridges.

Several institutions have recently received artworks on loan from the Art Bridges collection, including Amarillo Museum of Art, the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Blanton Museum of Art, Dallas Museum of Art, El Paso Museum of Art, The Old Jail Art Center, Portland Art Museum, Tyler Museum of Art, and Yellowstone Art Museum. These institutions are designing innovative programming to engage audiences with the loaned objects, as well as works in their collections, through Art Bridges support.

Art Bridges also supports programming associated with works of art from other collections. Two projects underway include program support for John Sloan's *Bleecker Street*—currently on loan for the exhibition, *New York, New York*, at Nassau County Museum of Art, and support for Gilbert Stuart's *William Smith*—currently on loan to Juniata College Museum of Art.

## Key Partners

The American Federation of Arts (AFA), a nonprofit organization that develops traveling art exhibitions and education programs globally, is working with Art Bridges to bring traveling exhibitions to institutions across the country. Together, AFA and Art Bridges are working to bring *Selections from The Studio Museum in Harlem* (working title) to six museums including the Frye Art Museum, The Gibbes Museum of Art, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, The Museum of the African Diaspora, Utah Museum of Fine Arts, and Smith College Museum of Art.

“This generous funding from Art Bridges will ensure that this exhibition, consisting of over 100 works that date from the 1930s to the present, can reach communities that would typically not have access to the amazing work created by some of our nation’s most important African American artists,” said AFA Director Pauline Willis.

Art Bridges is contracting with Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art to provide administrative, collection care, education/outreach, and curatorial expertise. “Sharing and celebrating American art is the essence of our museum’s mission, and we are pleased to support Art Bridges in its efforts to increase accessibility to outstanding works of art,” said Rod Bigelow, Crystal Bridges’ Executive Director and Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer. “We look forward to working together as this new foundation establishes itself as a vital resource in this field.”

Art Bridges is also working with the Terra Foundation for American Art to create a special six-year initiative to develop and nurture collection-sharing networks. *Terra Art Bridges* will provide funding to a diverse array of institutions across the U.S. to create new partnerships and facilitate new thinking about collaborative exhibition development, collection-sharing and care, and professional development that benefits participating museums and the audiences they serve. This initiative further enhances the Terra Foundation’s mission to increase scholarship about and access to American art.

“We are immensely proud to join with Art Bridges on this paradigm-shifting initiative,” said Terra Foundation President & CEO Elizabeth Glassman. “Inviting and considering diverse new voices and perspectives meaningfully enriches the cultural dialogue. These initiatives promise to increase engagement among a wide variety of audiences, and we look forward to the fruitful exchanges that will ensue.”

Additional information, including a list of works currently in the Art Bridges’ collection, is available at <http://artbridgesfoundation.org/>.

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