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## **Ann Philbin, Transformational Director of the Hammer Museum, to Retire from the Museum in 2024 After 25 Years of Visionary Leadership**



Ann Philbin, photo by Mark Hanauer

**(Los Angeles, CA)**—Marcy Carsey, Chair of the UCLA Hammer Museum’s Board of Directors, announced today that Director **Ann Philbin** will retire from the museum on November 1, 2024, after 25 years of leadership that made the Hammer into a landmark institution in Los Angeles and a leading museum of contemporary art for the nation and the world.

**Marcy Carsey** said, “When the history of the Hammer Museum is written, there will be a clear line drawn—before Annie Philbin, and after Annie Philbin. Thanks to her vision, the Hammer is known today as a world-class museum, internationally renowned yet uniquely and indisputably at the heart of Los Angeles. She has guided a complete transformation of the museum—its facilities, its collection, and its exhibitions and programs, which she has elevated in every way—while redefining the relationship of art museums to their communities and their society. We are profoundly grateful for her leadership and the values she has imbued into every level of this institution.”

UCLA Chancellor **Gene Block** said, “Engagement with the arts is central to the UCLA experience, and Annie has done an incredible job of embedding the Hammer and its offerings more deeply within the

fabric of our university. Beyond this, she has built for Los Angeles a true cultural gem that is accessible and inclusive, and whose exhibitions stand out for their remarkable quality and relevance.”

**Brett Steele**, Dean of UCLA’s School of the Arts and Architecture, said “Annie Philbin’s great success as the director of the Hammer has been in creating a space that is first and foremost for artists—a place where the creative communities of Los Angeles find inspiration not only in the museum’s galleries but also in its theater, where nearly every night of the week mind-opening talks, film screenings, and performances demonstrate the myriad ways the arts engage with the world, and vice versa. Her achievements for the Hammer, and her impact at UCLA and across Los Angeles, are beyond compare.”

**Ann Philbin** said, “It has been the privilege of a lifetime to lead the Hammer Museum for more than two decades, working closely with our supremely dedicated boards and brilliant staff to make this institution everything that Los Angeles and our wider community deserves. We have always said that the artists of Los Angeles are our core audience—and I think that in the way we have innovated in our programs and transformed our facilities, we have created a true ‘artists’ museum’ for them. I offer my profound gratitude to every member of our boards and staff, past and present, to the hundreds of artists we have worked with, to Michael Maltzan Architecture, our indispensable collaborators over the past decades, and the visitors we have been honored to serve over the years.”

Philbin will continue to lead the museum for the next 12 months, culminating with the fall 2024 exhibition *Breath(e): Toward Climate and Social Justice*, part of the Getty-funded initiative PST ART: Art and Science Collide. A search for Philbin’s successor will begin early in 2024, undertaken by a committee led by the museum’s Board of Directors.

## **ABOUT ANN PHILBIN**

Since becoming director of the Hammer Museum at UCLA in January 1999, Ann Philbin has developed a strong and original institutional identity and built a national and international reputation for thematic contemporary exhibitions, scholarly historical exhibitions, and contemporary artists’ projects, as well as dynamic, politically engaged public programs. Under Philbin’s leadership, the Hammer has seen its annual attendance more than quadruple, its number of cutting-edge programs double, and its wide-ranging collections expand to more than 50,000 objects, including the 4,500 artworks that have been acquired since 2005 to form the Hammer Contemporary Collection. In addition, Philbin has overseen substantial renovations to the museum’s building. In collaboration with Michael Maltzan Architecture, the Hammer added 40,000 square feet of new galleries, administration, and public spaces including a new main entrance and expanded ground-level galleries which opened in spring 2023.

With Philbin’s direction, the museum instituted the internationally acclaimed Hammer Projects, a signature series of more than one hundred contemporary exhibitions and installations featuring local, national, and international emerging artists. During her tenure the Hammer also launched its biennial exhibition *Made in L.A.*, which since 2012 has become the cornerstone of the city’s cultural landscape, providing a multifaceted and expansive view of art in Southern California. In six biennials to date, the Hammer has showcased new work and site-specific installations by more than 220 artists. Philbin also cultivated a robust slate of public programs, which are core to the Hammer’s identity and regularly feature many of the most influential authors, artists, and creative thinkers of our time. The Hammer presents roughly 300 programs per year, including signature programs such as Hammer Forums as well

as literary programs, film screenings, and concerts. The museum also routinely engages with L.A.-area K-12 students, most notably in the award-winning Classroom-in-Residence program (in collaboration with the UCLA Visual and Performing Arts Education Program), which invites classes to spend a full week at the museum working with arts educators.

Philbin also curated a number of exhibitions while at the Hammer, including the much-acclaimed *Lee Bontecou: A Retrospective* (co-curated by Elizabeth Smith, MCA Chicago) in 2003 and *Lee Mullican: Drawings* in 2000, as well as many early Hammer Projects. Under Philbin's auspices, the Hammer has organized numerous international loan exhibitions, many of which have traveled extensively including, among others, *Heat Waves in a Swamp: The Paintings of Charles Burchfield* (2009), curated by Robert Gober; *Between Earth and Heaven: The Architecture of John Lautner* (2008), curated by Frank Escher and Nicholas Olsberg; *Now Dig This! Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980* (2011), curated by Kellie Jones; *Take It or Leave It: Institution, Image, Ideology* (2014), curated by Anne Ellegood and Johanna Burton; *Radical Women: Latin American Art, 1960-1985* (2017), curated by Cecilia Fajardo-Hill and Andrea Giunta; *Stones to Stains: The Drawings of Victor Hugo* (2018), curated by Cynthia Burlingham and Allegra Pesenti; *Witch Hunt* (2021), curated by Connie Butler and Anne Ellegood; and *Joan Didion: What She Means* (2022), curated by Hilton Als. Additionally, retrospectives of artists Christian Marclay, Frances Alÿs, Mark Manders, Rachel Whiteread, Alina Szapocznikow, Llyn Foulkes, Jimmie Durham, Marisa Merz, Lawren Harris, Frances Stark, Mark Bradford, Zarina, Andrea Bowers, Lari Pittman, Ulysses Jenkins, and Bridget Riley have all been organized by the Hammer under Philbin's direction.

Prior to her arrival at the Hammer Museum, Philbin was director of The Drawing Center in New York for nine years where she introduced the work of hundreds of emerging artists through its much-lauded viewing program as well as curated and presented major contemporary and historical drawing exhibitions. Before taking the helm of The Drawing Center, Philbin was an independent curator and organized large-scale public art exhibitions. She was also the Director of the Curt Marcus Gallery and curator of the Ian Woodner Collection of old master drawings.

Philbin sits on the board of directors of LA28, the Los Angeles organizing committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games 2028, and the Foundation for Arts Initiatives (formerly the American Center Foundation). She is a past board member of the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts (2000 to 2008). Philbin was also a committee member of the National Endowment for the Arts' Federal Advisory Committee on International Exhibitions, the Mayor's Los Angeles Economy and Jobs Committee (LAEJC), and the Arts Oversight Committee of Los Angeles World Airports. In 2020 she was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

### **ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM**

The Hammer Museum is part of the School of the Arts and Architecture at UCLA, and offers exhibitions and collections that span classic to contemporary art. It holds more than 50,000 works in its collection, including one of the finest collections of works on paper in the nation, the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts. Through a wide-ranging, international exhibition program and the biennial, *Made in L.A.*, the Hammer highlights contemporary art since the 1960s, especially the work of emerging and under recognized artists. The exhibitions, permanent collections, and nearly 300 public programs annually—including film screenings, lectures, symposia, readings, music performances, and workshops for families—are all free to the public.

**HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION**

Admission to all exhibitions and programs at the Hammer Museum is free. Tuesday-Sunday: 11am to 6pm. Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Boulevard at Westwood, Los Angeles. Onsite parking \$8 (maximum 3 hours) or \$8 flat rate after 5 p.m. Visit [hammer.ucla.edu](https://hammer.ucla.edu) for details or call 310-443-7000.