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Tucson Museum of Art Receives \$1.5 Million Gift from Philanthropic Leaders Alice and Paul Baker

TMA's Largest Individual Donor Gift to Support Art Education

The Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block (TMA) announced that it had received a \$1.5 million art education gift from longtime museum benefactors Alice and Paul Baker. It is the largest individual gift dedicated to nurturing and expanding TMA's art education program, and funding renovation of TMA's Education Center. The Bakers also intend to donate all, or a substantial portion, of their pre-Columbian and Latin American art collection. Both of these generous gifts will support the *TMA/100: A Vision for the 21st Century* fundraising campaign.

"To honor this historic gift and recognize Alice Baker's long-term commitment to TMA, the Education Center will be re-named the **Alice Baker Center for Art Education**," said Jeremy Mikolajczak, Chief Executive Officer of TMA. According to Mikolajczak, Alice Baker is an *emeritus* member of the museum's Board of Trustees, serving for more than 27 years, and is also a vocal advocate for arts education. The Bakers' commitment to TMA has spanned beyond three decades. In 2001, the couple supported the founding of the Palice Pavilion, the museum's first gallery dedicated to Latin American art. The Baker gift of pre-Columbian and Latin American art will merge with the museum's existing collection and join the I. Michael Kasser Collection, a merger that will establish TMA as a regional leader for pre-Columbian and Latin American art.

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“Paul and I are deeply connected to Tucson and take joy in sharing a bigger vision for arts and culture in our city,” Alice Baker said in a statement. “At the heart of all museums is education. We hope that the renovated Education Center at TMA, in addition to the gift of our Latin American art collection, will inspire new generations of art lovers and support TMA’s award-winning outreach programs.”

“This is a transformative gift,” said Frank Hamilton, President of the Board of Trustees. “We are immensely grateful to Alice and Paul for their remarkable generosity and investing in education, a core TMA commitment to our community. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank Alice and Paul for their extraordinary longstanding support of Southern Arizona’s oldest visual arts institution.”

The renovated **Alice Baker Center for Art Education** will include four new classrooms, a state-of-the-art auditorium, a new research library, conference room, new exterior finishes, and renovated administrative offices. A groundbreaking is planned for early spring, with completion and opening in early summer 2019 – renovation work will not impact existing art education programs or TMA’s summer arts camp.

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About TMA’s Latin American Art Collection

The Latin American art collection encompasses more than 1,000 works of art including paintings, sculptures, ceramics, textiles, and decorative arts. The collection encompasses pre-Columbian art of Mexico, Central America, and South America; art of the Hispanic Vice-regencies and Spanish Colonies; 19th century art of Latin American Nations (Republics) inclusive of the Caribbean; and Modern and Contemporary works from Latin America and the United States.

The Tucson Museum of Art’s pre-Columbian and Latin American art collection was started with generous gifts from distinguished scholar and museum curator Frederick R. Pleasants. Early in his career, Pleasants was one of about 345 men and women who worked to protect and save art and cultural treasures in war-ravaged Europe during World War II. These men and women are known today as the “Monuments Men.”

In 2015, the museum announced it received a gift from the estate of Jeanette H. and Bernard L. Schmidt to endow a Curator of Latin American art position at the museum, which the museum intends to fill by early 2019.

About the *TMA/100: A Vision for the 21st Century Campaign*

TMA/100: A Vision for the 21st Century is TMA's fundraising campaign that reflects the museum's belief that a community deserves access to exceptional exhibitions and education programs that share our passion for art, culture, and history of Tucson and Southern Arizona. A portion of the funds raised will be used for physical improvements and expansion, while the remaining balance is reinvested in the museum's endowment. TMA wants to ensure that future generations will have a place to explore and create for years to come.

In the fall of 2017, Phase I of the multi-phased campaign was completed, raising more than \$1.5 million by private donors in less than a year. Launched in early 2018, Phase II of the project seeks to raise more than \$5.5 million for an expansion of the existing main museum building and the renovation of the education and administration center. The Baker gift is the latest in significant contributions to the Tucson Museum of Art in support of sustaining its vision, exhibitions, and programs for the future. In April 2018, the Kasser Family committed to a \$2.5 million gift to support the construction of a new wing for Latin American Art at the museum and the loan of a 250-piece collection. To-date, TMA has raised 72% of Phase II of *TMA/100: A Vision for the 21st Century*, a fundraising campaign with a goal of \$5.5 million by 2023.

About the Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block

The Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block's mission is *Connecting Art to Life*. The Museum was founded in 1924 in the El Presidio Historic District of downtown Tucson. It is Southern Arizona's premier presenter of fine art and art education programs.

The Museum features permanent and traveling exhibitions of Modern and Contemporary, Native American, American West, Latin American and Asian art. The 74,000-square-foot Museum offers guided tours, education programs and studio art classes in a contemporary building. The Museum's Historic Block of 19th and 20th century adobe and Mission Revival-style buildings, encompassing a four-acre city block, includes the John K. Goodman Pavilion, the highly acclaimed museum restaurant Café a la C'Art, and additional exhibition and studio spaces.

For more information, please visit TucsonMuseumofArt.org or call (520) 624-2333. Follow the latest events on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

TMA is a private 501(c)(3) charitable arts and education organization.