

WHITNEY

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PRESS RELEASE

THE WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART APPOINTS SEVEN NEW MEMBERS TO ITS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Julie Mehretu Appointed Artist Trustee

NEW YORK, NY (October 12, 2021) – The Whitney Museum of American Art announces the addition of seven members to its Board of Trustees. The new trustees are Paul Arnhold, Katja Goldman, Michael E. Kassan (ex officio), Claudia Laviada, Julie Mehretu, Eric L. Motley, and Jen Rubio.

“The impressive contributions these seven individuals have already made to the cultural community and to the Museum are testament to their commitment to this institution and its values,” said Whitney Board of Trustees President Fern Tessler. “We look forward to their participation and ideas as we work together to advance the Museum’s mission and long-range goals.”

As a Museum with a special focus on and commitment to living artists, the Whitney has included artists on its Board of Trustees since 2000 in recognition of the critical and unique perspective they bring to the strategic envisioning, planning, and ongoing governance of the Museum.

“Julie Mehretu, an artist of profound talent and passion, who has exhibited at the Whitney on many occasions, including most recently last summer, joins artist Fred Wilson as Trustee. The Whitney thrives because of relationships among its artists, audiences, staff, and Board, and I am grateful for the invaluable insights Julie and Fred bring to the Board and their deep commitment to our mission and values,” continued Tessler.

“I am thrilled to welcome these new trustees, who bring a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences, and expertise to our board,” stated Adam D. Weinberg, Alice Pratt Brown Director of the Whitney. “The Whitney’s founder, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, believed that artists were essential to defining, challenging, and expanding culture and that the Museum should be a site where artists and audiences engaged openly with untested ideas. Today, more than ninety years later, this history informs who we are and how we serve our public, and our trustees, along with our staff, help to ensure that we redouble our commitment to American art and artists.”

Paul Arnhold has been a Whitney Contemporaries member since 2008 and joined the Chairman’s Council in 2018. Born and raised in New York City, Arnhold works at the real estate firm Urban Standard Capital and is also an artist specializing in glassblowing whose studio is located in Red Hook, Brooklyn. The Arnhold Foundation, established by his late grandfather Henry Arnhold, supports conservation, education, health services, and the arts. Arnhold was elected to the Board of Trustees on April 7, 2020.

Katja Goldman has been involved with the Whitney for many years as a member of the Drawing and Print Committee. She is an art collector, talented chef, and cookbook author. Born and raised in New York, Goldman is deeply involved in the Joyce and Irving Goldman Family Foundation, founded by her parents, and the Goldman-Sonnenfeldt Foundation, which she co-founded with her husband, Michael Sonnenfeldt. Goldman was elected to the Board of Trustees on May 18, 2021.

Michael E. Kassin is the founder, Chairman, and CEO of MediaLink, a strategic advisory and business development firm focused on startups and companies in media, advertising, and technology. Previously he was president, chief operating officer, and vice chairman of Initiative Media Worldwide. Kassin has been a member of the Whitney's National Committee since 2015. He also serves on the board of directors of the National Association of Television Program Executives, the AdCouncil, and the Paley Center for Media board of governors. A dedicated community volunteer, he is involved with H.E.L.P. Group, a nonprofit organization serving children with special needs, and the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program of Los Angeles. Kassin became chair of the Whitney's National Committee in July 2020, and in this role, he also became an ex officio member of the Board of Trustees.

Claudia Laviada brings to the Whitney's Board of Trustees a deep interest in contemporary art. After growing up in Mexico, she graduated from Columbia University with a master's degree in international affairs and has lived in New York City for many years with her family. She collects photography, sculpture, and other media, including work by Wolfgang Tillmans, Gabriel Orozco, Roe Ethridge, Graciela Iturbide, Kati Horna, and Robert Polidori. Laviada was elected to the Board of Trustees on May 18, 2021.

Julie Mehretu is an internationally recognized artist whose work has appeared in major museums and exhibitions around the globe. Her mid-career survey, *Julie Mehretu*, was presented at the Whitney from March 25 through August 8, 2021. Her work is represented in the Whitney's collection and has been included in numerous group exhibitions at the Museum, beginning with the 2004 Biennial. She is the recipient of many awards, including the Berlin Prize, a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, and the U.S. Department of State Medal of Arts. In 2020, *Time* magazine included Mehretu in its list of the one hundred most influential people. Mehretu was elected to the Board of Trustees on September 22, 2021.

Eric L. Motley, Ph.D., is the Deputy Director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. In this role, Motley oversees the museum's national strategy through civic, cultural, and philanthropic partnerships and is charged with advancing the National Gallery's mission in tandem with its operational and revenue-generation plans. Prior to joining the National Gallery, Motley served as the executive vice president and corporate secretary at the Aspen Institute, based in Washington, D.C. He also held numerous positions in the U.S. Department of State and the White House, where he was the youngest appointee of the George W. Bush administration. In 2017, he published a memoir, *Madison Park, A Place of Hope*, telling the story of the small community where he grew up in Montgomery, Alabama. Also a trustee at The Morgan Library & Museum, Motley is an avid collector of first editions and rare books, concentrating on the English writer and lexicographer Samuel Johnson. Motley was elected to the Board of Trustees on March 2, 2021.

Jen Rubio is the Co-Founder and CEO at Away, the luggage and travel lifestyle brand. Before co-founding Away, Rubio worked as global director of innovation for the clothing brand AllSaints and head of social media at Warby Parker. Rubio has taught social media as an adjunct professor at Miami Ad School and has been a guest lecturer at Hyper Island, New York University, the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Northwestern University, and Harvard University. She is also an avid collector of contemporary art and, through her foundation, is a passionate supporter of social justice causes and ongoing pandemic relief. Rubio was elected to the Board of Trustees on December 8, 2020.

To view the Whitney Museum of American Art Board of Trustees list as of October 12, 2021, please visit whitney.org/about/trustees.

About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for ninety years. The core of the Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the

United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

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