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Gordon Knox Appointed President of San Francisco Art Institute

San Francisco, CA, November 10, 2016 — The Board of Trustees of San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI) announces the appointment of Gordon Knox as President. Knox will begin in his new role in January 2017.

“We are extraordinarily pleased to welcome Gordon Knox as the next President of SFAI,” says Chris Tellis, Chair of the SFAI Board of Trustees. “Gordon brings to SFAI a deep commitment to arts education, along with 25 years of experience developing institutions and working to create opportunities for practicing artists. He fully understands and is inspired by the challenges of leading a center of higher learning focused on the fine arts. Gordon will provide SFAI with dynamic leadership at a time when the entire San Francisco creative community is undergoing an unprecedented renaissance with expanded museums and galleries and opportunities for artists to study and thrive.”

“SFAI epitomizes the qualities that built San Francisco,” says Knox. “It is a maverick institution at the heart of a city known to be one step further into the future than the rest. For a century and half, and still going strong, SFAI has fed the city with exploratory thinking, disruptive artistic investigation, sublime art-making, and a persistently clairvoyant perception of how the arts change us all.”

Knox comes to SFAI from the Arizona State University (ASU) Art Museum, where he has served as Director since 2010. His work has long focused on the transformative role of the arts in society and, under his direction, the ASU Art Museum became a model of social engagement and change in the region. Knox launched several new initiatives that engage with diverse collaborators in the sciences, humanities, and from indigenous and immigrant communities to develop artist-led investigations of desert ecology, global sustainability, food self-sufficiency, social resilience, and more. Knox also established an International Artist Residency facility and program there and secured a sizable endowment for its continuation. Among the many exhibitions that Knox curated, developed, or brought to ASU are *Miguel Angel Rio - Landlocked*, the first video survey of the highly influential Mexico City-based artist; *SUPERFAKE: The Parley*, a residency-based investigation into value, authenticity, meaning, and art, developed by the Danish art collective SUPERFLEX; and *55: Music and Dance in Concrete*, an immersive sound, video, and movement experience that brought together a team of leading composers, videographers, choreographers, and lighting directors to transform and liberate the bricks and mortar of the museum.

At SFAI, Knox will work closely with Provost and Senior Vice President Rachel Schreiber, who has been serving as Interim President for the past year, to oversee SFAI's academic programs.

Prior to his time at the ASU Art Museum, Knox was the Director of Global Initiatives at the Stanford Humanities Lab, where he developed and implemented international on-the-ground, collaborative programs to effect positive social change through the arts, an effort that was recognized in 2008 by *Forbes Magazine*. Prior to Stanford, Knox was Artistic Director at the Montalvo Arts Center in Saratoga, California, where he designed, developed, and established the organization's international artist

residency program and its global participation in the art world. During the 1990s as the Founding Director of the Civitella Ranieri Foundation in Italy, Knox envisioned and established a center for the arts that quickly became a new model for international, multidisciplinary residency programs.

Knox is currently on the Board of ZERO1 and Leonardo/The International Society for the Arts, Sciences and Technology. He has also served as an advisor, editor, or board member of numerous other organizations including The Christensen Fund, *The Climate Clock*, the San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery, *The Paris Review*, Res Artis, Roulette, the Ratti Foundation, the Furla Foundation, the Dakar Biennial, the Sanskriti Foundation, and the Musagetes Foundation.

Knox's interest in the relationship between the arts and society and critical, artistic inquiry emerged from his studies in social anthropology at the University of California Santa Cruz, Cambridge University, and the University of Chicago.

"Over many decades, the San Francisco Art Institute has played an outsized role in American art history, graduating many of the nation's most prominent artists and influencing the major artistic movements of the 20th and 21st centuries," says Tellis. "We very much look forward to having Gordon continue and enhance these achievements as our new president at SFAI."

"SFAI was the first to create an art school out of the technology of photography," says Knox. "It was where the moving picture was first presented. It was the birthplace of both Mt. Rushmore and Burning Man. SFAI is permanently situated in the vanguard because it remains committed to cultural innovations associated with humanity's deep need to share ideas and tell stories. From Abstract Expressionism to the Beat Generation and on to the heart of the counterculture, which, as we now know, provided the ethos and thinking that spawned cyber-culture and our current digital world, SFAI has remained fearless in its advancement of the flow of ideas. It is an honor to be invited into this institution and to join its brilliant team as we explore 21st century challenges and opportunities. I am grateful, excited, and eager to be part of this community of cultural thinkers."

About San Francisco Art Institute

Founded in 1871, SFAI is one of the country's oldest and most prestigious institutions of higher education in the practice and study of contemporary art. As a diverse community of working artists and scholars, SFAI provides students with a rigorous education in the arts and preparation for a life in the arts through an immersive studio environment, an integrated liberal arts and art history curriculum, and critical engagement with the world. Committed to educating artists who will shape the future of art, culture, and society, SFAI fosters creativity and original thinking in an open, experimental, and interdisciplinary context.

MEDIA CONTACT

Nina Sazevich

Public Relations

415.752.2483

nina@sazevichpr.com