

April 3, 2024

NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale Unveils New Members to Curator Circle Committee

The new appointees join Founding Curator Circle members Whitney Lane, Kristin Cline Wurzak, and Tara and Miles Forman.

April 3, 2024 | Sean d'Oliveira



[NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale](#) selected new members to its [Curator Circle Committee](#). Seeking passionate individuals deeply involved in the community and committed to philanthropy, the Curator Circle Committee appointed Theresa Christie, Lori Franke, Dawn Elise Hamilton, Sheryl Maher, Mark R. Richards, Lauren Sperber and Zachariah “Reggie” P. Zachariah, Jr. to its Curator Circle Committee. As leaders of the Curator Circle membership, the new members offer a unique opportunity to directly participate in the museum’s permanent collection by contributing to the Acquisition Fund to select and purchase artworks. Members can also enjoy stimulating and engaging events and exclusive access to the art world.

“We are thrilled to welcome Theresa Christie, Lori Franke, Dawn Elise Hamilton, Sheryl Maher, Mark R. Richards, Lauren Sperber, and Zachariah “Reggie” P. Zachariah, Jr., to NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale’s Curator Circle Committee,” Bonnie Clearwater says, Director and Chief Curator for NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale. “Each new committee member brings a unique perspective and expertise to the growth of Curator Circle, the newest affinity group designed for the Next Generation of art enthusiasts, aspiring collectors, and Museum supporters.”



The newly appointed Curator Circle Committee members include:

- Theresa Christie graduated with a B.S. in Regional Development from the University of Arizona and was formerly a teacher for Mesa Public Schools, where she taught Geography and American History. Additionally, she enjoyed teaching Microsoft Word, Excel and HTML classes at Avaya, Inc. in Denver, Colorado. Christie served on the Beaux Arts Board for four years and is currently a member of Beaux Arts Fort Lauderdale, being involved in fundraising for NSU Art Museum throughout those years. She is the wife of Ted Christie and the mother of two teenagers. She enjoys playing tennis, running, skiing, art, reading and traveling in her free time.
- Lori Franke and her husband Kirk have been avid collectors of contemporary art and have supported the NSU Art Museum in Fort Lauderdale for a long time. She had played a significant role in the museum's growth, initially as one of the founding members of Cobra Circle and later expanding her membership to Curator Circle. During her two-year tenure as Beaux Arts' president, the museum's auxiliary group, she served on the Board of Governors as Ex Officio. Lori is currently a Regional Account Executive with AbbVie, and she is a mother to two teenage boys, Carson and Crosby. Despite her busy schedule, she continues volunteering for Beaux-Arts and Broward County Schools.
- Dawn Elise Hamilton is the owner and principal designer of DawnElise Interiors International, Inc., an interior design firm based in Fort Lauderdale. She was raised in the New York metropolitan area and obtained a bachelor's degree in Art History from Columbia University. After completing her degree, she worked at several world-renowned museums, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, El Museo del Barrio, and The Museum of the Moving Image. Dawn's passion for design led her to launch DawnElise Interiors in 2006 after moving to South Florida, and she has since built a reputation as a top-tier interior designer.
- Since retiring as a Chief Marketing Officer from Phillips PetFood and Supplies and VP of Sales and Marketing at Virbac Laboratories, Sheryl Maher has become passionate about fundraising for meaningful organizations. She serves on various boards, including the Foundation Board for the Lehigh Valley Charter Arts School, Bethlehem, PA, and has been president and vice president for several years. Sheryl has co-chaired four galas and several other events in the last six years and is the past President of PAWS for the Broward County Humane Society. Maher has recently developed an interest in art and has been collecting mid-century and modern art for the last eight years. While she has collected some important pieces, the true value of an art piece for her is when it speaks to her.
- Mark R. Richards is a highly experienced operating executive, with over 30 years of senior-level experience, including over 20 years in the C-Suite managing large, global industrial businesses. With two decades of board experience, Richards has held various roles, including board chair and serving on all standing committees. Richards is also a founding chapter President and member of the Private Directors Association (PDA), a leading national non-profit organization dedicated to driving excellent practice in board formation and governance within private and family businesses. Additionally, Richards holds the certification of Board Leadership Fellow from the National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD), the highest level of credentialing for corporate directors and corporate governance professionals. He is passionate about promoting performing and fine arts, wellness programming, and access to healthcare. He has served as a Trustee for nationally recognized organizations such as the Appleton Performing Arts Center, an award-winning performing arts center, and Thedacare Hospital, a leader in applying lean



principles to control costs while improving care. Richards has also been an active fundraiser for various non-profit organizations, including United Way, Trout Museum of Art, Habitat for Humanity, and Catalpa, a novel delivery system addressing community-wide adolescent behavioral health issues in rural counties. In addition, Richards co-founded Fusion, a women's affinity group focused on leadership development and C-Suite sponsorship, which has grown to over 700 members.

- Lauren Sperber, a Fort Lauderdale native, is a philanthropist and co-founder of the Childhood Cancer Project. She has also supported the NSU Art Museum for several years. Sperber is an interior designer with a passion for the arts. She is also the mother of three children and the wife of Andrew Sperber.
- Zachariah "Reggie" P. Zachariah, Jr. is a shareholder in the Corporate Practice of a firm located in Fort Lauderdale. His practice specifically focuses on private equity transactions, mergers and acquisitions, corporate restructurings, counseling boards and senior management on strategic business matters, corporate formation and governance, and financial and transactional matters. Reggie has gained extensive industry experience in healthcare technology and services, education, insurance, manufacturing, franchises, retail, and infrastructure. Before attending law school, he worked as a financial analyst, focusing on mergers and acquisitions for a public company.

The new members will be recognized during an upcoming unveiling reception. This reception also marks a new milestone in NSU Art Museum's history with the addition of two paintings: High Tide by Miami artist Zoe Schweiger and Tout Moun Se Yo Moun by Haitian artist Kathia St. Hilaire. Due to the exceptional dedication and support of Curator Circle members, this was the first time artworks had been added to the permanent collection. The museum extends its congratulations to the two talented artists on this honor.

The second edition of the Curator Circle Unveiling Reception is set to take place on Monday, April 8 at the NSU Art Museum. Curator Circle members eagerly anticipate the unveiling of the artwork and artist they voted for in March to enter the museum's permanent collection. The event is made possible by the generous support of various sponsors, including Andres Bonell – Bryn Mawr Trust of Delaware, Ted and Theresa Christie, Matthew and Whitney Lane, Blaine Phillips and Sheryl Maher, Brian Reas – Northwestern Mutual, and an anonymous contribution, with additional support provided by Dawn Elise Hamilton and Lifestyle Media Group. The aim is to raise \$20,000 for the event through silent auction, raffle drawing, and pledges, with all proceeds going towards the NSU Art Museum and Art Acquisition Fund. Daoud's Fine Jewelry has provided a generous donation for the raffle, a luxurious pair of Diamond Heart Dangle Earrings, for which the organizers are deeply thankful as it will help them achieve their goal.

The Diamond Heart Dangle Earrings Raffle Tickets can be [pre-purchased here](#). Donations can be made by purchasing one ticket for \$50 or three tickets for \$125. The raffle drawing is scheduled at the Curator Circle Unveiling Reception on April 8, 2024, at 7 p.m. Attendance is not required to win.

The organization expresses profound gratitude to Christie's; Privee – The Colonnade Outlets at Sawgrass Mills, and Spirit Airline Foundation for their generous donations of exceptional items to be auctioned off



to support its mission. The online auction will commence on April 1 at 12 p.m. The organization counts on each person's support to achieve its goal.

NSU Art Museum, located in the heart of Downtown Fort Lauderdale, is a premier destination for exhibitions and programs encompassing all facets of civilization's visual history. The museum is widely known for its significant collection of Latin American and contemporary art, with an emphasis on art by Black, Latin American, and women artists. It also features works by American artist William Glackens and the European CoBrA group of artists.