

CRYSTAL BRIDGES

MUSEUM *of* AMERICAN ART

For immediate release

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Robert Workman to Step Down As Executive Director Of Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

BENTONVILLE, Ark., Jan. 26, 2009. -- Robert Workman has decided to step down as executive director of the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art so that a new director can be in place as the museum transitions from construction to its opening and for years thereafter, the museum announced today.

The museum also announced it is beginning a national search for a new executive director. Workman has agreed to continue with the museum until Dec. 31, 2009, to oversee major projects and to assist in the transition to the new executive director. During the transition period, day-to-day operations for the museum will be handled by the museum's executive management team.

In a statement, Museum Chairwoman Alice Walton said: "I accept Bob's resignation with regret, understanding and gratitude. He has done a magnificent job and will be leaving a beautiful legacy. Crystal Bridges wouldn't be what it is without Bob. I am pleased he will continue to work with us and deeply grateful for the innumerable contributions he has made."

Workman said he decided to leave because he could not make a commitment to stay well beyond the museum opening and therefore thought the museum would be better served if he left this year.

With construction of the museum and development of its exhibitions and programming proceeding well, Workman said a new executive director would have ample time to become part of the Northwest Arkansas community, manage the transition from museum construction to operation, and oversee operations of the museum after the opening.

“This was a very difficult decision to make, and I did not make it lightly,” said Workman. “I have been honored to work closely with Alice Walton and the other dedicated and talented people who have been creating this remarkable institution from the ground up. It has been an extremely rewarding period in my career, but I believe it is the right time to prepare for new leadership to build on our achievements and maximize the opportunities provided by the opening of this institution.

“The Walton family’s amazing gift of land and resources to realize the opening of what will be one of the nation’s leading museums of American art will transform not only Northwest Arkansas, but have a lasting impact through our region and beyond.”

Workman had many accomplishments at the museum. He began his association with the museum in 2004, working as a consultant on the planning and implementation for the building and grounds and collaborating with the architects, builders and landscape designers responsible for the development of the museum.

In January 2006, Workman was named executive director. Since that time, he has created the organizational framework for the museum and built a leadership team of experienced, respected professionals.

About Crystal Bridges

Crystal Bridges is envisioned as a premier national art institution dedicated to American art and artists, learning and community gatherings. The museum takes its name from the unique glass-and-wood building design, created for the natural setting by world-renowned architect Moshe Safdie. The entire complex will encompass approximately 100,000 square feet of gallery,

library, meeting, and office space, a 250-seat indoor auditorium, areas for outdoor concerts and public events, gallery rooms suitable for large receptions, as well as sculpture gardens and walking trails.

The museum will house a permanent collection of masterworks from American artists along with galleries dedicated to Native American and regional art and artists. The growing permanent collection is composed of paintings and sculptures by American artists from the Colonial period through the modern era and will consist of numerous notable paintings, including: Gilbert Stuart's *George Washington* (The Constable-Hamilton Portrait); portraitist Charles Willson Peale's 18th century painting of a confident George Washington completed near the end of the Revolutionary War; and Hudson River School masterwork *Kindred Spirits* by Asher B. Durand. Other artists and works represented include Charles Bird King's early 19th century portraits of American Indian leaders; and Winslow Homer's depictions of the interplay between man and nature.

In addition to the permanent collection, temporary exhibitions drawn from national institutions will be displayed in the museum. The 100-acre site of the museum complex and cultural center is located in Bentonville, Ark. For more information about Crystal Bridges, visit www.crystalbridges.org.

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