

Elliot Bostwick Davis Named New Director and CEO of Norton Museum of Art as It Prepares to Open Foster + Partners-designed Expansion in February 2019

WEST PALM BEACH, FL (Sept. 17, 2018) –The Board of Trustees of the Norton Museum of Art announced today that nationally recognized art historian and curator Elliot Bostwick Davis has been appointed Director and CEO to succeed Hope Alswang, who is retiring on March 1, 2019 after leading the institution for nine years. Davis comes to the Norton from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), where for the past 18 years she has spearheaded all aspects of one of the world’s premier collections of the art of the Americas. She will assume the directorship on March 2, 2019.

Davis joins the Norton at a moment of singular transformation for the institution that includes a 59,000 square-foot expansion and new sculpture garden designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Lord Norman Foster of Foster + Partners. The breathtaking new wing and expanded museum, opening to the public on February 9, 2019, offers new galleries, classrooms, state-of-the-art auditorium, and other amenities. The expansion allows Davis to broaden the Museum’s multiple missions of serving as an inspiring and engaging cultural resource for the region, and an incubator for groundbreaking and meaningful exhibitions, scholarship, and programs.

“It is with great pleasure that we announce the appointment of Elliot Davis, an outstanding museum leader, as the new Director and CEO of the Norton Museum of Art,” said Harry Howell, Chairman of the Norton Museum of Art’s Board of Trustees. “Widely respected as a scholar and curator, Elliot is also an innovator in making the art of the Americas a more inclusive field and making museums more active and engaged in their communities. As our institution begins to grow into its new wing, we know that Elliot will create a vision for the Norton that meets our aspirations of being one of the nation’s leading art museums.”

“It is an honor to become the next Director of the Norton Museum of Art at this time of historic transformation,” Davis said. “I look forward to working with all members of the Norton community—Trustees, staff, friends, and members—as we strive to broaden the role of the art museum in contemporary culture. I view the Norton as a place of inspiration, creativity and excellence, and one that will nurture even greater connections to audiences of all ages and walks of life, both in Palm Beach County and beyond.”

Since 2000, Davis has led the MFA’s Art of the Americas department as the John Moors Cabot Chair, charged with responsibility for one of the world’s preeminent collections of paintings, decorative arts and sculpture from North, Central, and South America. The Art of the Americas collection of more than 16,000 objects spans three millennia, from 900 BCE to the late 20th century. During her tenure, Davis created a new and innovative paradigm for presenting American art in a global context and expanded the breadth of artistic representation from across the Americas with important acquisitions of art by women, African Americans, Native Americans, folk and outsider artists, as well as paintings and decorative arts from the Spanish Colonial period.

Committed to expanding the MFA’s engagement with new audiences, she directed and led two pilot programs. The first, funded by the Henry Luce Foundation, developed innovative methods of displaying

art from the permanent collection. The second created traveling exhibitions for culturally underserved and rural communities throughout the Northeast, as part of the Art Bridges-Terra program.

Davis led the curatorial team that created the critically acclaimed installation of the Art of the Americas Wing (also designed by Foster + Partners, with whom Davis collaborated on the wing's design) which opened in November 2010 displaying nearly 5,000 objects on view in 53 galleries, representing one-third of the MFA's gallery space. She also played an active role in the MFA's capital campaigns.

At the MFA, she has authored 20 publications and curated 15 exhibitions, including *Mark Rothko: Reflection* (2017); *Making Modern* (2016); *Jamie Wyeth* (2014); *Lois Mailou Jones* (2013); *Edward Hopper* (2007), and *Things I Love: The Collections of William I. Koch* (2005).

Before joining the MFA, Davis was responsible for American, British, and contemporary art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in its Department of Drawings and Prints. She has served on the boards of the Association of Art Museum Curators, Mona Bismarck American Center, Mass Humanities, Groton School, Shelburne Museum, the New York Academy of Art, and the American Antiquarian Society.

Davis received her Ph.D., M.A., and M. Phil in art history and archaeology from Columbia University. She also earned an M.A. in liberal studies from New York University, and her A.B. *cum laude* in art history and archaeology from Princeton University.

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