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The Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts Draws More Than 155,000 Visitors in Milestone First Year
*2023-24 Annual Report Highlights Record Attendance, Financial Growth, Workforce Expansion, and
Community Impact; Announces Diego Rivera Exhibition and Winthrop Rockefeller Memorial Award
Recipient*

June 11, 2024 (LITTLE ROCK, Ark.) — The [Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts \(AMFA\)](#) released the 2023-24 Annual Report during its annual meeting attended by the AMFA Foundation Board of Directors and Board of Trustees. The report, available [here](#), highlights key metrics that underscore AMFA's successful inaugural year.

Highlights:

- **Record Attendance and International Engagement:** AMFA welcomed more than 155,000 guests, with visitors from all Little Rock zip codes, 41 counties in Arkansas, 48 U.S. states, and 18 countries. Through statewide outreach efforts, the Museum served more than 20,000 community members, bringing the total attendance to 175,544 people. This milestone underscores the Museum's role as a premier arts and culture hub in Little Rock.
- **Financial Growth and Stability:** AMFA achieved a record high total revenue of \$11.2 million for the 12-month period ending April 2024, marking a 67 percent increase from the Museum's last full year of operations as the Arkansas Arts Center in 2018.
- **Workforce Expansion:** The Museum's labor force now includes 100 full-time employees, 225 part-time employees, and 129 docents and volunteers. This expansion not only enhances the Museum's operational capabilities but also contributes significantly to local economic growth.
- **Membership:** AMFA maintains a robust membership base with 5,308 members, reflecting continued community support and engagement.

Reflecting on AMFA's inaugural year, **Dr. Victoria Ramirez, Executive Director of AMFA**, stated, "Our inaugural year has surpassed all expectations, welcoming a record number of visitors and achieving significant financial milestones. These remarkable achievements highlight the dedication of our foundation, board, and staff, the generosity of our supporters, and the enthusiasm of our community. We are excited to expand our programs, deepen our community engagement, and further enhance the cultural landscape of Arkansas, setting new standards for excellence in the arts."

The revenue of \$11.2 million was driven by diverse funding sources, including \$3 million from the AMFA Foundation, \$2.7 million from development efforts, \$2.3 million in earned revenue, and \$0.4 million from memberships. The City of Little Rock contributed \$2.8 million for the 12-month period ending April 2024 and increased its support to \$4 million for the 2024 fiscal year. AMFA reported total expenses of \$11.2 million for the fiscal year, reflecting its strategic investments in personnel, exhibitions, and facility enhancements.

Rivera's Paris On View February 7, 2025 - May 18, 2025

During the meeting, Dr. Ramirez announced *Rivera's Paris*, curated and organized by AMFA. *Rivera's Paris* is an exploration of Diego Rivera's years spent in Europe, where he formed his ideas about art and the world that ultimately would propel him to become the most influential Mexican painter in the 20th century. The exhibition will be groundbreaking—uniting paintings, drawings, and photographs for the first thorough examination of the years surrounding the creation of AMFA's masterpiece by Diego Rivera—*Dos Mujeres* (1914).

This exhibition offers a unique glimpse into Rivera's world, revealing the profound influence of the artists he encountered in Spain and France and his vibrant life in Paris, the art capital of the world. *Rivera's Paris* offers deeper insight into Rivera's artistic evolution and explores his distinctive approach to cubism while examining the work of his contemporaries.

Rivera's Paris highlights *Dos Mujeres* as a signature artwork in the AMFA Foundation Collection. The work was gifted in 1955 to the Museum by Abby Rockefeller Mauzé, daughter of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and sister to future Governor Winthrop Rockefeller. The painting was also the first artwork donated to the Museum by a member of the Rockefeller family, which prompted subsequent donations by David Rockefeller, Laurance S. Rockefeller, Winthrop and Jeannette Rockefeller, and collateral descendants.

Dos Mujeres is a double portrait of Rivera's common-law wife, Angelina Beloff, and their friend and fellow artist, Alma Dolores Bastián (nicknamed Moucha), who together with her husband lived in the same building as Beloff and Rivera at 26, Rue du Départ. Rivera painted *Dos Mujeres* in 1914 in his apartment-studio, from which "one looked out on the vast sea of rooftops—with their squared and angular rhythm of

waves—of nearby warehouses and workshops; the panes would rumble—the rumble of trains—from the Gare Montparnasse.”

Rivera’s most important Cubist painting—and one of his largest—*Dos Mujeres* was first exhibited in 1914 at the Société des Artistes Indépendants. There, it received extensive coverage in the press, hailing Rivera as the “Champion of Cubism.”

AMFA has secured several key loans representing the full evolution of Rivera’s years in Europe, including an early landscape (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.); a Cubist portrait (Meadows Museum, SMU, Dallas); and several later drawings when Rivera returned to naturalism, as evidenced in his tender portrait of his wife, Angelina Beloff (1917, Museum of Modern Art, New York), who is one of the subjects depicted in *Dos Mujeres*. Additionally, major examples by artists who influenced Rivera: Darío de Regoyos y Valdés, whom Rivera praised as being “a marvelous colorist” (Meadows Museum, SMU, Dallas); a monumental painting by Hermenegildo Anglada Camarasa (The Hispanic Museum and Library, New York); Jean Metzinger, a vibrant portrait of the artist by Robert Delaunay (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston); and two works by Jacques Lipchitz (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.)—who traveled to Spain with Rivera in 1914 to escape the war and later credited him with his own explorations in Cubism. To date, AMFA has secured loans from twelve American museums and several private collections.

Rivera’s Paris is supported by the Robert Lehman Foundation.

Tilbury Receives 2024 Winthrop Rockefeller Memorial Award

The AMFA Foundation announced the recipient of this year’s Winthrop Rockefeller Memorial Award, **Van Tilbury**. This prestigious award honors individuals who exhibit exceptional dedication and support for the arts and AMFA. A committee comprising previous recipients selected Tilbury for his outstanding contributions. **Terri Erwin** presented Tilbury with the award during the annual meeting.

Warren Stephens, chair of the AMFA Foundation Board of Directors commented, “Van’s commitment mirrors the service exemplified by the late Governor Winthrop Rockefeller, whose work was instrumental to the early growth of the Museum. Van is a steadfast supporter of AMFA and his contributions over the years have made an everlasting impact on the Museum and the community it serves.”

Tilbury was a member of the AMFA Board of Trustees from 2012 to 2024 and served in many capacities, including vice-president (2018-20), president (2020-22), and chair (2022-24). Tilbury was also a member of AMFA’s building committee, which oversaw the design and construction of the new building. He is the current president and CEO of East Harding Construction.

Return of Tabriz

Dr. Ramirez also announced Tabriz will return to AMFA in 2025, building on the success of previous fundraising events, such as the 2017 gala, which raised over \$800,000. The event will be co-chaired by **Mary Olive and John Stephens**. Tabriz, which started in 1971, was named after the cultural city of Tabriz in the Middle East, known for its vibrant marketplace. Tabriz 2025 will be an unforgettable celebration for all attendees.

Capital Campaign Update

Capital Campaign co-chairs **Harriet and Warren Stephens** announced that the campaign raised \$176.6 million, far exceeding the original goal of \$66 million. AMFA was realized through a successful public and private partnership to fund the building's design and construction.

AMFA By the Numbers

- Total Attendance: 175,544
- Total Revenue: \$11.2 million
- Total Expenses: \$11.2 million
- Workforce Expansion: 100 Full-Time, 225 Part-Time, 129 Docents and Volunteers
- Supporters: 5,308 Members, 341 Donors (Individual and Corporate)
- Community Partners: 98 Statewide Partners, 456 Schools
- Exhibitions and Site-Specific Installations: 12
- Museum Tours: 236
- Public Social Events: 54
- Windgate Art School Classes Offered: 712
- Accessible Events: 24

For more information about AMFA, please visit arkmfa.org.

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About the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts

Founded in 1937, the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts is the largest cultural institution of its kind in the state, offering a unique blend of visual and performing arts experiences. AMFA is committed to featuring diverse media and artistic perspectives within its permanent collection of 14,000 works of art as well as through rotating temporary exhibitions. AMFA's international collection spans eight centuries, with strengths in works on paper and contemporary craft, and includes notable holdings by artists from Arkansas, the South, and across the United States and Europe.

With a vibrant mix of ideas, cultures, people, and places, AMFA extends this commitment to diversity through its dynamic children's theatre and performing arts program, the innovative Windgate Art School, and community-focused educational programs for all ages. Located in Little Rock's oldest urban green space, MacArthur Park, AMFA's landmark building and grounds are designed by Studio Gang and SCAPE, in collaboration with Polk Stanley Wilcox Architects.