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## ***THE FABRIC WORKSHOP AND MUSEUM IN PHILADELPHIA APPOINTS SUSAN LUBOWSKY TALBOTT AS DIRECTOR***

### **A New Chapter for One of Nation's Leading Contemporary Art Museums**



Susan Talbott, photographed by Thibault Jeanson at Ann Hamilton: *habitus* installation at the Municipal Pier 9, Philadelphia.

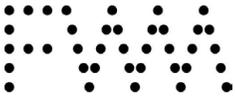
Philadelphia, PA – The Board of Directors of The Fabric Workshop and Museum (FWM) is pleased to announce the appointment of Susan Lubowsky Talbott as Executive Director.

As only the second Executive Director in the museum's 40-year long history, Susan L. Talbott brings the imaginative capacity of a contemporary art curator and the skills of a seasoned museum director to FWM. The new director follows in the footsteps of visionary founder Marion (Kippy) Boulton Stroud, who led the organization for 38 years until her untimely death last year.

At the request of the Board, Talbott came aboard earlier this year to guide the museum during its unexpected period of transition.

Since January, she has overseen every aspect of administration, from planning and fundraising to managing two especially ambitious projects: the pioneering collaboration between Janine Antoni, Anna Halprin and Stephen Petronio in the spring and a major, two-location installation by Ann Hamilton this fall.

"Susan is a consummate professional whom we are fortunate to have at the helm of FWM," says The Fabric Workshop and Museum President Katherine Sokolnikoff. "I am confident that she will advance the Fabric Workshop and Museum in a manner that upholds that high standards of our work and contributes to the field of contemporary art, both here in Philadelphia and beyond."



Talbott came to Philadelphia from Hartford where, as director and CEO of the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, she was credited with successfully envisioning and overseeing an eight-year transformation that reinvigorated the presentation and interpretation of the museum's important collections and renovated all five of the museum's historic buildings. Since her arrival at FWM, the museum has experienced steady gains in attendance: in the first four weeks of its 17-week presentation, the museum's current exhibition—Ann Hamilton's *habitus*—has already drawn the largest attendance in the history of FWM.

The first exhibition completely conceived and organized by Talbott opens on Friday, February 10, to shed light on an unusual resource within the permanent collections: an archive of 289 artist boxes. Since 1977, artists making works of art in the museum's workshop—among them Roy Lichtenstein, Richard Tuttle, Louise Bourgeois, Yinka Shonibare, and Do Ho Suh—have submitted their preparatory materials to be placed inside cardboard boxes at their projects' conclusion. Talbott will select a broad selection of these across the decades, some never before shown.

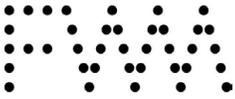
Yet to be entitled, this showcase of artist boxes kicks off the Fabric Workshop and Museum's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemoration. As the artist boxes document, renowned and emerging artists from around the world visit FWM studios to create experimental works in an array of disciplines—from new media, performance, sculpture, installation, and video to painting, ceramics, and architecture. In so doing, they often make longstanding contributions to contemporary art and culture. The museum also has a special interest in its founding subject, fabric, which the artist Ann Hamilton has eloquently described as “the body's first architecture.”

“FWM is the only institution in the United States devoted to creating work in new materials and new media. Susan grasps that unique mission and is perfectly prepared, as a seasoned museum director, to advance it,” said Artist Advisory Committee Chair John Ravenal.

### **About Susan Lubowsky Talbott**

Prior to her successful and highly acclaimed transformative leadership of the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, CT, Ms. Talbott was the Director of Smithsonian Arts, Washington, DC (2005–08), and Acting Director of the National Museum of African Art in 2006. Previously, Ms. Talbott served as Director and CEO of the Des Moines Art Center; Executive Director of the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) in Winston-Salem, NC; Director of the Visual Arts Program at the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, DC; and Director of the Whitney Museum of American Art's branch museums at Equitable Center and Philip Morris in New York.

She has organized or co-organized many memorable exhibitions, including *Patti Smith: Camera Solo*; *Andy Goldsworthy: Three Cairns*; and *My Reality: Contemporary Art and the Culture of Japanese Animation*. She



holds BFA and MFA degrees from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY, and was a Harvard University Fellow in the Art Museum Directors' Program. She has taught at SUNY, Brockport and New York University, and serves on the board of ArtTable, the national leadership organization of professional women in the arts. Previously, she served on the boards of the French American Museum Exchange (FRAME), the American Association of Museums/International Council of Museums (ICOM), and the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD). Ms. Talbott was inducted as a Chevalier in the French Order of Arts and Letters (Ordre des Arts et des Lettres) in November 2015.

Under Talbott's leadership, the Wadsworth Atheneum was a finalist for the National Medal for Museum and Library Service in 2013, and in 2014 the Museum received a \$9.6 million endowment for European art acquisitions, bringing the total endowment to more than \$100 million. In September 2015, the final phase of a 5-year, \$33 million program of infrastructure, storage, and gallery renovation was completed with 17 new galleries and a dynamic reinstallation of the contemporary, postwar, and European collections. Roberta Smith writing for the *New York Times* called the project "brilliant."

### **About The Fabric Workshop and Museum**

The Fabric Workshop and Museum was founded by Marion Boulton Stroud in 1977 with a visionary purpose: to stimulate experimentation among leading contemporary artists and to share the process of creating works of art with the public. For nearly four decades now, the organization has extended studio facilities, equipment, and expert technical support to leading artists so that they may experiment with innovative materials and media. The Fabric Workshop and Museum has also served as an education center for Philadelphia youth who, as printing apprentices, learn technical and vocational skills along with approaches to creative expression.

Research, construction, and fabrication occur on-site in studios that are open to the public, providing visitors with the opportunity to see artwork from conception to completion. The unique works of art created at FWM are shown throughout the United States and the world in major museums and cultural venues.

Since its founding, The Fabric Workshop and Museum has developed from an ambitious experiment to a renowned institution with a celebrated Artist-in-Residence Program, an extensive permanent collection, in-house and touring exhibitions, and comprehensive educational programming including lectures, tours, in-school presentations, and student apprenticeships. Recognized worldwide for its commitment to supporting artists in a studio practice, The Fabric Workshop and Museum is part of the dynamic art ecology of Philadelphia and supported by the foundations community and arts patrons nationally.

The programs of The Fabric Workshop and Museum are supported by AG Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The Arcadia Foundation; Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation; The Coby Foundation, Ltd.; Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation; E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation; Edna W. Andrade Fund of The Philadelphia Foundation; The Honickman Foundation; Institute of Museum and Library Services; The Knight Foundation; LLWW Foundation; Louis N. Cassett Foundation; Marion Boulton "Kippy" Stroud Foundation; Museums Connect<sup>SM</sup> made possible by the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and administered by the American Alliance of Museums; National Endowment for the Arts; New Millennium Charitable Foundation; Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage; The Philadelphia Arts in Education Partnership; The Philadelphia Cultural Fund; The Shipley-Miller Foundation; the Studio in a School Association; and the Board of Directors and Members of The Fabric Workshop and Museum.

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