



For Immediate Release

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The Cummer Museum of Arts & Gardens Announces Andrea Barnwell Brownlee’s Retirement

*Board of Trustees Names Kimberly Noble as Interim
George W. and Kathleen I. Gibbs Director and CEO*

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., April 8, 2025 - The Board of Trustees of the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens announced today that it has accepted the retirement notice submitted by Andrea Barnwell Brownlee, PhD, the George W. and Kathleen I. Gibbs Director and CEO. Her retirement will be effective May 1, 2025. The Cummer Museum’s current chief financial officer, Kimberly Noble, MBA, CFM will serve as interim director and CEO while a national search is conducted for a permanent successor.

“I have been honored to lead the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens and am proud it is increasingly regarded as a vibrant cultural hub of Jacksonville that is welcoming to all,” said Brownlee. “I am excited about devoting more time to my family and pursuing other interests. I wish the Cummer Museum, its Board of Trustees, exceptional staff and docents all the best.”

Brownlee took the helm of the Cummer in December 2020. Under her leadership, the Cummer Museum has received nationally recognized awards, including a \$1 million capacity grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and a Leadership in Art Museums award by a consortium of funders including the Ford Foundation, Mellon Foundation, Pilot House Philanthropy and the Alice L. Walton Foundation to establish the Dr. Johnnetta Betsch Cole Associate Curator position.

Michael Munz, chair of the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens Board of Trustees said “The Board is thankful for Dr. Brownlee’s service to the Cummer Museum and the community at large. Her leadership, which has elevated the Museum’s standing as a premier regional art museum that has hosted vibrant and engaging exhibits from around the world, has been nothing short of extraordinary. We wish her well in the next chapter of her life.”

During Brownlee’s tenure the Cummer Museum has presented a series of dynamic nationally and internationally traveling exhibitions including “Fabric of a Nation: American Quilt Stories,” “Sporting Fashion: Outdoor Girls 1800 to 1960,” “Flamboyance! A Topiary Menagerie,” the museum’s first-ever garden exhibition and “Zanele Muholi: Somnyama Ngonyama.”

Under Brownlee's leadership the Cummer Museum also completed a comprehensive five-year strategic plan and earned reaccreditation from the American Alliance of Museums, a distinction bestowed on only 1,102 of the 33,000 museums in the United States, 56 in Florida and two in Jacksonville. Under her stewardship the Cummer Museum also acquired important works by leading contemporary artists including Sanford Biggers, Maia Cruz Palileo and Yeesoookyung.

Brownlee, an art historian and curator who earned her doctorate in art history from Duke University, was previously the director of the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art. Brownlee is an active participant in the museum community and is a trustee of the Association of Art Museum Directors. She is a member of the Leadership Jacksonville Class of 2023 and serves on boards including Visit Jacksonville, the JAX Chamber, and the Florida State College at Jacksonville Foundation. She is also on the Advisory Board for the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University.

Noble, who has served as CFO at the Cummer Museum since June 2021, has more than 20 years of experience managing critical finance roles for nonprofits as well as Fortune 500 companies, including serving as CFO of St. Johns Country Day School and senior finance roles at Regency Centers, Winn-Dixie, Johnson & Johnson and CSX Transportation. She is a certified financial manager and earned an MBA in finance and security analysis at Warrington College of Business at the University of Florida where she also earned a bachelor of science degree in finance.

About the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens:

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens stands as a beacon of culture and inspiration in Jacksonville, Florida, proudly showcasing an impressive collection of art and stunning historically significant gardens. Founded in 1958 by the visionary Ninah Cummer, a powerful woman deeply committed to her community, the museum reflects her passion for art, gardens and education. Ninah's dream was to create a space where the beauty of fine art and nature could be appreciated and shared with all, and she succeeded in transforming her family estate into this remarkable institution. The museum boasts an exquisite collection that spans from ancient to contemporary art, including European masterpieces and American works that resonate with the spirit of the region. Complementing the art is a series of beautifully landscaped gardens along the St. Johns River that invite visitors to explore and find tranquility amidst nature's splendors. This harmonious blend of art and nature not only enhances the visitor experience but also embodies the essence of creativity and serenity that defines the Cummer Museum, making it an essential destination for art lovers and nature enthusiasts alike. As a landmark in Jacksonville, the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens not only honors Ninah Cummer's legacy but also serves as a vital cultural hub for education, creativity, and community engagement. It stands as a testament to the power of one woman's vision and her enduring impact on the arts in the community.

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