

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Memphis College of Art Stops Admitting Students, Makes Plans to Close**

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (October 24) — Facing declining enrollment, overwhelming real estate debt, and no viable long-term plan for financial sustainability, the Board of Directors of the Memphis College of Art has voted to stop recruiting new students, effective immediately, and begin making plans to close the College.

The College will now begin the orderly dissolution of MCA's real estate and other assets to fund the College's debt obligations and other liabilities, including providing sufficient funding to serve existing students who remain at MCA. The College is not admitting new students, and at the conclusion of fulfilling its obligations to existing students who remain in good standing, MCA will close. The precise period of time for this wind-down ("teach-out") has yet to be determined; the College anticipates it will last through May 2020.

"It is with great sadness that we move forward with this decision," said MCA Board Chair Henry P. Doggrell.

The Board vote resulted from a long process that eventually determined that an independent, private fine arts and design college is no longer financially sustainable in Memphis. The College's situation is not unique – small private colleges face financial challenges across the country. Over the last months, the school's leaders have cut costs to operate as efficiently as possible, but it wasn't sufficient to sustain operations beyond the current academic year without continued significant community support.

During the "teach-out" period, MCA will continue its long-standing tradition of offering Community Education programs, including the Fashion Certificate Program, summer camps, and adult art classes. Many of the College's community partnerships will continue as well. MCA's popular Holiday Bazaar will take place as scheduled on November 17-18, with proceeds funding existing student scholarships.

"This has been a heartbreaking process," said MCA Interim President Laura Hine. "But we remain proud of the creative energy MCA artists have long brought to Memphis, and are eternally grateful to the donors and foundations who have sustained us throughout our 81-year history. The tremendous value of the artistic contributions made by MCA faculty, students, and graduates, over many decades, simply can't be captured in words."

She continued: "In the immediate term our attention is focused on the internal MCA family - our students, our faculty and our staff. Going forward, we will rely on the thousands of MCA alumni in Memphis and across the country to carry on the legacy of the College through their art, their creative energy, and their innovation."

For more information and updates, go to [mca.edu](http://mca.edu).

Please direct all inquiries to Mary Caywood, Associate VP for Marketing and Communications at the College at [mcaywood@mca.edu](mailto:mcaywood@mca.edu), [901-272-5111](tel:901-272-5111) or [901-218-6881](tel:901-218-6881), or Marilyn Koester, Communications Manager at [mkoester@mca.edu](mailto:mkoester@mca.edu), [901-272-5113](tel:901-272-5113).

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Memphis College of Art provides a rigorous curriculum in an intimate, diverse community to empower generations of leading artists, designers and educators to flourish professionally and contribute valuable ideas to society. MCA is fully accredited with expert, nationally renowned faculty and grants BFA, MFA, MA in Art Education and MA in Teaching degrees with graduates excelling in various careers across the country and internationally. For more information, visit [mca.edu](http://mca.edu). Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/memphiscollegeofart](https://www.facebook.com/memphiscollegeofart) and on Twitter at [@memphisart](https://twitter.com/memphisart).

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