



art alliance austin

## **ART ALLIANCE AUSTIN ANNOUNCES ASA HURSH AS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

*One of Austin's oldest arts non-profits embarks on new strategic vision under the leadership of Asa Hursh; Development Director Holly McDaniel and Operations Director Wendy Prindle also announced*

(AUSTIN, TEXAS – August 2014; source: Juice Consulting) – **Art Alliance Austin** is proud to announce the appointment of **Asa Hursh** as its new **Executive Director**. Hursh most recently served as Deputy Director of the organization and has served in various roles in the organization for the past three years. Additionally, the organization has announced **Holly McDaniel** as its new **Director of Development** and **Wendy Prindle** as **Director of Operations**, as well as several new board members (see below).

Established in 1956, Art Alliance Austin is refocusing its mission to engage people with great art by supporting Austin's most promising visual artists and arts organizations to build a vibrant, informed community. The Austin focused non-profit promotes and funds visual art by commissioning art works and producing a diverse series of cultural experiences that bring artists, art buyers, collectors, and the public together while generating economic benefit for the entire city. Art Alliance Austin produces the city's second oldest outdoor festival, **Art City Austin**, the largest art marketplace in central Texas, as well as produces or underwrites several events during the year such as the **Art Night** series, **PechaKucha Nights** and the **Downtown Holiday Stroll** in partnership with the Downtown Austin Alliance.

"Austin's evolving art community and economic climate require a more focused strategic direction at Art Alliance Austin, and I am honored to lead that effort," said **Asa Hursh, Executive Director**. "Our organization has been around for over 50 years and has had an incredible history. With the evolving landscape of Austin's art scene, and contemporary art in general, Art Alliance Austin is creating an organizational model that better supports the evolving needs of Austin. By developing new methods of discovering and experiencing art, we will foster opportunities that broaden and strengthen the region's art community."

"We are thrilled that Asa is taking the helm of the Alliance," said **David Bodenman, Art Alliance Austin Board Chairman**. "His vision for the Alliance's future, commitment to its rich history, and dedication to and passion for the organization make the ideal qualities of a leader for one of Austin's oldest and most important art non-profits."

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“The purpose of the organization is to broaden the community of arts patrons at all levels from the attendee, to the art buyer, to the collector,” said **Hursh**. “Austin currently has a phenomenal selection of talent, both artists and curators, on par with other major cities in Texas and around the country. This city has all the makings of a truly vibrant arts scene. The Alliance will create accessible opportunities for the public to experience and engage that part of their city’s culture,” he said. “Second, we’re actively working with various business owners, cultural organizations, and civic organizations looking for artist performances, murals, public art, and temporary exhibitions. The Alliance will facilitate and manage those opportunities for our region’s most promising artists and curators, while providing meaningful engagement for its supporters.”

“The Art Alliance has been a steward of the Austin art community for decades and, in recent years, a great partner with Big Medium and the East Austin Studio Tour,” said **Shea Little, Executive Director of Big Medium**. “Art Alliance has helped us reach new audiences and expand our programming, and we cherish this partnership and the many more the Art Alliance has made with other artists and art organizations. Austin is in an exciting moment with so much growth and renewed energy for the visual arts. Asa is an ideal leader for the organization, and I look forward to seeing what he will do for Austin and the Art Alliance.”

At its core, Art Alliance Austin provides platforms for artists and art organizations to showcase their work - from festivals, to gallery tours, to speaker series, to public art and exhibitions. This will serve to broaden and deepen the connection between the Austin arts community and its audience. Because the Alliance does not have a dedicated space to program, it is flexible to support various types of works and match those works with different locations and audiences, from the novice to the erudite.

Art Alliance Austin is also proud to announce its current board, which consists of both long-standing and brand new members. The board includes **David Bodenman**, Highland Resources (Chair), **Jada Garrison**, The University of Texas at Austin (Vice Chair), **Berkeley Claxton**, St. David’s HeathCare (Treasurer), **Ryan Bennett**, Frost Bank (Secretary/Parliamentarian), **Kim Eckert**, IBM, **Sharon Kronberg**, philanthropist, **Grover Bynum**, Austin Technology Council, **Steve Maddox**, Austin High School, and **Joel Sumner**, National Instruments.

“Art Alliance Austin is developing a new and unique model and one that we believe reflects the current needs of Austin’s art scene,” said **Hursh**. “Our organization functions as a promoter, an advocate, and producer of the arts. The model focuses on the back of the house – administration, event planning, development, and marketing. Curation comes from outside of the organization, from a team of local talent that isn’t on the staff but is brought on board for various projects and events. We believe this model allows us flexibility as well as the broadest reach and support for the community.”

The Art Alliance is currently working on many events over the coming months including **PechaKucha** on **Thursday, Oct. 23**, **Art Night EAST** on **Friday, Nov. 14**, the **Downtown Holiday Stroll** in partnership with the Downtown Austin Alliance on **Saturday, Dec. 6**, and next year, **Art City Austin** taking place on **Saturday, April 25** and **Sunday, April 26** in downtown Austin on Cesar Chavez, near the Seaholm redevelopment project.

**About Art Alliance Austin:**

Art Alliance Austin exists to broaden and strengthen Austin's art community by producing a diverse series of cultural experiences that bring together artists, art buyers, collectors, and the public. Since 1956, the community focused nonprofit has cultivated opportunities that directly support the region's most promising visual artists, curators, and arts organizations. Art Alliance Austin programs and partnerships now engage more than 100,000 people annually and produce an estimated \$2.5 million in annual economic impact. For more information, please see [www.artallianceaustin.org](http://www.artallianceaustin.org).

**Art Alliance Austin Staff Bios:**

**Asa Hursh** is the Executive Director of Art Alliance Austin. He holds an MBA from the McCombs School of Business and an MA in Art History from The University of Texas at Austin with a concentration in Modern and Contemporary Art and also attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston as an undergraduate with a concentration in painting. Asa has been involved with Art Alliance Austin for the past few years in a part-time capacity while attending graduate school. He brings years of business and art experience to his position. Prior to the Alliance, Asa served on the board of directors of the Durham Art Guild in Durham, NC.

**Holly McDaniel** is the Director of Development and oversees all aspects of funding for Art Alliance Austin. She maintains and grows the community through cultivation, corporate sponsorship, planned giving, and membership campaigns. Before joining the Alliance, Holly was Director of Philanthropy at KMFA, 89.5. Her extensive background in development includes Polytechnic School and GLAAD, The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation in Los Angeles, California. Holly attended Occidental College where she majored in Art History.

**Wendy Prindle** is the Director of Operations and manages logistics, planning, and coordination of Art Alliance Austin's events as well as daily office business. Wendy has over 11 years of experience in the event industry, including management at The Driskill Hotel and founder of her own event planning company. She heightens the level of events through attention to detail and a passion to create unique experiences. Wendy was a longtime volunteer for Art City Austin before joining the organization's staff and is a graduate of Texas State University.

**MEDIA NOTE:**

For media credentials for any upcoming Art Alliance Austin events or for general media inquiries, interview requests or coverage, please contact the team at Juice Consulting:

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