



ARTS & CULTURE



Museum for Art in Wood receives \$10 million endowment and a new name

Windgate Foundation has gifted "the largest, by far" endowment to the Museum, formerly called The Center for Art in Wood.



A rendering of the Museum for Art in Wood.

Courtesy of Museum of Art in Wood

Updated Jan 30, 2023

The Center for Art in Wood announced Monday that it will receive a \$10 million endowment from the Windgate Foundation and would change its name to the Museum for Art in Wood.

“The museum isn’t really undergoing any transformation at all,” said Jennifer-Navva Milliken, the executive director and chief curator. “It’s the name that is catching up with the way the museum operates. My hope is that the public will better be able to understand what to expect [and] how to come in and use us, and enjoy and explore.”

The Windgate Foundation split the \$10 million gift so that \$3.5 million will be managed by the Arkansas Community Foundation, which will disburse a quarterly unrestricted grant to the museum. The remaining \$6.5 million is managed by the museum, which has invested the funds. The interest earned will be used toward general operations support.

In the last decade, the Windgate Foundation has granted the museum sizable gifts, including \$2 million in 2013 and \$2 million in 2017. “But this endowment is “the largest by far,” said Milliken. “It doesn’t mean that we don’t still need to fund-raise, we absolutely do, [but] it allows us to think with security in a way that we hadn’t been able to before.”

She added that the name change was already being discussed when news of the endowment came, and it is not a part of the endowment. “We already perform as a museum. We have a permanent collection of artworks that’s growing [and] is conserved, stewarded, and researched according to museum

standards.”

The museum’s collection holds 1,200 objects, and its research library contains 1,000 books and reading materials about the history of wood turning and woodworking. Located in Old City, the museum is open to visitors Wednesday through Sunday.

Founded as the Wood Turning Center in 1986, the museum hosts various exhibits all year long. The next one, “[The Mashrabiya Project](#),” is “the most ambitious programming” in the history of the organization, according to Milliken. Opening March 3, the show will examine intricate wooden window screens called mashrabiya and explore the significance of this architectural element in Islamic culture.

Published Jan. 30, 2023



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