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Gage Academy of Art Establishes Endowment Fund

\$1 million fund to support finding and retaining teaching artists, keeping class tuition affordable and providing scholarships and tuition subsidies.

SEATTLE, WA – February 6, 2015 – Gage Academy of Art is proud to announce the establishment of a \$1 million endowment for the organization from longtime Gage champion Anne Steele. This is the first ever major endowment gift for Gage, and brings special joy and significance on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Gage, which is being celebrated in 2015. The gift was announced at Gage 25/25, a celebration and exhibition at Pioneer Square’s AXIS Gallery on February 5, 2015.

In accordance with Ms. Steele’s wishes, the endowment gift has been thoughtfully structured to provide maximum flexibility in its support of Gage, with the guiding hope from Ms. Steele that it can help the organization continue to find and retain the highest quality faculty of teaching artists, keep class tuition affordable and provide the same substantial level of scholarships and tuition subsidy. In addition, Ms. Steele hopes that the endowment gift can provide financial stability, strength and safety and aid in its search for a new home – a move that is expected in the next 5 years as Gage has outgrown its North Capitol Hill location. It is the intention of the organization to keep the principal of the endowment untouched for normal operating expenses, and rely on them only to fund any major creative and innovative opportunities that present themselves in upcoming decades.

Erin Moyer, President of the Gage Board of Trustees, described the profound impact of this gift by saying, “On behalf of the board and Gage staff, I want to thank Anne Steele for this phenomenal act of leadership and generosity. This gift ensures the vitality of Gage Academy of Art for decades to come, and will be instrumental in preparing and sustaining Gage for growth of its programs and facilities over its next twenty-five years. We’ve always aspired to be the very best independent art school and cultural organization possible, and this gift paints a very bright future for Gage.”

Executive Director Sheila Hughes added, “We at Gage know that Anne’s generosity will inspire others who want to invest in artists and support this very special place. There has never been a time when artists and art-making were more important to nurturing our region’s livability, productivity, vitality and community well-being. Gage is proud to serve as home for some of the best working artists in the Northwest and the world – artists who come together to inspire, teach and share their time and talent with other aspiring artists of all ages, abilities and economic means. Anne’s gift ensures that Gage can continue to create this circle of learning, and to deliver that kind of quality experience to our community in a way that is relevant for years to come.”

Ms. Steele, a student, trustee and supporter of Gage for more than a decade, explained her thoughts on both her motivation for the gift and the timing. “Art has always been an important part of my life, and I’ve seen firsthand the kind of transformational and creative impact that a passionate instructor and a deeply engaged arts community has on the trajectory of an individual. Whether they are a veteran artist or just starting their journey, kindergartener or senior citizen, and from every kind of background, orientation or economic means imaginable – art changes lives. I’m thrilled to be part of making that happen, and excited that this gift sets a strong foundation for Gage as it enters the threshold of its next 25 years as an arts school and cultural organization.”

Gage features programs for adults, youth and teens that engage and inspire, and is home to a year-round schedule of classes, workshops, tours, free public art events, lectures, festivals, youth programming and exhibitions, all distinguished by a renowned faculty of teaching artists, a focus on foundational, quality instruction, and a supportive environment designed to foster life learning. Gage is guided by these core values:

- The belief that artists are made, not born.
- The belief that artists need a strong and supportive community to be successful.
- The belief that cultural vibrancy builds healthier, more productive individuals and stronger, more livable communities.
- The belief that making art builds confidence, encourages tolerance and develops problem-solving skills and productivity, especially in young people.
- The belief that everyone deserves an opportunity to experience a quality arts education.

The Gage 25th Anniversary year also marks some exciting program expansions and milestones, including:

- The expansion of the innovative Atelier Programs, including sculpture with Michael Magrath and classical and digital drawing and painting with Tenaya Sims at the newest Gage satellite organization, the Georgetown Atelier.
- The Fall 2015 launch of the Gage Studio Arts Intensive, an affordable 7-month program that provides a foundation of tools and skills for serious and emerging artists
- The summer launch of a comprehensive Contemporary Atelier & workshop program with noted Northwest artist Kimberly Trowbridge
- Plans for its first digital program offerings in summer 2015
- Plans for cultural painting and study trips to Northern Italy, Detroit, London, Taiwan, Portugal and Cuba
- Expansion of its successful free Teen Art Studios to Bellevue, in partnership with the Bellevue Arts Museum

To learn more, visit GageAcademy.org, or email Mark Livingston, Communications Director, at Mark@GageAcademy.org.

MORE ABOUT ANNE STEELE AND GAGE

Anne Steele began taking classes at Gage Academy of Art in 2000, when she was introduced the beauty of drawing through longtime Gage teaching artist Margaret Davidson. Anne has also studied

at Gage with Terry Furchgott, Suzanne Brooker, Katherine Schmidt and more. In all, Anne has participated in more than 40 Gage classes, workshops, lectures and tours; and the Steele Gallery at Gage (the whitebox gallery) was named in her honor.

Anne has made numerous contributions to organizations over the years, including to Gage Academy of Art, PCI Media Impact and the Willamette Wildlife Heritage Fund. Anne believes in the power of lifelong learning, and says, “it’s a privilege to donate to things I care about.”

ABOUT GAGE ACADEMY OF ART

Gage Academy of Art is celebrating 25 years as a vibrant extended-learning and contemporary art center, providing community based artistic development for artists of all ages, abilities and economic means. Since 1989, Gage has committed itself to advancing the visual arts and artists and serving as a vibrant cultural destination. Featuring year-round programs that engage and inspire, Gage is home to public art events, lectures, youth programming and exhibitions. For more information, connect with Gage on Facebook and Twitter, or visit GageAcademy.org.

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