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## Stephanie Koch Appointed Interim Executive Director of The Luminary

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JAMES MCANALLY, PHOTO: KALAIJA MALLERY;  
STEPHANIE KOCH, PHOTO: ZAKKIYYAH  
NAJEEBAH DUMAS O'NEAL.

### STEPHANIE KOCH APPOINTED INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE LUMINARY AS FOUNDER JAMES MCANALLY DEPARTS TO LEAD COUNTERPUBLIC

Following a period of tremendous growth, The Luminary's board of directors and staff are pleased to announce a leadership transition, with founder and executive director James McAnally departing to lead the civic exhibition Counterpublic and gallery director Stephanie Koch taking over as interim director of The Luminary.

Outgoing executive director James McAnally has transitioned to establish Counterpublic as its executive and artistic director, effective May 16, 2022. McAnally will stay on The Luminary's board of directors through this transitional period. The board unanimously selected Stephanie Koch, who has served as the gallery director, to serve as The Luminary's interim executive director. A search for The Luminary's permanent executive director begins later this summer.

Koch joined The Luminary in April 2021 to oversee the exhibitions and residency programs, and has additionally dedicated her time to visioning new programs such as the Process-As-Practice and The Arts Writing Residencies, forging new institutional partnerships with The Black Embodiments Studio and Burnaway. Collaborating with The Luminary's Manager Kalaija Mallery, Koch relaunched in-person engagement after a long hiatus through an ambitious series of programming, including the opening of Know/How Books + Print and hosting Black Coffee to create more welcoming spaces in the gallery. "It is a privilege to support The Luminary's team and community in this new role. I look forward to building a stronger platform from which the incoming director can leap into a new chapter," says Koch.

Since founding The Luminary in 2007 alongside Brea Youngblood, McAnally's vision and direction of The Luminary led the organization through exponential growth, established the institution as a national leader in the field, and served as an advocate for St. Louis' arts communities. "The board is incredibly thankful for James' vision and leadership from The Luminary's founding to the present. We are delighted to see him transition to his new role of leading Counterpublic into an independent platform and continuing to have a profound impact in our local art's community and beyond," said Brent Crittenden, Board President. "We are grateful to have Stephanie Koch transition into the Interim Executive Director role and look forward to working with her and our team on

advancing The Luminary into this next stage.”

In his exit, McAnally notes that “A founding vision for The Luminary was to form a sustainable, artist-centered platform for St. Louis that would evolve with the needs of the city and of the moment. After fifteen years of exhibitions, performances, publications, residencies, regranting and mutual support initiatives, I am monumentally proud of the ways that vision has taken root and now, with Stephanie’s leadership alongside Kalajia Mallery and Sarah Nixon, am eager to embrace its next phase in a supporting role on the board.”

Founded by The Luminary in 2019, Counterpublic has incorporated into a separate 501(c)(3) to better support each platform’s role in the St. Louis arts ecosystem and to encourage more collaboration across civic, cultural and community organizations. McAnally’s full-time transition to Counterpublic comes ahead of its expanded return in April 2023 with thirty-plus artistic commissions across two dozen sites along Jefferson Avenue. The recently announced exhibition will include the first permanent public artwork from acclaimed architect Sir David Adjaye at The Griot Museum of Black History and a mile-long monument to displaced neighborhood Mill Creek Valley by Damon Davis, presented in collaboration with Great Rivers Greenway, CITY SC, Harris-Stowe State University and the City of St. Louis.

The work performed thus far by McAnally over the last 15 years comes full circle with Koch’s experience in institution building and organizational partnerships, furthering The Luminary’s reputation as a leader in the field, both regional and national.

A search for The Luminary’s permanent executive director begins on Friday, July 15th with an application close date of Friday, September 16th. You can find more information about the position [here](#) at that time.

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