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Minnesota Center for Book Arts Board of Directors Announces Search Committee for New Director

Artistic director to serve as interim executive director

(April 14, 2010) MINNEAPOLIS--Luca Gunther, chairman of the Minnesota Center for Book Arts (MCBA) board of directors, announced today that a committee has formed to conduct a search for a new executive director of the book arts center. Jeff Rathermel is interim executive director during the search. Rathermel, since 2004, is MCBA's artistic director. The search committee includes board directors Dr. Betty Bright, Pamela Johnson and Dr. Marguerite "Maggie" Ragnow.

"As we approach our 25th year celebration, The Minnesota Center for Book Arts Board sees a great opportunity to expand the reach and scope of the organization," commented Gunther, "Building upon the work of the past and in concert with recent strategic planning, the board is energized for this process."

Dr. Bright helped to start MCBA, working for nine years as program director and curator of more than 50 exhibitions. She is an independent scholar, curator and teacher with a doctorate in art history from the University of Minnesota. She is the author of the critical work, "No Longer Innocent: Book Art in America 1960-1980" (Granary Books, 2005), the first history to trace the emergence of the artist's book in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s.

Johnson has a background in arts development and artist development. Most recently she was senior associate at Cincinnatus, a Minneapolis-based strategic leadership consulting firm serving nonprofit organizations. Her work there included strategic planning and executive search for a variety of clients including the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Arts Midwest, Southern Theater, GALA Choruses, Medtronic Foundation, Minneapolis Foundation, Cargill Foundation and the Women's Foundation of Minnesota. She earned a B.A. degree from Scripps College and an M.A. degree in English from the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Ragnow is curator of the James Ford Bell Library, a member of the history department's graduate faculty at the University of Minnesota. The James Ford Bell Library documents the history and impact of international trade prior to ca. 1800 C.E. Its collection of rare books, maps and manuscripts illustrates the ways in which European cultural influences expanded worldwide, and how Europe, in turn, was influenced by other cultures around the globe. Ragnow earned her Ph.D. in medieval and early modern history at the University of Minnesota after successful careers in marketing and in small business/nonprofit accounting.

About Minnesota Center for Book Arts

MCBA opened doors to the public in 1985 and celebrates its 25th year in 2010. The largest and most comprehensive center of its kind in the nation, Minnesota Center for Book Arts celebrates the book as a vibrant contemporary art form that takes many shapes. From the traditional crafts of papermaking, letterpress printing and bookbinding to experimental artmaking and self-publishing techniques, MCBA supports the limitless creative evolution of book arts.

The mission of Minnesota Center for Book Arts is to advance the book as a vital contemporary art form, preserve the traditional crafts of bookmaking, inspire diverse artists and learners and engage audiences in educational, creative and interpretive experiences. Learn more at <http://www.mnbookarts.org>.