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***THE AMERICAN CRAFT COUNCIL WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SARAH SCHULTZ***

MINNEAPOLIS, MN – The American Craft Council is pleased to announce Sarah Schultz as its new executive director. Schultz, who has more than 25 years' experience in arts leadership, fundraising, and education, succeeds Chris Amundsen, who left the organization in September.

"Sarah is the total package," says Chuck Duddingston, who led the search committee and serves as chair of the ACC's board of trustees. "She's a thoughtful, inclusive leader who knows how to bring people together to make big things happen. We're grateful to Chris Amundsen, who did terrific work strengthening the organization. Sarah will build on his legacy, carrying the ACC forward with a fresh vision."

"The ACC has a remarkable history of celebrating and supporting craft in America," Schultz says. "I am thrilled to be working with the board and staff as we expand the reach and engagement of the organization to the incredible diversity of practices and artists working today."

Most recently, Schultz was interim vice president of public programs and education for the Friends of the High Line in New York City and a visiting curator for Mural Arts Philadelphia.

When Schultz begins as executive director April 2, it will be a homecoming of sorts: She spent more than 20 years at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, including 14 as director of education and curator of public practice. In that role, she worked with artists across many disciplines and launched such groundbreaking projects as Open Field, a four-year experimental cultural commons initiative, and Artist-Designed Mini Golf.

"Sarah's innate intelligence, her quick, bright, and creative approaches to problem-solving, her collaborative spirit and networking ingenuity, and her belief that craft is central to life are but a few of the reasons I am excited about having her as the next executive director," says Jean McLaughlin, immediate past director of Penland School of Crafts and a member of the search committee. "It's an exciting time for the Council," adds Lorne Lassiter, vice chair of the board,

noting the intensive national search and the impressive pool of candidates the position attracted.

Schultz takes on the role at a time of great change in the field, as a new generation takes the reins at many craft-oriented organizations. Coupled with that shift is an excitement among artists about new interdisciplinary approaches to making, as boundaries between art, craft, and design continue to blur; the field is also seeing a rising urgency for greater inclusiveness and adaptability. Schultz has been an outspoken proponent of innovation, networking, teamwork, and community building.

Schultz earned a BA in art history from Bucknell University, an MBA in arts administration from SUNY-Binghamton, and an MA from the University of Minnesota in art history and American studies.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN CRAFT COUNCIL

No one understands the world of artful living better than the American Craft Council. The national nonprofit educational organization has been shaping the artisanal craft movement for decades, serving as a craft chronicler, tastemaker, convener, and provocateur through its bimonthly magazine, *American Craft*, annual juried shows presenting artists and their work, thought leadership conferences, awards for excellence, research library, workshops, and seminars. For additional information, visit craftcouncil.org.

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