

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Three St. Louis Arts Organizations to Share Unexpected Multi-Million Dollar Estate Gift

ST LOUIS (January 31, 2022) Three St. Louis nonprofit arts organizations today announce that a generous and unexpected gift close to \$3 million has been bequeathed by the estate trust of Louetta A. Buechler, a long-time area resident and local artist.

The three organizations, Craft Alliance, Laumeier Sculpture Park, and St. Louis Artists' Guild, are the recipients of the bequest and will share the proceeds equally. This is one of the largest individual gifts that each of these organizations has ever received, and it will be distributed in several installments throughout 2022. Buechler, a resident of Manchester, MO passed away December 20, 2020. While she had been a loyal member and supporter of each organization for more than a decade, her generous gift came as an incredible surprise to all three.

"We are sincerely grateful to Ms. Buechler, a long-time Craft Alliance member, for this wonderful commitment to artistic excellence in the St. Louis arts community," said Mark Witzling, Executive Director of Craft Alliance. "We feel deeply fortunate that this gift allows us to further educate and enrich our community through contemporary craft."

Kathryn Nahorski, Executive Director of St. Louis Artists' Guild, notes that Ms. Buechler was a painter who participated in Artists' Guild shows and classes. She made her colorful abstract paintings in her home studio, surrounded by plants. Lou, as she was known to her close friends, filled her retirement years with her three loves: art, gardening and travel.

"We are thankful for her extraordinary gift and that she found meaningful opportunities for regional artists at the St. Louis Artists' Guild. Her generosity ensures our vibrant programming for future generations," Nahorski said.

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“With this wonderful gift, Ms. Buechler leaves a legacy that will help the St. Louis artistic community for years to come,” said Lauren Ross, Executive Director of Laumeier Sculpture Park. “It also beautifully illustrates the dramatic impact that planned giving can have. We are so grateful that she gave this level of thoughtful consideration to where she wanted her assets to continue to have an impact after her passing.”

Each organization will plan its individual use of these funds, and all expect to enhance their artistic programming for the benefit of the St. Louis community. As nonprofits, each organization relies on public and private support to fulfill their missions, including from the Arts and Education Council; the Regional Arts Commission; and the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency.

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### **ABOUT CRAFT ALLIANCE**

Craft Alliance is a non-profit art center dedicated to empowering and enriching communities through craft. From its new location in the Delmar Maker District in St. Louis, Missouri, Craft Alliance offers exhibitions, education classes for all skill levels, free community programs, artist residencies and a gallery shop. Learn more about Craft Alliance at [www.craftalliance.org](http://www.craftalliance.org).

### **ABOUT LAUMEIER SCULPTURE PARK**

Dedicated to creativity, community connections, and the restorative benefits of art and nature, Laumeier Sculpture Park serves visitors of all ages through art exhibitions, education programs, and public events. The 105-acre park is free and open daily and home to more than 70+ large-scale outdoor sculptures, interwoven amongst woodlands and trails. Founded in 1976 and located in Sunset Hills in St. Louis County, Laumeier is one of the first and largest sculpture parks in the country. It is an internationally recognized, nonprofit arts organization, accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. Learn more about Laumeier Sculpture Park at [www.laumeier.org](http://www.laumeier.org).

### **ABOUT ST. LOUIS ARTISTS' GUILD**

The St. Louis Artists' Guild, established in 1886, inspires art experiences through extraordinary exhibitions, interactive education, outreach to diverse audiences and by fostering creativity throughout the community. Its gallery and classrooms in Clayton serves both artists and art appreciators, by providing opportunities to display their work and teach while achieving our mission in raising awareness of artistic expression. Learn more about St. Louis Artists' Guild at [www.stlouisartistsguild.org](http://www.stlouisartistsguild.org).

