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## California College of the Arts President Stephen Beal Announces Retirement



CCA President Stephen Beal in the studio.

**San Francisco, CA—February 8, 2023**—After fifteen years leading one of the nation's most prominent schools of art and design, President Stephen Beal announced today that he plans to retire as the ninth president of California College of the Arts (CCA). Steve has led the college through a remarkable period of growth and transformation, and will be leaving CCA in a position of strength.

Beal joined CCA in 1997 as Provost and was appointed President in 2008. He will continue to serve as president until a new leader is appointed. Upon retirement he plans to devote more time to his painting practice, travel, and his family. Former CCA Board Chair C. Diane Christensen will serve as chair of the search for CCA's next president.

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**California  
College  
of the Arts**



CCA President Stephen Beal participating in a class with students on campus.

### **Beal Comments on His Decision**

“This is a time of unprecedented opportunity at CCA and in higher education,” said Beal. “For the past twenty-five years—ten years as provost and now fifteen as president—I have had the privilege of helping us prepare for this exciting moment. With the Board’s approval of the next phase of expansion of our San Francisco campus, it is time for me to focus on supporting the search for, and successful installation of, CCA’s next president. I have come to this decision after a period of intense reflection, which only bolstered my confidence that CCA is ready, and so am I.”

Beal continued, “Being president of CCA has been, and continues to be, one of the world’s great jobs. It will be difficult to step down, but I am very proud of what the CCA community—faculty, staff, students, alumni, and trustees—has accomplished in the last 25 years. CCA is widely regarded by our peers as one of the global leaders in progressive studio-based arts education, and interest in the college only continues to grow. I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the CCA community for their hard work in helping us get to this point, and for the support they have given me throughout my time here.”

### **Board Chair Calas on Beal’s Tenure**

"Steve Beal has been an energetic, passionate, and inspiring leader for CCA," stated Lorna Meyer Calas, chair of CCA's Board of Trustees. "He has led us through a remarkable period of growth and change at the college and in the broader higher education landscape. His achievements include unprecedented expansion of the college's programs and facilities including unification of operations in San Francisco, implementation of key academic initiatives, development of key important industry and community partnerships, and that largest capital campaign in CCA history. On behalf of the entire CCA community I thank him for his contributions as president, provost, and faculty member. I'm grateful that he will continue to lead until we find a successor, which will make for a smooth transition. Because of Steve's

tremendous efforts and the robust leadership team he has put in place, the college is in an excellent position to attract strong candidates.”

### **Nearly Two Decades of Leadership at CCA**

Stephen Beal was appointed provost in 1997 and president in May 2008. Highlights of his successful tenure at CCA include:

- The development of a strategic framework for long-range campus planning that has guided CCA's path forward as a leader in arts education.
- Establishment of 18 new academic programs, including undergraduate programs in Animation, Interaction Design, and Writing/Literature and graduate programs in Architecture, Curatorial Practice, Design, and Writing, as well as the ground-breaking MBA in Design Strategy.
- A commitment to the expansion, development and retention of an internationally recognized full-time faculty.
- A strong commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB), which included the hiring of CCA's first Vice President of DEIB.
- A near doubling of the student body during his tenure, from 1998 to today.
- Unification of CCA's academic and residential programming on its San Francisco campus. This included design and construction of two campus-adjacent residence halls housing 700 students, new studio space for the Wattis Institute, and the fall 2022 groundbreaking on Double Ground, the Studio Gang-designed facility that will offer 100,000 sq. ft. of studio, classroom, and community space.
- Leadership fundraising with the board of trustees raising over \$140M in funds including \$120M for the *Maker/Meets/Future Campaign* supporting student scholarships and the campus and program expansion in San Francisco – surpassing CCA's previous fundraising campaign record by fourfold.
- Creation of partnerships with leading art schools in China including the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, China Academy in Hangzhou, and Luxun Academy of Arts in Shenyang.
- Partnering with the board on the evolution and increased diversity and number of [alumni members](#).
- Expansion of alumni engagement through the creation of a range of new programs and groups including the President's Alumni Advisory Committee.

Other public program initiatives during his tenure include the launching of the [CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts](#) and incorporation of the Capp Street Program, as well as the establishment of the [Center for Art and Public Life](#) and [Creative Citizens in Action](#).

### **About Stephen Beal**

Beal has more than four decades of experience in art and design education leadership. He came to CCA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), where he was vice president of academic planning and associate vice president of academic affairs. Previous to that he was chair of SAIC's graduate division, chair of its post-baccalaureate program, and a member of the painting faculty.

In addition to his prolific academic career, Beal is a practicing artist whose work has been exhibited nationally, including at galleries such as George Lawson in Los Angeles and New Museum Los Gatos. Beal holds an MFA from SAIC. Beal currently serves on the advisory board at the Asia Society Northern California and is a trustee emeritus of the Creative Growth Art Center in Oakland. He also served on the board of trustees at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco and as an advisor to the American Film Institute in Los Angeles. He and his wife, Dee Hoover, reside in the East Bay. They have two children.

[More on Stephen Beal](#)

### **About California College of the Arts**

Founded in 1907, California College of the Arts (CCA) is an ambitious art and design school that educates students to shape culture and society through the practice and critical study of art, architecture, design, and writing. Located in the design center of San Francisco, the college prepares students for lifelong creative work by cultivating innovation, community engagement, and social and environmental responsibility.

CCA recently unified its two campuses, bringing together its academic and residential programs in one vibrant urban neighborhood hub. CCA is in the construction phase of a new building designed by the award-winning architecture firm Studio Gang. This new building will create new adjacencies and interactions while inviting yet-to-be-discovered modes of making, teaching and learning.

CCA offers 22 undergraduate and 11 graduate programs in the areas of fine arts, architecture, design, and writing. CCA enrolls students from 41 countries and 43 states and is ranked among the top 25 most diverse colleges in the U.S.

CCA faculty are accomplished educators, academics, practitioners, and researchers with a breadth and depth of expertise that inspires students to take creative risks in the pursuit of purposeful work.

Noted alumni include the artists Nathan Oliveira, Jules de Balincourt, Robert Arneson, Robert Bechtle, Viola Frey, and Peter Voukos; the Oscar-winning filmmaker Audrey Marrs; the illustrator Tomie de Paola; conceptual artists Hank Willis-Thomas, David Ireland, and Dennis Oppenheim; and the designers Lucille Tenazas, Michael Vanderbyl, and Gary Hutton. For more information about CCA, visit [cca.edu](http://cca.edu).

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