



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Announcement of Scherman Foundation Board Leadership Changes



(June 16, 2021) NEW YORK, NY – The Scherman Foundation announced today that Dr. Karen R. Sollins has stepped down from her position as Chair of its Board of Directors. The Foundation gratefully recognizes Dr. Sollins’ 43 years of distinguished service, as Chair (1997-present), as President (1993-1997), and as a director (1978-1993). During her tenure, Dr. Sollins brought enormous intelligence, dedication, and compassion to the work of the Foundation, guiding it through numerous changes and challenges.

Dr. Sollins’ tenure as the Foundation’s Chair was marked by the creation of the Rosin Fund, a distinct project-oriented grant program, as well as a significant expansion of grantmaking in areas such as the environment, arts, and arts infrastructure, and most recently the initiation of a new focus area in protecting and fostering democracy. Her work has both carried on and refreshed the vision and legacy of her father, Axel Rosin, and her grandfather, Harry Scherman. The Board, staff, and most importantly, the grantees of the Scherman Foundation are forever appreciative of her contributions.

Succeeding Dr. Sollins as Chair is Marianna Schaffer. Ms. Schaffer joined the board as a director in 2019 and has since invigorated its decision-making with her creative thinking, strong voice, and nearly 20 years of experience as a philanthropic nonprofit sector leader.

“I am excited to bring my vision and energy to the Foundation and its mission. I look forward to working with the staff and board in their ongoing efforts to support a more just, equitable, democratic, and sustainable society,” said Ms. Schaffer.

Ms. Schaffer is the Vice President of Programs at the Dodge Foundation, where she is a critical leader in providing oversight and management of all programmatic activities. In her role, she ensures alignment with Foundation goals and values focused on root cause and repair of structural racism and inequity in New Jersey.

Prior to her current position at Dodge, she was the inaugural Director of Artist Initiatives at Creative Capital, an organization that provides adventurous artists across the country with substantial financial and capacity-building grants. While there, she ushered in the widest national diversity of applicants, awarded artists, and practitioners in the organization's history.

Ms. Schaffer was Program Officer at the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, where she worked with individual artists and small arts organizations at the intersection of arts and social justice. She also managed the New Climate Initiative, a partnership with the Sundance Institute focused on climate change-related media projects. Before joining Rauschenberg, Ms. Schaffer was Director of Programs at the David Rockefeller Fund. There she oversaw day-to-day operations and grantmaking focused on arts access and engagement, criminal justice reform, and climate justice and advocacy.

In addition to the Scherman Foundation, Ms. Schaffer serves on the Board of Directors of HI-ARTS and Outdoor Empowered Network.

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