

FOR INFORMATION

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- **VCCA selects new Executive Director: Gregory Allgire Smith**
- **Nationwide search began in March**
- **Mr. Smith assumes position October 1, 2011**
- **VCCA is one of largest artists' communities in the nation**



**VCCA ANNOUNCES GREGORY ALLGIRE SMITH
As New Executive Director**

(Amherst, VA) Following a nationwide search that began in March, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts today announced the appointment of Gregory Allgire Smith as its new Executive Director.

Mr. Smith, who bested a field of more than 100 highly qualified competitors, has thirty years' experience in the nonprofit arts sector, twenty of them as chief executive. He has focused on raising arts organizations to a higher level of programmatic service, public recognition and financial stability, while continually broadening their network of advocates.

Mr. Smith ran the Art Academy of Cincinnati, which grew and prospered significantly under his 15-year leadership. At the Telfair Museum in Savannah, Georgia, he broadened community engagement and launched the creation of a contemporary art museum to complement the historic Telfair Academy and Owens-Thomas House.

Tina Walls, president of the VCCA Board, said board members felt Mr. Smith's vision, experience in all aspects of arts administration, and proven ability to engage the arts community and its supporters would be a tremendous asset to VCCA. "It was a rigorous search by a very dedicated committee, but Greg's passion for the arts and his wide-ranging experience in arts education, management and fundraising made him an outstanding choice for taking VCCA to the next level of its growth."

VCCA's current executive director, Suny Monk, is retiring on October 17 after fourteen years of excellent service and dedication. "Suny's built such a solid and inspiring foundation for her successor to build on," said Mr. Smith, "that taking on this new role is doubly an honor and a pleasure...I am extremely excited to be named the new executive director of VCCA, an organization with such stature of service to artists over the past forty years and potential for continued greatness in the coming years. VCCA's mission, the high caliber of artists drawn to it as Fellows, the devoted and hard-working board and staff members, and the stunningly beautiful location--all of these factors make me thankful for my new professional role. My wife Susan and I look forward to becoming part of the Blue Ridge area and the arts of Virginia."

Nestled in Amherst County, Virginia, VCCA is one of the largest artists' communities in the United States, and the US leader in international arts exchange programs. Every year, over 350 writers, composers and visual artists come to VCCA from all across America and around the globe to work on books, plays, paintings, sculpture and music. The fruits of their labors have graced libraries, bookstores, theaters, galleries and concert halls from Virginia to New York to California to Europe; and they have won an immense variety of prestigious awards, including the Pulitzer Prize and the MacArthur "Genius Grant"