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## **The Hobby Center Foundation Announces Resignation of President & CEO Fran Macfarren**

*The Hobby Center Foundation to conduct nationwide search for new President & CEO*

HOUSTON—December 28, 2021—The Hobby Center Foundation today announced that President & CEO Fran Macferran will leave the Hobby Center effective December 31. Macferran will re-engage the consulting business he established prior to accepting his position at The Hobby Center nearly 17 years ago. The Hobby Center Foundation will conduct a nationwide search for a new President & CEO in 2022.

Macfarren was appointed as President & CEO in 2005. During his tenure, Macfarren applied his accounting and business background, and his extensive experience in live entertainment to evolve the organization's business model. This included Macferran's renegotiation of the Hobby Center's strategic relationships and his creation of a VIP donor program.

Among other achievements, Macferran led the development of the Autism Theater Initiative which debuted in 2012. This program provides performance experiences specifically tailored for those with sensory sensitivities and their families in a welcoming and supportive environment. To date, the Hobby Center has offered sensory friendly presentation of *The Lion King*, *The Radio City Christmas Spectacular* and *Disney's Aladdin*, as well as other shows. Houston and the Hobby Center were the first to provide an autism friendly performance of a nationally touring production with the presentation of *The Lion King*.

"We are grateful for Fran's leadership of the Hobby Center Foundation and the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts," says Stephen Ash, immediate past -Chairman. "Fran, with the support of the executive leadership team, leaves the organization in a strong financial position in spite of COVID related challenges. Fran's passion and dedication to the Hobby Center is deeply appreciated, and we wish him the very best."

New Chairman of the Board of Directors, Rob Doty, adds, "Over the past several years, the Hobby Center has been fortunate to have assembled a senior executive leadership team which is second to none in the industry, and we are grateful to have such an extraordinary team in place to help shepherd the Hobby Center into its next phase of leadership."

"I feel I have contributed my best to the Hobby Center, and I support the leadership team and board as they look to the future," states Macferran. "I am looking forward to new challenges, including consulting with other arts organizations."

A search committee will be organized to recruit a new President & CEO. Inquiries regarding the search can be directed to Kimberly Cutchall at [kimberly@ultdgroup.com](mailto:kimberly@ultdgroup.com).

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**The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts** is operated by the Hobby Center Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Its mission is to expand Houston's reputation as a world-class cultural center by providing a premier performing arts facility, fostering accessibility to the performing arts and promoting arts education, with an emphasis on musical theatre. The complex houses two performance chambers, an on-site restaurant, Diana American Grill, and an 800-car capacity on-premise parking garage. Please visit [TheHobbyCenter.org](http://TheHobbyCenter.org).