

Phoenix Art Museum

News Release

MEDIA CONTACT:

Nikki DeLeon, Director of Marketing and Communications
602.257.2112 | nikki.deleon@phxart.org

Phoenix Art Museum to exhibit world-famous baseball card collection

Exhibition includes the Honus Wagner T206, one of the most sought-after trading cards in sports history

PHOENIX (February 23, 2016) – Phoenix Art Museum will feature a specially-ticketed limited-engagement exhibition of some of the rarest and most important baseball cards in the history of the sport beginning March 9 through April 24. Drawn from the Diamondbacks Collection, carefully and painstakingly amassed by Ken Kendrick, longtime collector and managing general partner of the Arizona Diamondbacks, *The Ultimate Collection: Iconic Baseball Cards from the Diamondbacks Collection* features 16 of the top 20 rated sports trading cards in the entire world, along with an additional 25 highly-valued and prized baseball trading cards. The exhibition will include baseball's rarest and most famous collectible: a T206 Honus Wagner trading card, once owned by hockey legend Wayne Gretzky.

"It is truly a magnificent opportunity to bring a collection of this cultural significance to Phoenix Art Museum and to our community," said Amada Cruz, the Museum's Sybil Harrington Director. "Mr. Kendrick's collection transcends the field of sports and honors the art of collecting, and the unique enthusiasm that fuels collectors of every kind."

Kendrick got his start as a collector as a young boy growing up in small-town West Virginia, purchasing nickel-packs of trading cards on summertime trips to the five-and-dime with his boyhood friends, as much for the bubble gum as for the cards. Kendrick, who grew up playing Little League and listening to baseball games on the radio with his father, began to amass a collection of cards that featured the players he followed during the 1950s. As he got older, he stepped away from collecting cards, only to discover as an adult that his mother had saved the cards he'd collected as a young man. It was those cards that would be the foundation of a pursuit that has now spanned decades, and would become The Diamondbacks Collection, named in honor of the Arizona team that Kendrick became part owner of in 1995 and managing general partner of in 2004.

The roster of cards that compose the collection is truly staggering, including 16 of the 20 rarest and highly prized trading cards in the history of sports. The collection includes Topps rookie cards for Baseball Hall of Fame inductees Mickey Mantle, Henry "Hank" Aaron, and Sandy Koufax. It also includes a rare Bowman 1954 Ted Williams card, along with cards representing some of the most legendary and iconic names in the history of the game, including Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, Jackie Robinson, Lou Gehrig, Satchel Paige, Joe DiMaggio, and Willie Mays. It also includes a single basketball card: a 1986 Fleer #57 Michael Jordan card, considered by many to be the greatest player in the history of the NBA.

The Ultimate Collection marks the first time Kendrick's collection has been exhibited west of the Mississippi, and the first time it has been formally exhibited in its home state of Arizona. Previously, the exhibition was on view at the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York for three years, before closing in 2013.

The exhibition rounds out the Museum's first celebration of the art of collecting as part of Collectors Month in April 2016, honoring collections of many kinds. It will coincide with the opening of *Phoenix Rising: The Valley Collects*, an exhibition that features the best of Valley art collections from a multitude of genres and media, and the annual Copperstate 1000, a vintage-car rally that raises funds to support the Museum and features exquisitely restored collector's cars.

For many, the stories of why collectors collect, where their passions were first ignited are often even more intriguing and fascinating than the objects themselves. Along with the thrill of the pursuit of the cards on the path to possession, for

Kendrick, the cards represent the love of a game that ultimately tied him to his late father. Today, the collection has become an intergenerational connection for Kendrick and his own children.

“More than anything, baseball was to me one of those great links I had to my father. When I see these cards today, it makes me think back to my youth and most of all, it makes me remember my father, listening to games together on the radio, and sometimes traveling to see Reds games in Cincinnati,” Kendrick recounts. “Today, these cards represent a legacy for my own children. They represent family stories and memories. I’m excited for the collection to be on view at the Museum because I hope it can connect other families together. I hope to see fathers bringing their sons and daughters, grandfathers bringing their grandchildren to come and see the collection, to share their stories and memories with the next generation.”

About the Exhibition

The Ultimate Collection: Iconic Baseball Cards from the Diamondbacks Collection is organized by Phoenix Art Museum. It is made possible through the generosity of Earl G. “Ken” Kendrick and the Arizona Diamondbacks. Tickets for the exhibition are \$8 plus required General Museum Admission which varies according to age and student status. For information on general admission, visit phxart.org/visit/hours_admission_location. The special ticket also includes admission to all other special engagement exhibitions during the life of *The Ultimate Collection*, including *Michelangelo: Sacred and Profane* (through March 27), and *Super Indian: Fritz Scholder 1967-1980*. The tickets can be reserved online at tickets.phxart.org. Admission into *The Ultimate Collection* is free for all Museum Members. To become a Member of Phoenix Art Museum, visit phxart.org/membership.

Images, Checklist and Interviews

Press images are available upon request, and include images of some of the most iconic cards in the collection, including Honus Wagner, Mickey Mantle and others. For a complete list of featured trading cards that will be featured from the Diamondbacks Collection or to request interviews with Mr. Kendrick, contact Nikki DeLeon, Director of Marketing and Communications at Phoenix Art Museum at 602.257.2112 or nikki.deleon@phxart.org. Interview requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the collector and may take up to three to five business days to schedule.

About Phoenix Art Museum

Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for more than 50 years and is the largest art museum in the Southwestern United States. In addition to an annual calendar of special exhibitions, Phoenix Art Museum’s permanent collection galleries are drawn from more than 18,000 objects of modern and contemporary art, fashion design, and photography, as well as American, Asian, Latin American, and European art. Each month, the Museum hosts a wide variety of public programs, including lectures, performances, tours, workshops, and film screenings designed for audiences of all ages to enjoy.

###