

George Lucas and Mellody Hobson

Co-founders and Co-chairs of the Board, Lucas Museum of Narrative Art



*George Lucas, photo by Jamel Toppin © Skywalker Properties Ltd. LLC;
Mellody Hobson, courtesy of Ariel Investments*

For filmmaker George Lucas and Mellody Hobson, co-CEO and president of Ariel Investments, collecting art is a shared passion. Prior to their 2013 marriage, Hobson had been building a collection focused on contemporary African American works, including pieces by Kara Walker, Gary Simmons, and Norman Lewis. Lucas has spent five-plus decades collecting American art and popular illustrative, comic, cinematic, and animation art, including works by Norman Rockwell, Thomas Hart Benton, Frank Frazetta, Jacob Lawrence, Winsor McCay, Gordon Parks, and Maxfield Parrish. The collection they began assembling together sits at the intersection of their shared interests, including works by Tamara de Lempicka, Robert Indiana, Carrie Mae Weems, Frida Kahlo, Jean-Michel Basquiat, and Chuck Close, among others.

The creator of *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones*, Lucas has invented characters and stories that have become bedrocks of contemporary global culture. He revolutionized the film industry by forming Industrial Light & Magic to create the visual effects for *Star Wars* and furthered innovation in film and television sound through the creation of Skywalker Sound. Taking a philanthropic leadership role in applying his technical and storytelling expertise to the classroom, Lucas founded the George Lucas Educational Foundation in 1991 to transform K–12 education for all students. In addition to co-founding and serving as the co-chair of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, Lucas serves on the boards of the Film Foundation and the USC School of Cinematic Arts.

Hobson is responsible for management, strategic planning, and growth for all areas of Ariel. Additionally, she chairs the board of Ariel Investments' publicly traded mutual funds. Beyond Ariel, she serves as a

director of JPMorgan Chase and is the former chair of Starbucks Corporation. She is a well-recognized financial literacy advocate and wrote a *New York Times* bestselling children's book, *Priceless Facts about Money*, to demystify money for young readers. Mellody's community outreach includes her role as chairman of After School Matters, a Chicago non-profit that provides area teens with high-quality after-school and summer programs. She is also co-chair of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art and a board member of Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Center for Strategic & International Studies, the George Lucas Educational Foundation, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Mission 44 US.

In 2010, Lucas and Hobson signed the Giving Pledge, committing themselves to dedicate the majority of their wealth to improving education. "Our goal is to support continued innovations in education that help open the imaginations of students young and old and inspire them to dream beyond what is considered possible," Lucas has said. Lucas and Hobson are especially interested in using the arts as a means of making education emotionally meaningful.

With this mission in mind, the couple co-founded the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, a new museum currently under construction in Los Angeles. Together, the couple pledged a seed collection to the museum, in addition to the Lucas Archives, and have provided extensive funds for the museum's acquisition program.

"The stories that art tells are often key to understanding a society and its aspirations—whether our own or others," Lucas has said. "We hope the Lucas Museum will help audiences better understand the world and build toward a more just and empathetic society."

Hobson and Lucas have also made major gifts to the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools for the construction of an arts building named for noted photographer and filmmaker Gordon Parks, the USC School of Cinematic Arts, the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, and After School Matters.