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*Legacy in Motion*

## **Executive Leadership Transition F.A.Q**

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### **Why is Laurel Raczka stepping down now? Is this part of a long-term plan or a response to external pressures?**

Laurel Raczka's decision to retire at the end of 2025 follows a long-considered transition plan developed with the Painted Bride's Board of Directors. This is not a response to crisis or external pressure—it reflects thoughtful timing, legacy stewardship, and a shared commitment to long-term sustainability. Laurel has led the Bride with vision and care for over two decades, and this next step honors both her contributions and the organization's future.

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### **What is the leadership transition timeline?**

A national search is already underway to appoint the next Executive Director well before Laurel's planned retirement at the end of 2025. This timeline ensures ample opportunity for onboarding, relationship-building, and organizational continuity.

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### **What will the onboarding process look like?**

The Bride is committed to a mission-aligned onboarding process. The incoming Executive Director will receive an in-depth orientation on the organization's history, programming approach, finances, and community partnerships. Laurel and key stakeholders will help guide the handoff, ensuring the new leader is well-supported as they step into the role.

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### **What role will Laurel play during the transition? Will she remain involved after retirement?**

Laurel will remain in her current role through the end of 2025 to help facilitate a smooth and intentional transition. While her formal leadership will conclude, the Board is exploring with her the possibility of a future advisory or ambassadorial role, grounded in mutual respect and organizational need.

**Who is leading the search process for the next Executive Director?**

The Board of Directors initiated a succession planning process over a year ago and is now conducting a national search to identify the next Executive Director. A Board-appointed search committee is focused on finding a candidate whose vision, values, and leadership style align with the Bride's artist-centered, equity-driven mission.

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**Is this transition a sign of organizational instability or a shift in mission?**

Not at all. The Bride remains financially stable, strategically grounded, and deeply rooted in its values. This transition reflects strength, not crisis. Our mission remains unchanged: to support artists, amplify underrepresented voices, and foster transformation through art. What's evolving is how we structure our leadership and operations to sustain that mission for generations to come.

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