



## **BOB WEIS WILL BE HONORED WITH 2024 SKLAR CREATIVE VISIONARY AWARD**

**(Los Angeles) April 4, 2024** -- The 4<sup>th</sup> annual **Marty & Leah Sklar Creative Visionary Award** will be presented to Bob Weis, a philanthropist, creative leader, and longtime champion of Ryman Arts at Celebration of the Arts.

The Sklar Creative Visionary Award is presented annually by Ryman Arts to an individual whose distinctive contribution to the creative community and whose leadership in the art world has made a significant impact. Bob Weis, whose impact on the community has been tremendous, truly exemplifies this award. Bob spent 35 years as an Imagineer, including 6 years as President, and a year as Imagineering Global Ambassador and currently leads Global Entertainment at Gensler.

During his time at Disney, Bob led more than 200 major projects around the world. From the U.S. to Shanghai, Tokyo to Paris, his design and innovation imprint has been indelibly left on theme parks, attractions and rides, resorts, and cruise ships. He has also consulted with major clients including Smithsonian, National Geographic, NASA, and the United States Navy, among others. In 2022, Weis took on the role of Global Imagineering Ambassador, following in the footsteps of one of his mentors, Disney Legend and former WDI president Marty Sklar and co-founder of Ryman Arts, who was the first to hold the ambassador title.

Bob Weis's connection to Ryman Arts stretches all the way back to meeting the legendary Herbert D. Ryman on the patio of WED (now Walt Disney Imagineering), to supporting the annual Ryman Arts fundraisers at co-founders Marty and Leah Sklar's home, to today. He has been a champion of Ryman Arts' diverse community of students for decades, creating and personally funding the Hani El-Masri award which recognizes an outstanding Ryman Arts student each year who is an immigrant to the United States, and which celebrates the life of the late Imagineer and artist Hani El-Masri. Bob spearheaded the preservation of the Marty Sklar Archives and has used his master storyteller skills to bring Herb Ryman's legacy to life.

"We can think of no other individual who encapsulates the lifelong dedication to inspiring others through leadership and who is actively paving a way for future generations to be creative visionaries for our community. Bob is the ideal person to receive the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Sklar Creative Visionary Award." – David A. Price, Ryman Arts Board President.

The Marty & Leah Sklar Creative Visionary Award is presented annually to an individual of singular creative vision and leadership who has made a distinctive contribution to the creative community: illuminating, inspiring, and expanding the impact, relevance and reach of the arts through their work and creative vision. Created in 2018, it is named for two visionaries who were co-founders of Ryman Arts. Leah Sklar has been active in community and educational initiatives throughout her life, including a key role in the development of Ryman Arts' mission and program. Marty Sklar was the legendary President of Walt Disney Imagineering, leading the creation of Disney theme parks around the world. Previous honorees of this award include Kevin Feige of Marvel Studios, Hayao Miyazaki of Studio Ghibli, and Academy Award-winning costume designer Ruth E. Carter.

Ryman Arts, a Los Angeles-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has engaged over 38,000 youth from diverse communities around Southern California since 1990 through its core studio art program and outreach activities, helping them prepare for a creative life through college and beyond. Many alumni currently work in positions in the creative and arts field.

The Sklar Creative Visionary Award will be presented at Celebration of the Arts on Thursday, April 4, 2024, 5:30 – 10 PM. Grand Central Air Terminal, 1310 Air Way, Glendale, CA 91201. Tickets will be available to the public and go on sale, February 29, 2024.

This event will be an affair of creativity and a celebration of the artistic journey, inviting guests to honor and celebrate our Visionary Award recipient, Bob Weis, while perusing the artwork of artists in our community. All proceeds from the evening will benefit Ryman Arts.

## **BACKGROUND:**

**Ryman Arts** transforms lives by creating access and opportunity for a diverse community of young artists through rigorous education in fundamental art skills and mentoring – at no cost to the students. Almost all graduates go to college, many go on to work in creative industries, and all are poised for personal success. A nationally recognized non-profit organization, Ryman Arts was founded in 1990 to honor the legacy of legendary Disney artist Herbert D. Ryman. Their mission is to reach students with the greatest need to ensure all young artist reach their full potential. Ryman Arts is a 501(c)(3). For more details about Ryman Arts or the 2024 Celebration of the Arts, visit: [rymanarts.org](https://rymanarts.org)

**Bob Weis** leads Global Entertainment for Gensler. As former President of Walt Disney Imagineering, Bob brings more than 30 years of leadership creating, designing, and developing some of Disney’s most iconic projects around the globe. His experience in pioneering large-scale groundbreaking and story-driven experiences further expands Gensler’s ability to drive design innovation that meaningfully shapes the human experience.

In leading Entertainment at Gensler, Bob collaborates with the firm’s global leaders to envision and bring to life unique experiences for clients spanning across Gensler’s 33 practice areas, including entertainment, lifestyle, hospitality, retail, sport, mixed-use, cultural institutions, wellness, and workplace.

Bob has been recognized with numerous industry accolades and awards and remains closely connected to his Disney roots. Bob is the recipient of multiple honors from the Themed Park Association, including Best New Theme Park for Shanghai Disney Resort and the Buzz Price Lifetime Achievement Award. He has been awarded an honorary Ph.D. from Cal Poly School of Environmental Design, where he graduated with a degree in Architecture.

**Celebration of the Arts:** A visionary evening supporting Ryman Arts

“Be inordinately infatuated with the world—its people, its history, and geography. Let your eyes speak to your heart and your heart to your hand.” – Herbert D. Ryman

We welcome Travelers to an event at the Grand Central Air Terminal, on April 4, 2024, where they’ll be swept up in an exhilarating circle of creativity inspired by the legendary artist Herbert Ryman. Herb’s work inspired a group of his dearest friends and enthusiasts to create an educational enterprise, Ryman Arts, to “pay forward” the idea that every generation should have the opportunity to discover the joy of art and living a creative life that illuminates the spirit and soul of our communities and world. Guests will become a part of this dynamic celebration as

they participate in the unique art show, bidding on and winning art, enjoying little seen Herb Ryman artwork in a curated exhibit, savoring hors d'oeuvres and signature cocktails as they mingle with legendary artists, Ryman Arts alumni, and meet the next generation of artists who will do things still greater than what has gone before.

This event will begin a new 21st century tradition for Ryman Arts bringing the legacy of this event back home to the Walt Disney Imagineering Campus. The highlight of the Celebration of the Arts event will be the honoring of the 4th annual Sklar Creative Visionary Award to philanthropist, creative leader, and visionary Bob Weis.

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