Memphis Art Museum to Debut *First Draft*, a New Café for Coffee, Creativity, and Connection

First Draft media kit
MAM media kit

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (November 9, 2026) – In anticipation of its grand opening on December 6, 2026, Memphis Art Museum today announced First Draft, the new lobby cafe where coffee, creativity, and community come together. Open seven days a week at the museum's new riverfront home, First Draft will feature artisan collaborations with Comeback Beverage and Bob's Bakery.

First Draft is one of the many ways visitors can make Memphis Art Museum part of their everyday lives. No admission is required to visit the cafe or enjoy the museum's free public spaces, making it easy to stop in for coffee, spend time in Hyde Square, or take in views of the Mississippi River. Shelby County residents also receive free gallery admission, while convenient on-site parking is available to all visitors.

Inspired by the earliest stages of the creative process, First Draft takes its name from the idea that every great work begins somewhere. Designed as an inviting place for visitors to work through an idea or settle in with a sketchbook while surrounded by art, the cafe will encourage visitors to embrace their own creativity.

That same spirit of creativity extends to the cafe's local partners. Comeback Beverage has developed a custom coffee roast exclusively for Memphis Art Museum, served alongside fresh pastries and savory offerings made daily by Bob's Bakery. The menu will also feature grab-and-go lunch options, espresso drinks, matcha and seasonal specialties, with additional items to be announced.

First Draft will complement the museum's restaurant, operated by the owners of Memphis favorites Ecco, Tonica and Libro, offering visitors additional dining options throughout the day.

Founded by Memphis natives Hayes and Amy McPherson in 2019, Comeback Beverage began in the city's Pinch District. Since then, it has expanded into coffee roasting and developed a line of canned coffee sodas that are now sold nationwide.

“We’re excited to create a coffee blend for art lovers and everyone who steps through the museum’s doors,” said Hayes McPherson, Co-Founder of Comeback Beverage. “The museum has shaped how our co-founder Amy and I approach design and artistry. We grew up walking the galleries of the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, inspired to create something impactful.”

Specializing in sweet and savory pies, Bob’s Bakery by Tonica opened in July 2026 on South Front Street. Founder Shari Haley began her culinary career at 16.

“I’ve always believed that baking is more than just creating something sweet,” said Shari Haley, Founder of Bob's Bakery. “It’s telling a story, sharing a piece of myself, and turning simple ingredients into something people enjoy.”

The menu will include scones and savory hand pies, with cinnamon rolls available on weekends.

“Every flavor and every baked good we put out is a reflection of my love for cooking and my family,” added Haley. “When the opportunity to open Bob’s Bakery came up this year, I knew my family had to be part of it. We named it after our late father, Bob, and two of my sisters help me with the day-to-day baking and front-of-house service.”

Museum members can enjoy complimentary drip coffee at First Draft. Information about becoming a Founding Member is available at memphis.art/founder.

Memphis Art Museum and First Draft open on December 6, 2026 at 55 S. Front Street. For full hours and visitor information, visit memphisartmuseum.org.

ABOUT MEMPHIS ART MUSEUM
Opening on December 6, 2026, Memphis Art Museum ushers in a new era for art, culture and civic life in Memphis. Designed by Herzog & de Meuron with archimania as architect of record, the new Memphis Art Museum expands the institution’s current gallery space by 50 percent and significantly increases public access, offering six times more art-filled free public space than its current location. The new 2-acre urban campus, situated on a reconstructed bluff along the Mississippi River, will feature a 10,000-square-foot community courtyard, a 50,000-square-foot rooftop art garden, expanded galleries, new light-filled education spaces, an outdoor amphitheater with stunning river views and an expansive pedestrian plaza. Nearly all of the museum’s public-facing amenities, including the store, café, lobby and galleries, are on one level to bring more accessible arts experiences to Memphis. More than a museum, it is a place where creativity and shared experiences bring people together, inviting Memphians and visitors alike to engage with the transformative power of art.

Memphis Art Museum is one of the leading art museums in the American South. Its collection of more than 10,000 works spans five millennia and six continents, including ancient works from Greece, Rome and the Ancient Americas; Renaissance masterpieces from Italy; English portraiture; American painting and decorative arts; contemporary art and African Diasporic art. For more information visit memphisartmuseum.org.

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