

NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
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WASHINGTON April 17: Chester Dale, President of the National Gallery of Art, announced today the appointment of John Walker as Director of the Gallery to take effect on July 1, 1956 when David E. Finley, Director since 1938, will retire. Since 1939 Mr. Walker has been an Executive Officer and the Chief Curator of the National Gallery of Art. During the construction of the National Gallery of Art Mr. Walker was a member of a committee representing the Trustees of the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, who provided the funds to erect the building.

In speaking of Mr. Walker's appointment, Mr. Finley said: "I am delighted that John Walker is to be the next director of the National Gallery of Art. He has a distinguished position in the art world of this country and Europe. He has a brilliant mind and is eminently qualified by training and experience and by his warm and friendly personality to carry on the development of the National Gallery. We have been closely associated since the Gallery was established and have worked together in planning the building, the installation of the works of art, and in the growth of the collection on which he has left the indelible imprint of his knowledge and taste. He deserves the honor

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that has come to him and the National Gallery will be fortunate in having him as its director."

Mr. Walker was born in Pittsburgh in 1906, graduated from Harvard in 1930, and continued his graduate studies in Florence as a John Harvard Fellow under Bernard Berenson, the greatest living critic of Italian art. From 1935-1939 Mr. Walker was in charge of the Department of Fine Arts at the American Academy in Rome. He has written the following books: Great American Paintings from Smibert to Bellows (with Macgill James), 1943; Masterpieces of Painting from the National Gallery of Art (with Huntington Cairns), 1944; Paintings from America, 1951; Great Paintings from the National Gallery of Art (with Huntington Cairns), 1952; National Gallery of Art, 1956; and Bellini and Titian in Ferrara, to be published in the autumn of 1956. He has also contributed articles to many magazines and reviews.

During the war Mr. Walker was Special Adviser to the American Commission for Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas; he is on the Council of the Gazette des Beaux Arts and is a Trustee of the American Academy in Rome, the American Federation of Arts, the Bureau of University Travel, and is a member of the Visiting Committee of the Harvard University Press and of Dumbarton Oaks. He is also a member of the Executive Committee of the National Commission of Unesco and of the Advisory Council for the College of Liberal and Fine Arts of the University of Notre Dame.

Mr. Walker is a member of the Chevy Chase Club, Washington, the Century Association, New York, and the Brook, New York.