

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

SIXTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON DC 20565 • 737-4215 extension 224

Washington, D. C. May 2, 1969. John Walker, Director of the National Gallery of Art, will retire July 1, and at that time will become Director Emeritus, it was announced by Paul Mellon, President of the Gallery. Mr. Mellon said that J. Carter Brown, Deputy Director of the Gallery for the past year, will become Director on that date.

The announcement was made following the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees Thursday. Mr. Walker immediately called the staff of the Gallery to the auditorium to inform them of the decision.

"I am followed by the best possible person," he told the assembled curators, guards, and office personnel. "If the Gallery Trustees could have appointed anyone in the entire museum profession as Director, they could have chosen no one more brilliant and better trained than Carter Brown."

Mr. Walker's association with the National Gallery began in 1938 when, with the first Director, David Finley, he helped in the design of the new building and supervised the installation of the Andrew W. Mellon Collection and the Samuel H. Kress Collection prior to the opening of the Gallery in 1941. As the first Chief Curator, until 1956 when Mr. Finley retired, and since then as Director, he has guided an acquisition program

consisting of many hundreds of works of art, culminating in 1967 with the purchase of Ginevra de' Benci by Leonardo da Vinci. Two years ago, he proposed to the Trustees a national Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts and a building addition to house the Center and expand the services of the museum. Such a Center is now in the stage of advanced planning.

Mr. Brown, who was born in 1934 in Providence, Rhode Island, was graduated summa cum laude from Harvard College in 1956. In preparation for a museum career, he took advanced degrees at Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration and the Institute of Fine Arts (New York University) with museum training at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He also studied in Florence, with Bernard Berenson; at the Hague, at the Netherlands Institute for Art History; and in Paris, with the Curator of the Louvre in the Cours de Muséologie. In 1961 he joined the National Gallery as an assistant to Mr. Walker.

"The Gallery started with a great Director, David Finley," Mr. Walker said. "I have tried to carry on what he began so superbly, and I know Carter Brown will guide this museum to new achievements and further goals of service."

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