

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HECKSCHER AND VON SIMSON APPOINTED

NATIONAL GALLERY KRESS PROFESSORS 1979-80

WASHINGTON, D. C. October 10, 1979. William Sebastian Heckscher and Otto von Simson, renowned art historians, have been named Samuel H. Kress Professors in Residence at the National Gallery of Art for the academic year 1979-1980.

Mr. Heckscher will be at the Gallery for the fall term (October 1979 to January 1980), and Mr. von Simson for the spring term (February to May 1980).

Mr. Heckscher, best known for his scholarship in Netherlandish art and in emblematics, was a member of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. While at the Gallery, he will be continuing his research on the French Renaissance illustrator and humanist, Geofroy Tory, the first man to be titled "imprimeur du Roi," printer to King Francis I in the 1530s.

Mr. von Simson, a medievalist and diplomat, is currently working on German nineteenth-century painting.

Trained as an art historian, medieval Latinist and palaeographer at Hamburg University, Oxford University, New York University and Princeton University, Mr. Heckscher began his career as a portrait painter and still continues to draw. He received

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his Ph.D. in 1935 from the University of Hamburg.

Mr. Heckscher was the Benjamin N. Duke Professor and Director of the Art Museum at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, from 1970 to 1974. He was Chairman of the Department of Art there from 1966 to 1969.

From 1955 to 1966, he was professor and Director of the Iconological Institute at the University of Utrecht, and prior to that, taught at the University of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and the State University of Iowa. He was a member of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey (1936-40, 1947-48, 1952-53, and 1960-61).

Mr. Heckscher was honored by a festschrift in 1964. He is a charter member and corresponding member of the Society of Indexers, London, the Benjamin Franklin Fellow and a member of the Royal Society of Arts, London, and a member of the Mediaeval Academy of America. He served as editor-in-chief of the Netherlands Yearbook for Art History in 1959 and 1960. He has been invited to lecture at the Collège de France.

Among his many articles and books are "Relics of Pagan Antiquity in Mediaeval Settings" published in 1937 in the Journal of the Warburg Institute; a review of the article "Antike und Renaissance" published in the American Journal of Archaeology in 1948; Sixtus VIII, originally delivered as the Inaugural Address at Utrecht University in 1955; "Albert Einstein: Herinnering aan gesprekken" published in Hollands Weekblad in 1960; "Genesis of Iconology" in the XXIst International

Congress of Art History, Bonn, in 1964; and "Shakespeare in His Relationship to the Visual Arts: A Study in Paradox" published in Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama, The Report of the Modern Language Association Seminar in 1973.

Mr. von Simson has been professor and Director of the Institute of Fine Arts, Free University, Berlin, since 1964. He was First Counselor at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Paris from 1959 to 1964, was a member of the Executive Board of UNESCO from 1960 to 1964, and is the permanent delegate to UNESCO from the Federal Republic from 1959 to the present. Prior to his diplomatic career, he was professor of art history at the University of Chicago from 1945 to 1957.

He received his Ph.D. from the University of Munich in 1936. He was decorated a commander of the Legion of Honor and elected to the Ordre National de Mérite. Mr. von Simson was honored by a festschrift in 1977.

Among his numerous articles and publications are Sacred Fortress: Byzantine Art and Statecraft in Ravenna (1948) and Gothic Cathedral: Origins of Gothic Architecture and the Medieval Concept of Order (1956; 1962).

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION contact Katherine Warwick, Assistant to the Director (Information Officer) or Pamela J. Driscoll, Information Office, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. 20565 area code 202, 737-4215, ext. 511.