

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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NATIONAL GALLERY APPOINTS NEW HEAD OF EDUCATION

Washington, D.C., June 28, 1989 - Linda Anne Bank Downs has been appointed head of education of the National Gallery of Art effective July 30, 1989. Ms. Downs comes to the National Gallery from the Detroit Institute of Arts, where she has worked since 1968, and where, for the past eleven years, she has been curator of education and chief administrator of the education department. She succeeds Russell Sale who will resume scholarly research, remaining as a senior member of the education department.

J. Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery, said of the appointment, "We are very enthusiastic about Ms. Downs joining us. Her extensive background and expertise in museum education -- an area which has always been of great importance to the National Gallery -- will serve her well in assuming the broad responsibilities of our department, both local and national."

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As the National Gallery's education head, Ms. Downs will lead a division comprising five departments, and serve as the primary staff advocate for the diverse audiences of Gallery programs. These audiences include the visiting public; the national constituency served by Gallery extension programs offering free loans of audio-visual materials; and primary and secondary teachers who receive arts and humanities training. Ms. Downs will participate in planning and execution of the National Gallery's major public program initiatives, including exhibitions, media projects, and publications. She will also assist in the acquisition of additional support for current programs and new initiatives in education.

While at the Detroit Institute of Arts, Ms. Downs was co-organizing curator of the exhibition "Diego Rivera: A Retrospective," which traveled throughout the U.S., Mexico, and Europe in 1986. She introduced a computer system adjacent to exhibition galleries that allows visitors to make use of interactive programs to interpret the collections, an innovation in American art museums. She also supervised the development of a number of programs both state-wide, and to enhance art education for the visiting public, including forming a network of trained volunteers to conduct museum tours and offer instruction in visual arts appreciation. Ms. Downs was a board member of the American Association of Museums/International Council of Museums, 1983-1986, and currently serves as a member of the J. Paul Getty Education Foundation, Curriculum Development Institute.

Ms. Downs pursued her undergraduate degree at Monteith College and Wayne State University and received a masters degree in art history from the University of Michigan. She and her family plan to reside in Bethesda, Maryland.