

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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HOLD FOR RELEASE
Saturday, January 25, 1992

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J. CARTER BROWN RETIRES AS DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

Washington, D.C., January 24th . . . The Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Art announced today that J. Carter Brown, the Gallery's director for the past twenty-two years, will retire from his position by the end of the year. Mr. Brown, the longest serving director in the institution's history, and only the third to hold this position, succeeded David Finley (1941-1956) and John Walker (1956-1969).

Mr. Brown joined the National Gallery in 1961 and was appointed assistant director in 1964 and deputy director in 1968. On July 1, 1969, at the age of thirty-four, he was appointed director.

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"It makes me and my fellow trustees enormously sad to think of Carter Brown as no longer being director of this, the nation's gallery," said Franklin D. Murphy, chairman of the board of trustees. "He has been an extraordinary leader of this institution and will be difficult to replace. On behalf of the board I thank him for his many services to the Gallery and wish him well in his new life."

During his tenure the National Gallery's annual federal budget increased from \$3.2 million to \$52.3 million, its endowment from \$34 million to \$186 million, and attendance from 1.3 million to five to seven million visitors a year, while the Gallery doubled its square footage, increased its collections by some twenty thousand works of art, instituted an extensive special exhibitions program, and became a major educational resource to the nation. Also during this time, Mr. Brown oversaw the planning and construction of the Gallery's East Building, designed by I.M. Pei and voted by the American Institute of Architects one of the ten best buildings in America.

Since Mr. Brown became director, the Gallery's collections have been greatly enhanced in every area in which the Gallery collects, with special emphasis in the areas of twentieth-century art, old master and modern drawings, and photography. Among the works acquired during his tenure, some of the most significant are

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Paul Cézanne's The Artist's Father 1866, Thomas Cole's series The Voyage of Life (1842), Henri Matisse's paper cutouts (1950-1953), Pablo Picasso's Nude Woman (1910), Georges de la Tour's The Repentant Magdalene (c. 1640), Jackson Pollock's Lavender Mist (1950), Georges Seurat's The Lighthouse at Honfleur (1886), Paolo Veronese's The Martyrdom and Last Communion of Saint Lucy (c. 1582), Rembrandt Peale's Rubens Peale with a Geranium (1801), Claude Monet's Woman with a Parasol (1875), Jusepe de Ribera's The Martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew (1634), and Auguste Rodin's The Age of Bronze (1875/76), as well as 3,702 drawings, including works by Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, and others.

In this period the Gallery also acquired a number of important private collections, including more than one thousand major works of nineteenth- and twentieth-century art from Paul Mellon, the bequest of Ailsa Mellon Bruce, an extensive collection of prints and drawings from Lessing Rosenwald, part of the John Hay Whitney collection, the Armand Hammer collection of old master drawings, and, most recently, the Vogel collection of twentieth-century art. During its Fiftieth Anniversary Year in 1991 the Gallery acquired 2,444 works of art, representing 224 donors from twenty-two states plus the District of Columbia and five foreign countries, and six major collections.

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Over the past twenty-two years an extensive special exhibitions program has become an important feature of the Gallery's activities. Some of the most notable have been African Sculpture (1970), Archaeological Finds of the People's Republic of China (1974), Treasure of Tutankahmun (1976), The Eye of Thomas Jefferson (1976), The Splendor of Dresden: Five Centuries of Art Collecting (1978), American Light: The Luminist Movement (1980), Rodin Rediscovered (1981), El Greco of Toledo (1982), Old Master Drawings from the Albertina (1984), Impressionist to Early Modern Paintings from the USSR (1986), The Treasure Houses of Britain (1985), Matisse in Nice (1986), Georgia O'Keeffe (1987), Japan: The Shaping of Daimyo Culture (1988), The Art of Paul Gauguin (1989), Titian, Prince of Painters (1990), and Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration (1991), the last and the most ambitious and wide-ranging ever mounted at the Gallery.

On the occasion of the first of the three regularly scheduled meetings for 1992 of the Gallery's board of trustees Mr. Brown submitted a letter to the president of the Gallery, attached herewith.

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Attached Letter

National Gallery of Art

Washington, D.C. 20565

Office of the Director

January 24th, 1992

Dear Jack,

After thirty-two years at this fabulous institution, now coming up on twenty-three of them as director, I feel it is time the Gallery should have the opportunity of fresh leadership. My own additional responsibilities have become, meanwhile, so increasingly demanding, that I consider it unfair to the Gallery, to the other organizations with which I am involved, and to my family to try to serve all of them responsibly at the same time.

Since the death of my two parents, I have been increasingly involved at Brown University in my native Providence, taking my father's place on the Committee of Management of the John Carter Brown Library. The John Nicholas Brown Center for the Study of American Civilization, of which I am a trustee and officer, will begin programmatic operations early next year, with a particular emphasis on education and American architecture.

In addition, I plan to continue in my presidentially-appointed chairmanship of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, and as chairman of the jury of the Pritzker Architectural Prize, as well as serving on the boards and committees of the National Geographic Society, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the American Federation of Arts, the American Academy in Rome, the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, the Storm King Art Center, the Committee for the Preservation of the White House, the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University, the World Monuments Fund, the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, the Cafritz Foundation, the Hope Foundation, and others.

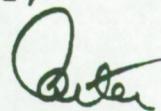
Finally, and for me of the highest importance, having joint custody of my two children, ages 14 and 8, I look forward to being able to devote more of my time and energy to responsible parenting.

Needless to say, I shall miss the Gallery, to which I have devoted more than half my life. I believe I am leaving it in a healthy and vibrant state, its 50th Anniversary Gift campaign and Quincentennial exhibition behind it, and with a marvelous staff, and many exciting plans in process.

And now, while still in prime health, I hope to be able to serve related causes in other ways, and believe that the time has come to begin to plan to step aside, with a view to leaving when my successor is selected and in place, but no later than the end of this calendar year.

I want you to know how much I have prized the opportunity to work for you and all your fellow trustees.

As ever,



J. Carter Brown
Director

Mr. John R. Stevenson
President
National Gallery of Art