

National Gallery of Art

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 2, 1997

CONTACT: Deborah Ziska
(202) 842-6353

**NATIONAL GALLERY BOARD ELECTS NEW CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD,
ALEXANDER M. LAUGHLIN, AND NEW TRUSTEE JULIAN GANZ, JR.,
AS RUTH CARTER STEVENSON RETIRES**

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 26, 1997 -- Following a meeting today of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Art, Robert H. Smith, president of the Gallery, announced that Alexander M. Laughlin was elected chairman of the board, succeeding retiring chairman, Ruth Carter Stevenson. Mr. Laughlin is a private investor with Deltec Asset Management Corporation, New York. At the same meeting, Julian Ganz, Jr., president of McMahan Furniture Stores (headquartered in Los Angeles) and chairman of the Trustees' Council of the Gallery, was elected the new trustee.

Mr. Smith expressed his "profound appreciation on behalf of the entire Board of Trustees for Mrs. Stevenson's outstanding contributions to the Gallery for almost two decades." Prior to serving as chairman, Mrs. Stevenson was a trustee of the Gallery (1979-1997) and chairman of the Collectors Committee (1975-1995), which through its annual gifts, has greatly enhanced the Gallery's twentieth-century art collection. In

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honor of the Gallery's fiftieth anniversary, Mrs. Stevenson gave a drawing by Paul Klee, Grüne Pflanz mit Blau (1924), and made a promised gift of a painting by John Constable, Yarmouth Jetty (1822).

Mr. Laughlin has been a member of the National Gallery Board of Trustees since 1987. Previously, he was chairman of the Trustees' Council (1985-1987) and vice chairman, Trustees' Council (1983-1985). In honor of the Gallery's fiftieth anniversary, Mr. Laughlin and his wife, Judith, gave Emil Nolde's Red and Yellow Anemones with Blue Hollyhocks (c. 1930-1940).

Commenting on the election of Julian Ganz, Jr. as new trustee, president Smith said, "The Gallery is very fortunate to have someone of Julian's qualities. He has long believed that involvement with the National Gallery is an unparalleled opportunity for people who have a serious interest in art because of the Gallery's exceptional aesthetic and educational strengths."

"Relationships with a museum are usually brought along by a director, a curator, or a conservator," Ganz observes. "They are stimulating people, and their interests are your interests. That was certainly the case with us at the National Gallery." Ganz's close interest in the Gallery began when he and his wife, Jo Ann, who together have assembled their major collection of nineteenth-century American art over more than three decades, lent a painting to an exhibition at the Gallery in the early 1970s. In 1981 the National Gallery organized the exhibition An American Perspective: Nineteenth-Century Art from the Collection of Jo Ann and Julian Ganz, Jr.

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Previously, Julian Ganz was president and then chairman of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Starting in 1982, he became more involved with the National Gallery when his wife Jo Ann joined the Trustees' Council as a founding member. The Ganzes were members of the Gallery's Collectors Committee for a number of years and are Patrons of the Patrons' Permanent Fund. They are also donors to the New Century Fund and Sustaining members of The Circle of the National Gallery of Art. In 1990 they gave a work from their collection, Winslow Homer's watercolor Blackboard, 1877, in honor of the Gallery's fiftieth anniversary.

Other members of the Board of Trustees include William H. Rehnquist, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; the Honorable Madeleine K. Albright, Secretary of State; the Honorable Robert E. Rubin, Secretary of Treasury; I. Michael Heyman, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution; Robert F. Erburu, retired chairman of the board, Times Mirror; and Louise W. Mellon, collector. Paul Mellon serves as Honorary Trustee and John R. Stevenson, as Trustee Emeritus. Ruth Carter Stevenson will serve as Trustee Emerita.

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