

Online Press Kit

Press Release

Chief Press Officer
Deborah Ziska
ds-ziska@nga.gov
(202) 842-6353

Release Date: October 17, 2008 (updated October 21, 2008)

**MARY LEVKOFF SELECTED TO BECOME CURATOR
OF SCULPTURE AND DECORATIVE ARTS IN EARLY
2009 AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART,
WASHINGTON, DC**

Washington, DC—Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art, announced that Mary L. Levkoff, curator of European sculpture and classical antiquities, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), has been selected to become the Gallery's curator of sculpture and decorative arts in February 2009. She will replace Nicholas Penny, the former senior curator of sculpture and decorative arts, who left to become director of the National Gallery in London.

In 1989, during his tenure as LACMA's director, Powell appointed Levkoff to the position of assistant curator, European painting and sculpture. She was subsequently promoted through the years to her present position.

"I've known Mary for a long time," said Powell. "She is a respected scholar, a dynamic curator, and a collegial collaborator across departments. We look forward to her leadership in acquisitions, scholarship, and exhibitions of sculpture."

Levkoff is the organizing curator and primary author for *Hearst the Collector*, a wide-ranging international loan exhibition at LACMA, on view November 9, 2008, through February 1, 2009. LACMA's collection of some 3,000 objects includes approximately 450 European sculptures dating from c. 1100 to c. 1920, and around 2,000 European medals and 700 Greek and Roman antiquities. Her distinguished record of acquisitions for LACMA—including a full-scale example of Jean-Antoine Houdon's *Voltaire Seated* (c. 1779–1795), also known as *Monument to Voltaire*, and the museum's first marble sculpture, *Severed Head of Saint John the Baptist* (c. 1887–1907) by Auguste Rodin—is well known to scholars in the field of European sculpture.

Levkoff worked for The Metropolitan Museum of Art in the department of European sculpture and decorative arts before joining LACMA. She has contributed to numerous scholarly journals, encyclopedias, and exhibition catalogues, and is the author of *Rodin in His Time: The Cantor Gifts to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art* (Thames & Hudson, 1994; LACMA/Rizzoli, 2000).

Levkoff received her B.A. in art and archaeology in 1975 from Princeton University, where she graduated magna cum laude and received the White Prize for her senior thesis in French Renaissance architecture. She earned her M.A. from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, where she focused on 16th-century French sculpture and 19th-century German and Austrian architecture. She passed her doctoral examination at the Institute of Fine Arts in 1980, where her major field was 16th-century Italian art and 15th- to 16th-century northern European art.

National Gallery of Art Sculpture Collection

The National Gallery of Art has nearly 2,900 works of European and American sculpture dating from the Middle Ages to present day and 513 works of decorative arts. Levkoff will oversee some 3,100 works, including masterpieces dating up to the early 20th century; 18th-century French decorative arts; Renaissance marble, terracotta, and wood sculpture, medals, plaquettes, and maiolica; and Chinese porcelains.

Highlights include the 12th-century *Chalice of the Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis*; Leone Battista Alberti's bronze *Self-Portrait* plaque (c. 1435); Gian Lorenzo Bernini's marble bust, *Monsignor Francesco Barberini* (c.1623); a distinguished group of Italian Renaissance and northern European bronze statuettes; Honoré Daumier's entire bronze sculptural oeuvre, including all 36 of his caricatures of French government officials; a selection of sculptures made by Auguste Rodin for his American patrons, among them a life-size plaster, *The Age of Bronze* (model 1875–1876, cast 1898); and the largest group in the world of the original wax and mixed-media sculptures by Edgar Degas, including his best known of these, *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen* (1878–1881).

General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Avenue NW, and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering the East and West Buildings. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 x 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

Press Office
National Gallery of Art
2000B South Club Drive
Landover, MD 20785
phone: (202) 842-6353 e-mail: pressinfo@nga.gov


Deborah Ziska
Chief of Press and Public Information
(202) 842-6353
ds-ziska@nga.gov

If you are a member of the press and would like to be added to our press list, [click here](#).

[Subscribe to Our Free E-mail Newsletters](#)

Stay up to date with the National Gallery of Art by [subscribing to our free e-mail newsletters](#): Web, educators, family programs, fellowships/internships, films, lectures, music programs, and teen programs. Select as many updates as you wish to receive. To edit your subscriber information, please go to our [subscription management page](#).

National Gallery of Art, Press Office

[home](#) | [general information](#) | [exhibitions](#) | [image lists](#) | [recent announcements](#)
[press archives](#) |  [RSS](#) | [contact us](#) | [national gallery of art](#)
Copyright ©2008 National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC