



Association of Art Museum Directors

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New York, NY, December 13, 2004 – In response to the ruling concerning the Barnes Foundation’s Petition issued today by the Court of Common Pleas of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, Orphan’s Court Division, the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) released the following statement:

The AAMD strongly supports the Court’s decision which discourages the Barnes Foundation from considering the sale of parts of its collections to fund operations. Selling art for any purpose other than the strengthening of collections is a drastic measure that violates the accepted standards of professional practice in the museum community and the public trust.

The AAMD agrees with the Court’s decision, which acknowledges the importance of donor intent while recognizing that rare circumstances can arise in which it is both necessary and responsible for an institution to consider modifying a donor’s indenture. Such actions should be carefully weighed and only considered when the institution’s service to the public or its continued existence is at stake.

The AAMD does not take a position on whether the Barnes should move, but believes that the Foundation should be guided by underlying principles of serving the public trust and increasing public accessibility and knowledge of works of art.

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