



Association of Art Museum Directors

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ASSOCIATION OF ART MUSEUM DIRECTORS SUSPENDS SANCTIONS ON NATIONAL ACADEMY MUSEUM

**National Academy Commits to Follow AAMD Policy on Deaccessioning,
Promising No Future Sales of Art for Operating Support**

**Recognizing its Progress, AAMD Suspends Sanctions,
Freeing its Members to Collaborate and Lend to National Academy**

**AAMD Institutes Five-Year Probation to Ensure
Continued Compliance and Institutional Advancement**

New York, NY—October 18, 2010—The Board of Trustees of the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) voted at its recent meeting to suspend its sanctions of the National Academy Museum in recognition of the steps that the Academy has taken towards better governance, financial planning, and management over the last 20 months, including a commitment not to deaccession works in its collection as a means of generating operating support at any point in the future. AAMD's Board also voted to put in place a five-year probation for the National Academy Museum, during which time loans between the Academy and AAMD's members—along with other program collaborations—may resume.

Each year during the probation, AAMD will review the National Academy's progress towards its stated financial and programmatic goals and report on the situation to the Association's Board. AAMD will lift the probation on the National Academy at the end of five years, assuming continued institutional advancement. The terms of probation were developed by AAMD in order to strike a balance between the negative effects of the sanctions on the National Academy's operations and future plans, and AAMD's stewardship of policies and standards to maintain the highest level of professional practice for the field.

“The National Academy's leadership has demonstrated through a series of steps taken over the last 20 months and the implementation of a long-range strategic plan that they are committed—both in principle and practice—to AAMD's position regarding the use of funds from deaccessioned works of art,” said Kaywin Feldman, President of AAMD and Director and President of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. “The Academy continues to work diligently to address a range of operational challenges. By suspending sanctions, AAMD recognizes their progress and encourages both the institution and its supporters to

continue their efforts. At the same time, we are gratified that they have forsworn such sales of art in the future and are taking steps to ensure that their collection remains accessible to the public.”

“We have been engaged in a constructive and positive dialogue with AAMD and appreciate the approach they have proposed,” said Carmine Branagan, Director of the National Academy Museum and School. “While it has been painful to operate under sanctions, we were compelled to confront and address important challenges, and we are now unreservedly committed to never deaccessioning works from the collection for operating support or capital projects. We certainly welcome the opportunity to resume collaborations with our museum colleagues across the country and look forward to continuing discussion with AAMD as the National Academy moves ahead to a promising future and a revitalized role in the cultural life of our city.”

The imposition of sanctions dates to December 2008, when AAMD acted in response to the sale by the National Academy of two paintings from its collection, the proceeds from which were used to cover operating costs. AAMD’s professional practices—designed to protect museum collections, which are held in public trust—clearly prohibit such action. In March 2009, representatives from AAMD met with National Academy leadership to discuss how the museum could achieve financial stability and institute policies to preclude the proceeds of any future deaccessions being used for operating funds. Other conversations between representatives of the two organizations took place over the subsequent months.

In September 2010, representatives from AAMD met with National Academy leadership. The Academy presented and discussed steps it had taken since, including a restructuring of its board and revisions to its underlying governing policies, development and implementation of strategic and financial plans designed to set the museum on a solid footing for the future, and its commitment to follow AAMD’s policy on deaccessioning. The conclusions reached by AAMD, on the basis of this meeting and an analysis of the information the National Academy presented, are that the Academy has made significant progress and that a suspension of the sanctions was justified and appropriate.

The Association of Art Museum Directors, representing 198 art museum directors in the US, Canada, and Mexico, promotes the vital role of art museums throughout North America and advances the profession by cultivating leadership and communicating standards of excellence in museum practice. Further information about AAMD’s professional practice guidelines and position papers is available at www.aamd.org.

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