



New York, NY—February 9, 2023—The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD), American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries (AAMG), and the Association of Art Museum Curators (AAMC) have issued the following statement on Valparaiso University’s proposal to deaccession works of art to fund capital expenditures:

Our organizations—which represent North America’s leading art museums—are strongly opposed to plans announced by Valparaiso University to deaccession several works of art from the collection of the University’s Brauer Museum in order to fund capital investments on campus.

College and university art museums have a long and rich history of collecting, curating, and educating in a financially and ethically responsible manner on par with the world’s most prestigious institutions. That a campus museum exists within the larger ecosystem of its parent educational institution does not exempt a university from acting ethically, nor permit them to ignore issues of public trust and use the museum’s collections as disposable financial assets.

This remains a fundamental ethical principle of the museum field, one which all institutions are obligated to respect: in no event shall funds from deaccessioned works be used for anything other than support for a museum’s collections, either through acquisitions or the direct care of works of art.

Although the Brauer Museum is not a member of AAMD, collectively we remain hopeful that the University will reconsider its decision. We stand ready to assist, in any way we are able, to find other solutions to the institution’s needs without resorting to the selling of works that can never be recovered, to the great detriment of current and future students and community members.

*The director of the Brauer Museum is a member of AAMG. The museum is an unaccredited member of AAM. The museum is not a member of AAMD or AAMC.

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