

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUMS ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT OF RAY WILLIAMS AS FIRST DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

*New position created in conjunction with expansion of the Art Museums' Department of Education and commitment to enhanced outreach and programs*

CAMBRIDGE, MA (December 13, 2007)—The Harvard University Art Museums announce the appointment of Ray Williams as its first director of education, effective January 14, 2008. A highly respected museum educator with over twenty years of experience, Williams will plan, develop, and implement all aspects of the Art Museums' educational and public programs. The creation of Williams' position and an expanded education department mark a renewed commitment by the Art Museums to enhance arts scholarship at all levels. Through the collection, the museums engage students, faculty, and the community in object-based teaching, research, education, and learning, and the new director of education will continue a collaboration with the Harvard Graduate School of Education in those efforts.

“We are delighted to have Ray Williams join our staff,” said Thomas W. Lentz, Elizabeth and John Moors Cabot Director of the Harvard University Art Museums. “Ray shares our vision to establish the Art Museums as an educational and cultural resource for both the University and community. As an experienced museum educator and arts consultant, Ray is well prepared to develop programs that reinforce our teaching and research mission.”

Williams comes to the Art Museums from the Rhode Island School of Design Museum (RISD) where he served as director of education. At RISD, Williams taught courses on museum education and developed a series of workshops for hospice caregivers. He also taught courses at Brown University and Rhode Island College and previously headed education departments at the Peabody Essex Museum, the Smithsonian's Freer and Sackler Galleries, as well as the Ackland Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A graduate of Western Carolina University, Williams holds an MA in art history from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, as well as an individualized master's degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Study centers are a key component of the Harvard University Art Museums' teaching and research mission, and will be a central focus of the planned renovation, expansion, and transformation of the

facilities adjacent to Harvard Yard. The Art Museums recently announced plans to begin the renovation of the building at 32 Quincy Street to bring together their three museums—the Fogg Art Museum, Busch-Reisinger Museum, and Arthur M. Sackler Museum—in one state-of-the-art facility. Among other improvements, the newly renovated building will feature a study center for each of the three museums that allows for close, intimate encounters with works of art.

In November, the Harvard University Art Museums released a collaborative report on study center learning with Project Zero, a research group at Harvard's Graduate School of Education. Project Zero explored visitor experiences at the Fogg's Agnes Mongan Center and the Busch-Reisinger Study Room to investigate the types of learning that take place in museum study centers, the distinctive strengths of object-based teaching, and how this learning can be enhanced and applied to new contexts and audiences. The Project Zero report may be read at: [www.pz.harvard.edu/Research/HUAM.htm](http://www.pz.harvard.edu/Research/HUAM.htm)

The Art Museums also announced last month a major gift to the Department of Education by Dorothy and Milan A. Heath, Jr., who pledged to endow a position in the department. Under Williams' leadership, the Heath's generous gift will enable the department to continue programs for school-aged children and advance the Art Museums' educational mission.

### **The Harvard University Art Museums**

The Harvard University Art Museums are one of the world's leading arts institutions, comprising the Fogg Art Museum, Busch-Reisinger Museum, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Straus Center for Conservation, Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art, the Art Museums Archives, and the U.S. headquarters for the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis. The Art Museums are distinguished by the range and depth of their collections, their groundbreaking exhibitions, and the original research of their staff. As an integral part of Harvard and the community, the three art museums and four research centers serve as resources for students, scholars, and visitors. For more than a century, the Harvard University Art Museums have been the nation's premier training ground for museum professionals and scholars and are renowned for their role in the development of the discipline of art history in this country.

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