

# Harvard Art Museums

Fogg Museum  
Busch-Reisinger Museum  
Arthur M. Sackler Museum

## Press Release

### **Narayan Khandekar Appointed Harvard Art Museums' Director of the Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies**

Cambridge, MA  
February 11, 2015

The Harvard Art Museums are pleased to announce the appointment of Narayan Khandekar as Director of the Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies. Khandekar replaces Henry Lie, who retired from the post in December 2014. Khandekar has been senior conservation scientist in the Straus Center's analytical laboratory since 2001.

Founded in 1928, the Harvard Art Museums' Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies was the first facility of its kind established in the United States and continues to be a world leader in fine arts conservation, research, and training. It plays a leading role both in the preservation of art and in the advancement of conservation science. The Straus Center also supports the Harvard Art Museums by providing analysis of and treatments to the approximately 250,000 objects in the museums' collections.

"Visitors to the Harvard Art Museums can literally see the long-standing importance of the Straus Center—through glass-walled laboratories in the heart of our new facility, meticulously conserved works in the galleries, and our current special exhibition, *Mark Rothko's Harvard Murals*," said Thomas W. Lentz, the Elizabeth and John Moors Cabot Director of the Harvard Art Museums. "With his institutional experience, deep scientific knowledge, intellectual curiosity, and naturally collaborative spirit, Narayan is the perfect choice to lead the Straus Center into its next chapter."

A world-renowned conservation scientist, Khandekar has been recognized for his superior technical knowledge and skills; he is a prolific author who is frequently consulted on a range of topics related to

the latest in conservation science. His many accomplishments at the Harvard Art Museums include the analysis of paintings attributed to Jackson Pollock and participation in the team that conducted the technical research for the museums' current special exhibition, *Mark Rothko's Harvard Murals*. He is the editor of the 2009 publication *John Singer Sargent's "Triumph of Religion" at the Boston Public Library: Creation and Restoration*, and is currently leading the first ever technical survey of traditional Australian Aboriginal bark paintings, as part of an upcoming special exhibition.

"It is a deep honor to be appointed director of the Straus Center," said Khandekar. "It is humbling to be walking in the footsteps of the founders of modern art conservation and conservation science in this country. I am excited to be part of a future that will be shaped by talented conservators and scientists, by continued collaboration with curators, and not least of all, by the many opportunities to work with the university community and scholars and scientists throughout the world."

In addition to his global reputation, Khandekar is well respected within the Harvard community for his leadership and collaborative approach to conservation. He has guided a number of students during his career, both as a lecturer at Harvard and elsewhere; and along with long-time Straus Center Director Henry Lie, he worked with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 2001 to define the museums' postdoctoral fellowship in conservation science.

Khandekar came to the Harvard Art Museums in 2001, after four years as associate scientist at the Getty Conservation Institute. Prior to joining the Getty, he held conservation positions in his home country of Australia, at the Ian Potter Art Conservation Centre at the University of Melbourne, and in the United Kingdom, at the Fitzwilliam Museum at the University of Cambridge. He holds a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the University of Melbourne and a postgraduate diploma in the conservation of easel paintings from the Courtauld Institute of Art.

### **About the Harvard Art Museums**

The Harvard Art Museums, among the world's leading art institutions, comprise three museums (the Fogg, Busch-Reisinger, and Arthur M. Sackler Museums) and four research centers (the Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies, the Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art, the Harvard Art Museums Archives, and the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis). The Fogg Museum includes Western art from the Middle Ages to the present; the Busch-Reisinger Museum is dedicated to the study of art from the German-speaking countries of central and northern Europe, and is the only museum of its kind in North America; and the Arthur M. Sackler Museum is focused on Asian, ancient, and Islamic and later Indian art. Together, the collections include approximately 250,000 objects in all

media. The Harvard Art Museums are distinguished by the range and depth of their collections, their groundbreaking exhibitions, and the original research of their staff. Integral to Harvard University and the wider community, the museums and research centers serve as resources for students, scholars, and the public. For more than a century they have been the nation's premier training ground for museum professionals and are renowned for their seminal role in developing the discipline of art history in the United States.

The Harvard Art Museums' recent renovation and expansion builds on the legacies of the three museums and unites their remarkable collections under one roof for the first time. Renzo Piano Building Workshop's responsive design preserved the Fogg Museum's landmark 1927 facility, while transforming the space to accommodate 21st-century needs. Following a six-year building project, the museums now feature 40 percent more gallery space, an expanded Art Study Center, conservation labs, and classrooms, and a striking new glass roof that bridges the facility's historic and contemporary architecture. The new Harvard Art Museums' building is more functional, accessible, spacious, and above all, more transparent. The three constituent museums retain their distinct identities in this new facility, yet their close proximity provides exciting opportunities to experience works of art in a broader context. [www.harvardartmuseums.org](http://www.harvardartmuseums.org)

### **Hours and Admission**

Daily, 10am–5pm. Closed major holidays. Admission: \$15 adults, \$13 seniors (65+), \$10 non-Harvard students (18+). Free for members; youth under 18; Cambridge residents; and Harvard students, faculty, and staff (plus one guest). On Saturdays, from 10am–noon, Massachusetts residents receive free admission. Visit our website for information about other discounts and policies.

[www.harvardartmuseums.org/plan-your-visit](http://www.harvardartmuseums.org/plan-your-visit)

### **Exhibitions, Events, and News**

Our Special Exhibition Gallery presents important new research on artists and artistic practice, and our University Galleries are programmed in consultation with Harvard faculty to support coursework.

[www.harvardartmuseums.org/visit/exhibitions](http://www.harvardartmuseums.org/visit/exhibitions)

Lectures, workshops, films, performances, special events, and other programs are held throughout the year at the museums. [www.harvardartmuseums.org/visit/calendar](http://www.harvardartmuseums.org/visit/calendar)

Check out *Index*, our multimedia magazine, to keep up with what's happening at the Harvard Art Museums. <http://magazine.harvardartmuseums.org/>

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