



Joint Statement on Berkshire Superior Court Decision Regarding Berkshire Museum Deaccessioning

In response to the decision of November 7, 2017 by Berkshire Superior Court Judge John A. Agostini, regarding the proposed deaccessioning by the Berkshire Museum, the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) and American Alliance of Museums (AAM) released the following statement:

The Association of Art Museum Directors and the American Alliance of Museum are disappointed at the Court's unwillingness to halt the proposed sale of works from the Berkshire Museum's collection. Our organizations remain deeply concerned that the Trustees of the Berkshire Museum are considering deaccessioning works from their collection to support operating expenses and fund an endowment. Museums acquire collections for the benefit of present and future generations. Responsible stewardship of a museum's collection, and the conservation, exhibition, and study of these works, are at the heart of a museum's service to its community and to the public. It is, therefore, a fundamental professional principle of both AAM and AAMD that there are clear limitations on the use of funds from deaccessioned works, and these limitations prohibit the use of these funds for operating costs, capital expenses, or general endowments. We will continue to seek out appropriate opportunities to make this case with respect to the Berkshire Museum's plans, and we stand ready to assist it and other museums facing financial difficulties to avoid resorting to sale of collections as a remedy.

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About AAMD:

The Association of Art Museum Directors advances the profession by cultivating leadership capabilities of directors, advocating for the field, and fostering excellence in art museums. An agile, issues-driven organization, AAMD has three desired outcomes: engagement, leadership, and shared learning. Further information about AAMD's professional practice guidelines and position papers is available at www.aamd.org.

About AAM:

The American Alliance of Museums has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. Representing more than 35,000 individual museum professionals and volunteers, institutions, and corporate partners serving the museum field, the Alliance stands for the broad scope of the museum community. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org.

Press contacts:

For Association of Art Museum Directors:

Christine Anagnos / Alison Wade
Association of Art Museum Directors
212-754-8084
canagnos@aamd.org / awade@aamd.org

For American Alliance of Museums:

Joseph Klem
Director of Public Relations
202-218-7670
jklem@aam-us.org