

NEWS RELEASE

Worcester Art Museum appoints new Director of Curatorial Affairs

European Art Expert Jon Seydl to Join WAM from Cleveland Museum of Art

Worcester, MA, October 29, 2013 – The Worcester Art Museum (WAM) today announced the appointment of Jon Seydl as its new Director of Curatorial Affairs. In this position, he will direct the Curatorial department, as well as the Conservation, Registration, and Collections and Exhibition Services departments; he will also be the Museum's curator of European art. Recognized for his specialty in 17th- and 19th-century Italian art, Seydl currently serves as the Paul J. and Edith Ingalls Vignos, Jr., Curator of European Paintings and Sculpture at the Cleveland Museum of Art. He will assume his new position in January 2014.

"We are excited for Jon to lead our talented, growing team of curators," said WAM Director Matthias Waschek. "While his Old Master focus is in keeping with one of WAM's traditional strengths, his proven track record of working innovatively outside his field of specialization will be crucial to us as we work to better engage audiences with our own collection. Cleveland's impressive arms and armor collection will also inform his thinking and leadership role in our integration of the Higgins Collection into WAM's encyclopedic holdings. Jon will provide an invaluable perspective as we continue toward our goal of accessibility for all audiences."

Most recently coming from the Cleveland Museum of Art, Seydl's previous positions include Program Specialist at the National Endowment for the Humanities Program, followed by Research Coordinator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. He joined the J. Paul Getty Museum in 2002 as Assistant Curator of Paintings before becoming an Associate Curator of Paintings in 2006. He came to the Cleveland Museum of Art in 2007. Since then, he has reinstalled and thematically reinterpreted Cleveland's entire collection of European Art as part of the Museum's renovation and expansion project. Seydl's acquisitions for the Cleveland Museum of Art include *St Peter of Alcántara* by Pedro de Mena and *Julius Caesar* by Mino da Fiesole, an *Apollo Magazine* 2009 Acquisition of the Year.

During his career, Seydl has curated and co-curated many major exhibitions, including *Jacques-Louis David: Empire to Exile* (2005), *Tiepolo Oil Sketches* (2005), *From Caspar David Friedrich to Gerhard Richter: German Painting from Dresden* (2006), *Rembrandt in America* (2011-12), and *The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection* (2012-13). Seydl wrote the catalogue for *Tiepolo Oil Sketches* (2005), which he curated at the Getty, and has co-edited two volumes of essays: *Gerhard Richter: Early Work, 1951-1972* and *Antiquity Recovered: The Legacy of Pompeii and Herculaneum*. In 2013 the Association of Art Museum Curators awarded him the Outstanding Catalogue Essay prize for "The Last Days of Pompeii."

Seydl completed his BA in art history at Yale University and received his MA and PhD in art history from the University of Pennsylvania. He specialized in 17th and 18th-century Italian Art and wrote his dissertation on images of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the 18th century.

“I am incredibly pleased to be joining the Worcester Art Museum,” Seydl said. “With the upcoming integration of the Higgins Armory and the recent reinstallation of the Museum’s European paintings in *[remastered]*, this is an exciting time for the Museum. Matthias’ vision for the future is thoughtful and compelling, and I look forward to working with him and the rest of the WAM team on advancing the Museum’s goal of increased accessibility and engagement through the presentation and interpretation of a very great collection.”

About the Worcester Art Museum

Founded in 1898, the Worcester Art Museum serves Worcester and the broader community. The Museum houses an encyclopedic collection of more than 35,000 pieces, including paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, photography, prints, drawings and new media. WAM’s collection has historically been strong in European art and was able to add further depth with the recent donation of Veronese’s *Venus Disarming Cupid*, which is featured in the recently opened installation of *[remastered]*. At the same time, the Museum continues to broaden its encyclopedic holdings—including particular strengths in both American art and ancient art—to remain a vibrant destination for an increasingly diversified constituency. Encouraging both individual contemplation and group engagement, *[remastered]*’s incorporation of technology, scholarship, and community activities reflects the Museum’s larger goal of increased accessibility. Symbolized by the opening of the Salisbury Street doors in 2012, Waschek’s time as director has been marked with attempts to make the Museum more open to all segments of the greater Worcester community. WAM continues towards this goal with plans for the construction of a landscaped “bridge,” which will provide significantly improved disability access and a clearer entrance to the Museum for all visitors.

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