



Association of Art Museum Directors

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New York, NY, January 31, 2005 – In response to the ruling concerning the Barnes Foundation’s Petition issued on December 13, 2004 by the Court of Common Pleas of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, Orphan’s Court Division, and the Supplemental Decree issued on December 22, 2004, the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) released the following statement:

The Barnes Foundation holds a collection of artistic masterworks that is an irreproducible record of unique achievements in the history of art. The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) is extremely concerned by the Court’s decision to permit the Barnes Foundation to sell parts of its collections to fund operations. Selling art for any purpose other than the strengthening of collections is a drastic measure that violates the accepted standards of professional practice in the museum community and the public trust.

The AAMD agrees with that portion of the Court’s decision which acknowledges the importance of donor intent while recognizing that rare circumstances can arise in which it is both necessary and responsible for an institution to consider modifying a donor’s indenture. Such actions should be carefully weighed and only considered when the institution’s service to the public or its continued existence is at stake.

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