

Statement of Christine Anagnos
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for the record of the
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies

Regarding the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) requests funding of at least \$155 million each for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for Fiscal Year 2019. We also ask that the Subcommittee provide the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) with the funding necessary to staff and train personnel in order to avoid placing any additional impediments on American art museums that are importing works of art containing ivory for the purposes of temporary public exhibition.

INDEMNITY PROGRAM: AAMD reminds the Subcommittee that the NEA administers exhibition indemnity agreements under the Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act of 1975 on behalf of the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. In the indemnity program's 44 years of existence, it has facilitated the presentation of more than a thousand significant exhibitions. Absent the indemnity program, museums would be unable to present exhibitions of the size and value that it covers. Careful review and stringent standards have kept loss or damage to a minimum, while a high deductible provides taxpayers with additional protection: to date only two validated claim payments have been appropriated by Congress, for a net sum of \$4,700.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: We have been gratified to see bipartisan support on this Committee and in Congress as a whole for the NEA's work. We particularly note the widespread commendation of the NEA pioneering programs for military personnel, veterans, and their families. AAMD also commends NEA for its commitment to the Blue Star Museums initiative, now in its ninth year. AAMD members have responded with overwhelming enthusiasm to Chairman Chu's invitation to offer free admission to active duty military and their families at least from Memorial Day through Labor Day. In 2016, approximately 90 percent of AAMD members in the United States either formally joined the program or already offered free admission to all. Each year, more than 2,000 museums participate, reaching on average more than 856,000 military members and their families. According to a survey conducted by Blue Star Families, fifteen percent of participants reported that it was the first time they had visited a museum. AAMD is grateful to Blue Star Families and the NEA for the opportunity to serve this new audience.

The NEA provides modest but important grants to art museums across the country. Examples of recent grants include:

Anchorage Museum, Anchorage, AK, FY 2018: To support the exhibition "Walrus and the Polar Bear: Asveq and Nanook," and accompanying catalogue. The exhibition will examine the region's iconic and endangered walrus and polar bear, through contemporary art, culture and indigenous traditions, providing a more complex portrait of these animals than the romanticized portrayal outside of the Arctic. The exhibition will feature existing works, as well as newly commissioned works by native Alaskan and other artists.

Frist Art Museum, Nashville, TN, FY 2018 (formerly Frist Center for the Visual Arts): To support the exhibition "Chaos and Awe: Painting for the 21st Century." The exhibition, slated to open in June 2018, will be presented thematically around specific themes that will explore issues related to technological challenges, interpretation of history, alienation and the sense of community, and the capacity and brilliance of the mind. Works by approximately 50 established and emerging artists will be presented. Educational programming includes a scholarly symposium, in-gallery talks, workshops, and classes.

Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, FY 2017 : To support provenance research on works in the museum's collection, specifically with respect to paintings and sculptures that may have a Holocaust-related connection. The funding enables provenance specialists to travel to specific archives and venues to complete research on paintings and begin research on the sculptures. Research results are being made public on the museum's online object database in the form of provenance narratives. In-gallery didactics, webpages dedicated to major contributors to the collection, and public programs are being developed to educate visitors about the provenance of the collection. The Nelson-Atkins welcomes any information that might help to clarify the provenance history of artwork in its collection.

Yellowstone Art Museum, Billings, MT, FY 2017: To support an exhibition of work by Jaune Quick-to-See Smith and accompanying catalogue. The exhibition featured paintings and prints spanning five decades of Quick-to-See Smith's career, exploring how she navigated Native and non-Native painterly expression as well as concerns related to coming of age as a female during the height of the male-dominated era of Abstract Expressionism. Quick-to-See Smith created her own visual language, one that is vivid, layered, symbolic, and unique in the canon of American art history. The exhibition included extensive public programming.

Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, FL, FY 2018: To support the exhibition "The World to Come" at the Harn Museum of Art. The exhibition exploring environmental challenges will feature works by more than 50 international contemporary artists who work in all media. Lectures, an interactive touch table, a panel discussion, workshops, and special youth educational programs will complement the exhibition. It opens in September 2018.

Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, FY 2018: To support the exhibition "Cult of the Machine" which opened in March 2018. Presented at the de Young Museum, the

exhibition features approximately 150 works by modernists such as Georgia O'Keeffe, and Charles Demuth, shedding scholarly light on the aesthetic and intellectual concerns of Precisionism, underlying the development of an important strand of American Modernism. Public outreach includes a catalogue, musical performances, hands-on art activities, films, artist demonstrations, scholarly talks, and school programs.

RISD Museum, Providence, RI, FY 2017: To support Project Open Door. The free, after-school and summer visual arts education program is a college access initiative for high school students and teachers from underserved communities. Participating youth develop technical skills in the visual arts and prepare competitive college entrance portfolios. Graduate students provide arts instruction in various artistic media. Students have the opportunity to work in an open studio, build portfolios of creative work, and make museum and gallery visits-including an annual visit to New York City. Its goals are to encourage teens to graduate from high school, to provide under-served teens attending Rhode Island urban public and charter high schools with opportunities to develop their artistic skills, to help prepare teens to enroll in post-secondary education by offering guidance on college selection and preparation of college applications, especially portfolio preparation for art and design college programs, to provide RISD MA & MAT students an authentic learning site that serves as a foundation for professional practices that will engage in social justice and community arts endeavors, and to provide RISD students, faculty, staff and alumni a platform for community engagement.

Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, MD, FY 2018: To support a project featuring contemporary artist Roberto Lugo, invited to make new work and create an installation using the museum's ceramics collection. The new installation will tell the intersecting stories of the people who designed, built, occupied, and worked at One West Mount Vernon Place, a mid-19th-century Greek Revival mansion. Lugo aims to make the environment of the art museum accessible by permitting individuals, physically and symbolically, to occupy spaces that were previously denied to them. Public programming will include a community conversation, clay workshops, gallery talks, and after-school programs. Opening later this year.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: This important agency assists art museums in presenting humanities scholarship to the general public. NEH also plays an invaluable role in assisting with the preservation and conservation of important collections. This is exactly the type of unglamorous work for which it is chronically difficult to raise private funding, making federal support all the more valuable.

AAMD notes NEH's support of grant programs to benefit wounded warriors and to ensure educational opportunities for veterans and service members transitioning to civilian life. We also note NEH's new Infrastructure and Capacity-Building Challenge Grants program, which seeks to strengthen the institutional base of the humanities in the United States. Examples of recent grants include:

SFMOMA, San Francisco, CA, FY 2017. One of the first museums to recognize photography as an art form, SFMOMA has more than 17,800 photographic works,

dating from the advent of the medium in 1839 to the digital images of today. Deepening and expanding its commitment to photography, the new Pritzker Center for Photography nearly triples the space dedicated to photography, filling the majority of the third floor, the largest space permanently dedicated to photography in any art museum in the United States. The center includes enhanced permanent collection galleries and new special exhibition galleries, along with a study center and the Photography Interpretive Gallery, which was supported by a major grant from the NEH.

Louisville-Jefferson County. Louisville, KY, FY 2017. The grant has enabled the purchase of new software, training costs, printing, transportation of participating youth, and staff compensation through the Cultural Pass Program, which provides free access for children to Louisville culture all summer long, including the Speed Art Museum.

Cummer Museum Foundation. Jacksonville, FL, FY 2018, for conservation of outdoor collections damaged by Hurricane Irma.

Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Eugene, OR, FY 2018, for the rehousing of 134 Asian paintings. This work will improve preservation of historic scrolls, including Chinese, Japanese, and Korean paintings, and promote access to these significant 19th-century works for use within the university community, for undergraduate research projects, museum exhibitions, as well as for related public programs that reach a broad audience.

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE: We also ask that the Subcommittee provide FWS with the funding necessary to staff and train personnel in order to avoid placing impediments on American art museums as they carry out their mission, not only to temporarily exhibit works of art to the public, which contain ivory, but also to be able to legally acquire works of antique ivory from abroad.

FWS staff have worked well with the art museum community on several important issues related to its mission and, as they continue to craft regulations that recognize the importance of maintaining historic works, we urge that they be given all necessary support and resources.

ABOUT AAMD: The purpose of the Association of Art Museum Directors is to support its members in increasing the contribution of art museums to society. The AAMD accomplishes this mission by establishing and maintaining the highest standards of professional practice, serving as forum for the exchange of information and ideas, acting as an advocate for its member art museums, and being a leader in shaping public discourse about the arts community and the role of art in society.

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