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ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO CONGRATULATES MARTHA TEDESCHI ON HER APPOINTMENT AS THE NEW DIRECTOR OF THE HARVARD ART MUSEUMS

CHICAGO—James Rondeau, President and Eloise W. Martin Director of the Art Institute of Chicago, confirmed today that the museum’s Deputy Director for Art and Research Martha Tedeschi, after months of careful consideration, has accepted an appointment to become the next Elizabeth and John Moors Cabot Director of the Harvard Art Museums. Tedeschi will depart the Art Institute of Chicago to assume her new title and duties in July 2016.

Since her appointment in 2012 as Deputy Director for Art and Research, Tedeschi has overseen the museum’s departments and programs related to content and curatorial practice, including the world-renowned Ryerson and Burnham Libraries and Archives; Departments of Conservation, Publishing and Imaging; the Mellon Academic Programs designed to enrich graduate and undergraduate study in art history and increase curatorial diversity in U.S. museums; and the day-to-day activities and long-term strategic planning of the museum’s eleven curatorial departments.

Rondeau shared his admiration and congratulations, “While we will miss Martha, we deeply appreciate the exceptional contributions she has made during more than 30 years of service to the Art Institute of Chicago, and we are thrilled to see one of our most dedicated and outstanding leaders achieve such an important and prestigious position.” Rondeau added, “Martha’s success reflects and affirms the progressive strength of our museum to identify and cultivate diverse talent and leadership potential."

Martha Tedeschi offered, “It is a tremendous privilege to be chosen to lead the Harvard Art Museums at this exciting moment in their history. As I assume my new post, I will carry with me the lessons and opportunities afforded me during my long career at the Art Institute, for which I am deeply grateful. I have had the privilege of working with very gifted directors, including Douglas Druick, my longtime mentor, and now James Rondeau, a cherished colleague. I will miss the Art Institute family more than I can say, but I have the satisfaction of knowing that I leave the museum in excellent hands and with a brilliant plan for the future.”
Tedeschi began her career at the Art of Chicago as a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Intern in 1982, and became a full curator in 1999. She held the Prince Trust Curatorship in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the Art Institute from 2011-2012. A specialist in British and American art, with a strong secondary interest in the history of printmaking in early modern Europe, she has published extensively, organized critically acclaimed exhibitions, and collaborated with conservators and conservation scientists on groundbreaking research.

Douglas Druick, former President and Director of the Art Institute and longtime colleague of Tedeschi, shared his praise and congratulations, “A gifted scholar, thoughtful leader, creative manager, and skilled mentor, Martha’s passion for expanding the definition and scope of museum education, for fostering visual literacy among diverse audiences, and for encouraging new generations of museum professionals makes her a perfect fit for this new role at Harvard.”

Tedeschi is the general editor and co-author of the two-volume catalogue raisonné The Lithographs of James McNeill Whistler (1998), winner of the George Wittenborn award for excellence in art publishing. Tedeschi served as the organizing curator of the exhibition Watercolors by Winslow Homer: The Color of Light, (2008) and for its sequel, John Marin’s Watercolors: A Medium for Modernism (2011). Both projects involved robust collaborations with conservators and conservation scientists. Her most recent exhibition was Undressed: The Fashion of Privacy (Summer 2013). As an administrator, she spearheaded the Art Institute’s comprehensive assessment and digitization of its permanent collection; implemented an ambitious Andrew W. Mellon Foundation partnership with the University of Chicago and Northwestern University around teaching graduate students from objects; and oversaw the major Mellon-funded pilot project designed to offer training and mentoring to students who support the important goals of fostering inclusive, pluralistic museums and increasing the engagement of historically underrepresented groups in the curatorial field.

Tedeschi also served as director of the Art Institute’s Print and Drawing Club and founding director of the respected Internship Program in Prints and Drawings. A board member of the Association of Art Museum Curators, and co-chair of that organization’s Nominating and Governance Committee, she is also active in the College Art Association, a former chair of the Art Institute of Chicago’s Curators Forum, recent past President of the Print Council of America (2009-2013), and a 2012 Fellow of the Center for Curatorial Leadership. Tedeschi received her B.A. with honors from Brown University, an M.A. from the University of Michigan, and her Ph.D. from Northwestern University.

Images: Martha Tedeschi. The Art Institute of Chicago.

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