

INDIANAPOLIS MUSEUM OF ART DECLARES MORATORIUM ON ACQUISITION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBJECTS LACKING ADEQUATE PROVENANCE

INDIANAPOLIS – April 16, 2007 – The Indianapolis Museum of Art announced today that it has declared a moratorium on the acquisition of archaeological objects lacking provenance it deems to be adequate. The resolution restricts the acquisition of archaeological objects to those which can be shown to have left their probable country of modern discovery prior to 1970, the year in which the United Nations established a protocol to aid countries in the protection of their antiquities, and to those antiquities with documentation attesting to legal export from their probable country of modern discovery after 1970. The moratorium, which is effective immediately, will remain in place while the museum evaluates and reframes its policies related to the collection of antiquities and ancient art.

The resolution comes as many museums revisit their policies surrounding the acquisition of antiquities, with the goal of instituting the best possible practices in a complex and changing environment. The moratorium will affect the consideration of all archaeological objects, and will apply to prospective purchases, gifts, bequests, and exchanges.

“The IMA, like all museums, has a responsibility to maintain the highest possible standards of ethics and professional practices,” said Maxwell L. Anderson, Director and CEO of the IMA. “The adoption of a conscientious system for the preservation of ancient objects and the stories they have to tell is of foremost importance to the Museum. This moratorium will enable us to develop a comprehensive acquisitions policy through careful deliberation.”

The IMA will continue to pursue acquisitions of antiquities with provenance as follows:

- Documentation of an object’s arrival in the United States by 1970
- Documentation of an object’s removal from its probable country of modern discovery before 1970
- Documentation of an object’s legal export from its probable country of modern discovery after 1970, along with evidence that it has been/ will be legally imported into the United States

As it reevaluates its policies, the IMA will work to educate the public on key issues surrounding the collecting of antiquities, as well as building a broader understanding of museum collection practices.

About the IMA

Encompassing 152 acres of gardens and grounds, the IMA connects visitors to its unique and expansive view of art with its Indianapolis Museum of Art, the future Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park and Oldfields–Lilly House & Gardens. The Indianapolis Museum of Art is the fifth largest encyclopedic art museum in the United States and features significant collections of African, American, Asian, European, contemporary and decorative art, including paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings and photographs, textiles and costumes.

The IMA has recently completed a \$74 million expansion project that features three new wings, 50 percent more gallery space, expanded educational spaces, two new restaurants by Wolfgang Puck Catering and an enhanced gift store. The construction added 164,000 square feet to the Museum and included a renovation of 90,000 square feet of existing space.

For more information, call 317.923.1331 or visit www.ima-art.org.

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Media Contacts:

Jessica Di Santo/Katie Zarich

IMA

317-920-2650/317-923-1331 x 295

jdisanto@ima.museum/ kzarich@ima.museum

Ilana B. Simon/Kat Rosenfield

Resnicow Schroeder Associates

212.671.5176/212.671.5177

isimon@resnicowschroeder.com/krosenfield@resnicowschroeder.com