

For Immediate Release: May 5, 2011

## **Indianapolis Museum of Art Launches Groundbreaking Mellon Curators-at-Large Program Piloting New Model for Museum Scholarly Appointments**

*The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation \$1.025 million grant enables IMA to bolster curatorial resources and permanent collection research*

*Renowned scholars of Chinese art, James Watt and art of India and South Asia, Mahrukh Tarapor Appointed for Inaugural Year*

**INDIANAPOLIS, IN**, May 5, 2011— The Indianapolis Museum of Art announced today it has received a \$1.025 million grant by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to fund a three-year pilot program that will allow leading scholars to conduct groundbreaking research on the IMA's collections while piloting a global model for future scholarly appointments at museums. Over each of the three years the IMA will name two curators to year-long appointments. The inaugural Mellon Curators-at-Large, who will begin working with the IMA in the fall of 2011, are James Watt, renowned Chinese art specialist, and Mahrukh Tarapor, whose fields of interest are the arts of India, South Asia, and the Islamic world.

The Curators-at-Large will work from their home base or from another city to conduct research on the IMA's permanent collection and facilitate long-term loans from abroad. Regular visits to Indianapolis will take place as part of their tenure, and the latest high-definition teleconferencing tools will allow ongoing visual communications between the Curators-at-Large and the IMA's collections and curatorial staff. Over the three-year pilot period, six scholars will contribute expertise in the following areas: art of India and South Asia, Chinese art, art of the Americas, African art, design arts and Islamic art.

"The Mellon Curators-at-Large Program fulfills a critical need for curatorial support at the IMA in specific areas of our collection," said Maxwell L. Anderson, The Melvin & Bren Simon Director and CEO of the IMA. "This program will allow the Museum to rejuvenate the permanent collection through targeted research from distinguished scholars working with other scholars on the IMA's staff. I am grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for its generosity and confidence in the IMA's vision for the future of museums. New teleconferencing technology purchased to help facilitate this program will allow staff at the IMA to be in regular communication with colleagues around the world."

James Watt is Brooke Russell Astor Chairman of the Department of Asian Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. He recently announced that after 26 years of service at The Met, he will retire on June 30. Home to one of the nation's finest collections of Chinese ceramics, the IMA has an encyclopedic collection of Chinese art that includes ancient bronze ritual vessels, jades, textiles and paintings. During his tenure, Watt will work with John Teramoto, curator of Asian art at the IMA, to reinstall the IMA's Asian galleries. Watt also will investigate the potential for long-term loans of archaeological material from Chinese sites.

Mahrukh Tarapor also concluded a celebrated career at the Metropolitan where she served as Associate Director for Exhibitions and Director for International Affairs until 2010. Tarapor's fields of interest are the arts of India, South Asia, and the Islamic world. Currently based in Geneva, Switzerland, Tarapor will initiate collaborative exchanges and loan programs aimed at telling the broader story of art from India.

The Curator-at-Large concept is the latest IMA initiative supported by The Mellon Foundation. In February 2009, the IMA announced a \$1.75 million grant to establish an endowment for the position of senior conservation scientist and open a conservation science laboratory. The laboratory opened in March 2011.

#### **Dr. Mahrukh Tarapor**

Dr. Mahrukh Tarapor is an inaugural Mellon Curator-at-Large at the IMA. Her one-year term begins October 1. Tarapor spent 27 years at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, joining the Museum in 1983. She was responsible for the Museum's program of exhibitions and served as Associate Director for Exhibitions. In that role she negotiated loans worldwide for exhibitions such as *Egyptian Art in the Age of the Pyramids* (1999); *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 A.D.* (2004); *The Glory of Byzantium* (1997) and its sequel *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)* [2004]; *Art of the First Cities: The Third Millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus* (2003) and its sequel *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C.* (2008). In 2006, she was also appointed Director for International Affairs and established the Metropolitan's first full-time office abroad in Geneva, Switzerland. In that role, she expanded the Museum's cultural relationships with museums and governments in Europe, the Middle East and Asia while continuing to oversee activities of the exhibition office in New York. Tarapor received her Ph.D. from Harvard University.

#### **James Watt**

James Watt is an inaugural Mellon Curator-at-Large at the IMA. His one-year term begins October 1. Watt joined The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1985 and became Brooke Russell Astor Senior Curator in the Metropolitan's Department of Asian Art in 1988. He also served as Brooke Russell Astor Senior Research Curator beginning in 1997. During his distinguished career, Watt planned and installed the Metropolitan's ancient China galleries (1987) and Chinese decorative arts galleries (1997). He also authored 15 catalogues and organized a number of exhibitions at the Museum including *East Asian Lacquer* (1991), *Splendors of Imperial China* (with Wen C. Fong, 1996), and *When Silk Was Gold* (1998). Watt will retire from the Metropolitan on June 30, 2011, and become Curator Emeritus. Prior to joining the Metropolitan he served in various roles at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, (1982-1985); Chinese University of Hong Kong (1977-80); Institute of Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong (1971-1981); and Hong Kong City Museum and Art Gallery (1964-1971). Watt studied at The King's College, Taunton; the Queen's College, Oxford; and the University of Hong Kong.

#### **About the Indianapolis Museum of Art**

Encompassing 152 acres of gardens and grounds, the Indianapolis Museum of Art is among the 10 largest and oldest encyclopedic art museums in the United States, and features significant collections of African, American, Asian, European and contemporary art, as well as a newly established collection of design arts. The IMA offers visitors an expansive view of arts and culture through its collection of more than 54,000 works of art that span 5,000 years of history from across the world's continents. The collections include paintings, sculpture, furniture and design objects, prints, drawings and photographs, as well as textiles and costumes.

Additionally, art, design, and nature are featured at 100 Acres: The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park and Oldfields—Lilly House & Gardens, an historic Country Place Era estate on the IMA grounds. Beyond the Indianapolis campus, in May 2011 the IMA will open to the public the recently acquired landmark Miller House and Garden in Columbus, Indiana. One of the country's most highly regarded examples of mid-century Modernist residences, the Miller House was designed by Eero Saarinen, with interiors by Alexander Girard, and landscape design by Dan Kiley.



4000 Michigan Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46208-3326  
t 317-923-1331  
f 317-920-0399  
[imamuseum.org](http://imamuseum.org)

Recognizing the IMA's positive impact on its community, the Museum was named a recipient of the 2009 National Medal for Museum and Library Services – the nation's highest honor for museums and libraries. The IMA's commitment to free general admission, programming for schools and teachers, environmental leadership and online initiatives were among cited community contributions in the Museum's selection for the award.

Located at 4000 Michigan Road, the IMA and Lilly House are open Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. The IMA is closed Mondays and Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's days. For more information, call 317-923-1331 or visit [www.imamuseum.org](http://www.imamuseum.org).

###

**Media Contacts:**

Katie Zarich / Candace Gwaltney  
IMA  
317-920-2650 / 317-923-1331 x 239  
[kzarich](mailto:kzarich) / [cgwaltney@imamuseum.org](mailto:cgwaltney@imamuseum.org)

Ilana B. Simon / Molly Kurzius  
Resnicow Schroeder Associates  
720-746-9552 / 212-671-5163  
[isimon](mailto:isimon) / [mkurzius@resnicowschroeder.com](mailto:mkurzius@resnicowschroeder.com)

For Immediate Release: May 5, 2011

## **Indianapolis Museum of Art Launches Groundbreaking Mellon Curators-at-Large Program Piloting New Model for Museum Scholarly Appointments**

*The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation \$1.025 million grant enables IMA to bolster curatorial resources and permanent collection research*

*Renowned scholars of Chinese art, James Watt and art of India and South Asia, Mahrukh Tarapor Appointed for Inaugural Year*

**INDIANAPOLIS, IN**, May 5, 2011— The Indianapolis Museum of Art announced today it has received a \$1.025 million grant by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to fund a three-year pilot program that will allow leading scholars to conduct groundbreaking research on the IMA's collections while piloting a global model for future scholarly appointments at museums. Over each of the three years the IMA will name two curators to year-long appointments. The inaugural Mellon Curators-at-Large, who will begin working with the IMA in the fall of 2011, are James Watt, renowned Chinese art specialist, and Mahrukh Tarapor, whose fields of interest are the arts of India, South Asia, and the Islamic world.

The Curators-at-Large will work from their home base or from another city to conduct research on the IMA's permanent collection and facilitate long-term loans from abroad. Regular visits to Indianapolis will take place as part of their tenure, and the latest high-definition teleconferencing tools will allow ongoing visual communications between the Curators-at-Large and the IMA's collections and curatorial staff. Over the three-year pilot period, six scholars will contribute expertise in the following areas: art of India and South Asia, Chinese art, art of the Americas, African art, design arts and Islamic art.

"The Mellon Curators-at-Large Program fulfills a critical need for curatorial support at the IMA in specific areas of our collection," said Maxwell L. Anderson, The Melvin & Bren Simon Director and CEO of the IMA. "This program will allow the Museum to rejuvenate the permanent collection through targeted research from distinguished scholars working with other scholars on the IMA's staff. I am grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for its generosity and confidence in the IMA's vision for the future of museums. New teleconferencing technology purchased to help facilitate this program will allow staff at the IMA to be in regular communication with colleagues around the world."

James Watt is Brooke Russell Astor Chairman of the Department of Asian Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. He recently announced that after 26 years of service at The Met, he will retire on June 30. Home to one of the nation's finest collections of Chinese ceramics, the IMA has an encyclopedic collection of Chinese art that includes ancient bronze ritual vessels, jades, textiles and paintings. During his tenure, Watt will work with John Teramoto, curator of Asian art at the IMA, to reinstall the IMA's Asian galleries. Watt also will investigate the potential for long-term loans of archaeological material from Chinese sites.

Mahrukh Tarapor also concluded a celebrated career at the Metropolitan where she served as Associate Director for Exhibitions and Director for International Affairs until 2010. Tarapor's fields of interest are the arts of India, South Asia, and the Islamic world. Currently based in Geneva, Switzerland, Tarapor will initiate collaborative exchanges and loan programs aimed at telling the broader story of art from India.

The Curator-at-Large concept is the latest IMA initiative supported by The Mellon Foundation. In February 2009, the IMA announced a \$1.75 million grant to establish an endowment for the position of senior conservation scientist and open a conservation science laboratory. The laboratory opened in March 2011.

#### **Dr. Mahrukh Tarapor**

Dr. Mahrukh Tarapor is an inaugural Mellon Curator-at-Large at the IMA. Her one-year term begins October 1. Tarapor spent 27 years at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, joining the Museum in 1983. She was responsible for the Museum's program of exhibitions and served as Associate Director for Exhibitions. In that role she negotiated loans worldwide for exhibitions such as *Egyptian Art in the Age of the Pyramids* (1999); *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 A.D.* (2004); *The Glory of Byzantium* (1997) and its sequel *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)* [2004]; *Art of the First Cities: The Third Millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus* (2003) and its sequel *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C.* (2008). In 2006, she was also appointed Director for International Affairs and established the Metropolitan's first full-time office abroad in Geneva, Switzerland. In that role, she expanded the Museum's cultural relationships with museums and governments in Europe, the Middle East and Asia while continuing to oversee activities of the exhibition office in New York. Tarapor received her Ph.D. from Harvard University.

#### **James Watt**

James Watt is an inaugural Mellon Curator-at-Large at the IMA. His one-year term begins October 1. Watt joined The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1985 and became Brooke Russell Astor Senior Curator in the Metropolitan's Department of Asian Art in 1988. He also served as Brooke Russell Astor Senior Research Curator beginning in 1997. During his distinguished career, Watt planned and installed the Metropolitan's ancient China galleries (1987) and Chinese decorative arts galleries (1997). He also authored 15 catalogues and organized a number of exhibitions at the Museum including *East Asian Lacquer* (1991), *Splendors of Imperial China* (with Wen C. Fong, 1996), and *When Silk Was Gold* (1998). Watt will retire from the Metropolitan on June 30, 2011, and become Curator Emeritus. Prior to joining the Metropolitan he served in various roles at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, (1982-1985); Chinese University of Hong Kong (1977-80); Institute of Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong (1971-1981); and Hong Kong City Museum and Art Gallery (1964-1971). Watt studied at The King's College, Taunton; the Queen's College, Oxford; and the University of Hong Kong.

#### **About the Indianapolis Museum of Art**

Encompassing 152 acres of gardens and grounds, the Indianapolis Museum of Art is among the 10 largest and oldest encyclopedic art museums in the United States, and features significant collections of African, American, Asian, European and contemporary art, as well as a newly established collection of design arts. The IMA offers visitors an expansive view of arts and culture through its collection of more than 54,000 works of art that span 5,000 years of history from across the world's continents. The collections include paintings, sculpture, furniture and design objects, prints, drawings and photographs, as well as textiles and costumes.

Additionally, art, design, and nature are featured at 100 Acres: The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park and Oldfields—Lilly House & Gardens, an historic Country Place Era estate on the IMA grounds. Beyond the Indianapolis campus, in May 2011 the IMA will open to the public the recently acquired landmark Miller House and Garden in Columbus, Indiana. One of the country's most highly regarded examples of mid-century Modernist residences, the Miller House was designed by Eero Saarinen, with interiors by Alexander Girard, and landscape design by Dan Kiley.



4000 Michigan Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46208-3326  
t 317-923-1331  
f 317-920-0399  
[imamuseum.org](http://imamuseum.org)

Recognizing the IMA's positive impact on its community, the Museum was named a recipient of the 2009 National Medal for Museum and Library Services – the nation's highest honor for museums and libraries. The IMA's commitment to free general admission, programming for schools and teachers, environmental leadership and online initiatives were among cited community contributions in the Museum's selection for the award.

Located at 4000 Michigan Road, the IMA and Lilly House are open Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. The IMA is closed Mondays and Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's days. For more information, call 317-923-1331 or visit [www.imamuseum.org](http://www.imamuseum.org).

###

**Media Contacts:**

Katie Zarich / Candace Gwaltney  
IMA  
317-920-2650 / 317-923-1331 x 239  
[kzarich](mailto:kzarich) / [cgwaltney@imamuseum.org](mailto:cgwaltney@imamuseum.org)

Ilana B. Simon / Molly Kurzius  
Resnicow Schroeder Associates  
720-746-9552 / 212-671-5163  
[isimon](mailto:isimon) / [mkurzius@resnicowschroeder.com](mailto:mkurzius@resnicowschroeder.com)

For Immediate Release: May 5, 2011

## **Indianapolis Museum of Art Launches Groundbreaking Mellon Curators-at-Large Program Piloting New Model for Museum Scholarly Appointments**

*The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation \$1.025 million grant enables IMA to bolster curatorial resources and permanent collection research*

*Renowned scholars of Chinese art, James Watt and art of India and South Asia, Mahrukh Tarapor Appointed for Inaugural Year*

**INDIANAPOLIS, IN**, May 5, 2011— The Indianapolis Museum of Art announced today it has received a \$1.025 million grant by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to fund a three-year pilot program that will allow leading scholars to conduct groundbreaking research on the IMA's collections while piloting a global model for future scholarly appointments at museums. Over each of the three years the IMA will name two curators to year-long appointments. The inaugural Mellon Curators-at-Large, who will begin working with the IMA in the fall of 2011, are James Watt, renowned Chinese art specialist, and Mahrukh Tarapor, whose fields of interest are the arts of India, South Asia, and the Islamic world.

The Curators-at-Large will work from their home base or from another city to conduct research on the IMA's permanent collection and facilitate long-term loans from abroad. Regular visits to Indianapolis will take place as part of their tenure, and the latest high-definition teleconferencing tools will allow ongoing visual communications between the Curators-at-Large and the IMA's collections and curatorial staff. Over the three-year pilot period, six scholars will contribute expertise in the following areas: art of India and South Asia, Chinese art, art of the Americas, African art, design arts and Islamic art.

"The Mellon Curators-at-Large Program fulfills a critical need for curatorial support at the IMA in specific areas of our collection," said Maxwell L. Anderson, The Melvin & Bren Simon Director and CEO of the IMA. "This program will allow the Museum to rejuvenate the permanent collection through targeted research from distinguished scholars working with other scholars on the IMA's staff. I am grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for its generosity and confidence in the IMA's vision for the future of museums. New teleconferencing technology purchased to help facilitate this program will allow staff at the IMA to be in regular communication with colleagues around the world."

James Watt is Brooke Russell Astor Chairman of the Department of Asian Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. He recently announced that after 26 years of service at The Met, he will retire on June 30. Home to one of the nation's finest collections of Chinese ceramics, the IMA has an encyclopedic collection of Chinese art that includes ancient bronze ritual vessels, jades, textiles and paintings. During his tenure, Watt will work with John Teramoto, curator of Asian art at the IMA, to reinstall the IMA's Asian galleries. Watt also will investigate the potential for long-term loans of archaeological material from Chinese sites.

Mahrukh Tarapor also concluded a celebrated career at the Metropolitan where she served as Associate Director for Exhibitions and Director for International Affairs until 2010. Tarapor's fields of interest are the arts of India, South Asia, and the Islamic world. Currently based in Geneva, Switzerland, Tarapor will initiate collaborative exchanges and loan programs aimed at telling the broader story of art from India.

The Curator-at-Large concept is the latest IMA initiative supported by The Mellon Foundation. In February 2009, the IMA announced a \$1.75 million grant to establish an endowment for the position of senior conservation scientist and open a conservation science laboratory. The laboratory opened in March 2011.

#### **Dr. Mahrukh Tarapor**

Dr. Mahrukh Tarapor is an inaugural Mellon Curator-at-Large at the IMA. Her one-year term begins October 1. Tarapor spent 27 years at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, joining the Museum in 1983. She was responsible for the Museum's program of exhibitions and served as Associate Director for Exhibitions. In that role she negotiated loans worldwide for exhibitions such as *Egyptian Art in the Age of the Pyramids* (1999); *China: Dawn of a Golden Age, 200-750 A.D.* (2004); *The Glory of Byzantium* (1997) and its sequel *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)* [2004]; *Art of the First Cities: The Third Millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus* (2003) and its sequel *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C.* (2008). In 2006, she was also appointed Director for International Affairs and established the Metropolitan's first full-time office abroad in Geneva, Switzerland. In that role, she expanded the Museum's cultural relationships with museums and governments in Europe, the Middle East and Asia while continuing to oversee activities of the exhibition office in New York. Tarapor received her Ph.D. from Harvard University.

#### **James Watt**

James Watt is an inaugural Mellon Curator-at-Large at the IMA. His one-year term begins October 1. Watt joined The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1985 and became Brooke Russell Astor Senior Curator in the Metropolitan's Department of Asian Art in 1988. He also served as Brooke Russell Astor Senior Research Curator beginning in 1997. During his distinguished career, Watt planned and installed the Metropolitan's ancient China galleries (1987) and Chinese decorative arts galleries (1997). He also authored 15 catalogues and organized a number of exhibitions at the Museum including *East Asian Lacquer* (1991), *Splendors of Imperial China* (with Wen C. Fong, 1996), and *When Silk Was Gold* (1998). Watt will retire from the Metropolitan on June 30, 2011, and become Curator Emeritus. Prior to joining the Metropolitan he served in various roles at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, (1982-1985); Chinese University of Hong Kong (1977-80); Institute of Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong (1971-1981); and Hong Kong City Museum and Art Gallery (1964-1971). Watt studied at The King's College, Taunton; the Queen's College, Oxford; and the University of Hong Kong.

#### **About the Indianapolis Museum of Art**

Encompassing 152 acres of gardens and grounds, the Indianapolis Museum of Art is among the 10 largest and oldest encyclopedic art museums in the United States, and features significant collections of African, American, Asian, European and contemporary art, as well as a newly established collection of design arts. The IMA offers visitors an expansive view of arts and culture through its collection of more than 54,000 works of art that span 5,000 years of history from across the world's continents. The collections include paintings, sculpture, furniture and design objects, prints, drawings and photographs, as well as textiles and costumes.

Additionally, art, design, and nature are featured at 100 Acres: The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park and Oldfields—Lilly House & Gardens, an historic Country Place Era estate on the IMA grounds. Beyond the Indianapolis campus, in May 2011 the IMA will open to the public the recently acquired landmark Miller House and Garden in Columbus, Indiana. One of the country's most highly regarded examples of mid-century Modernist residences, the Miller House was designed by Eero Saarinen, with interiors by Alexander Girard, and landscape design by Dan Kiley.



4000 Michigan Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46208-3326  
t 317-923-1331  
f 317-920-0399  
[imamuseum.org](http://imamuseum.org)

Recognizing the IMA's positive impact on its community, the Museum was named a recipient of the 2009 National Medal for Museum and Library Services – the nation's highest honor for museums and libraries. The IMA's commitment to free general admission, programming for schools and teachers, environmental leadership and online initiatives were among cited community contributions in the Museum's selection for the award.

Located at 4000 Michigan Road, the IMA and Lilly House are open Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. The IMA is closed Mondays and Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's days. For more information, call 317-923-1331 or visit [www.imamuseum.org](http://www.imamuseum.org).

###

**Media Contacts:**

Katie Zarich / Candace Gwaltney  
IMA  
317-920-2650 / 317-923-1331 x 239  
[kzarich](mailto:kzarich) / [cgwaltney@imamuseum.org](mailto:cgwaltney@imamuseum.org)

Ilana B. Simon / Molly Kurzius  
Resnicow Schroeder Associates  
720-746-9552 / 212-671-5163  
[isimon](mailto:isimon) / [mkurzius@resnicowschroeder.com](mailto:mkurzius@resnicowschroeder.com)