

PRESS RELEASE

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FRENCH GOVERNMENT NAMES SEATTLE ART MUSEUM CURATOR CHIYO ISHIKAWA “CHEVALIER DE L'ORDRE DES ARTS ET DES LETTRES”

Order of merit awarded for “significant contribution to the enrichment of the French cultural inheritance”



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SEATTLE, WA - The Seattle Art Museum announced that Dr. Chiyo Ishikawa, SAM's Susan Brotman Deputy Director for Art and Curator of European Painting and Sculpture, has been awarded the *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) by the French Minister of Culture. In receiving this—one of France's most distinguished titles—Ishikawa joins a prestigious group of artists, writers, scholars, and producers recognized for fostering French arts and culture.

The award was presented in a ceremony at the museum on January 17th, 2018, and was bestowed by Emmanuel Lebrun-Damiens, Consul General of France based in San Francisco. “This award recognizes eminent artists and writers, and those who have contributed significantly to furthering the arts in France and throughout the world,” says Lebrun-Damiens. “Chiyo Ishikawa could not be more deserving of the title.”

The presentation preceded a SAM member event, Conversations with Curators, at which Ishikawa gave a lecture on a significant maritime painting recently acquired by the museum, *Shipwreck off the Coast of Alaska*, by French artist Louis-Philippe Crépin (1772-1851).

Ishikawa has been with the museum since 1990. In 2004, she co-curated *Spain in the Age of Exploration 1492-1819*, for which His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain awarded her the Order of Isabel la Católica, often called the Royal American Order of Isabella the Catholic. She was SAM's curator for notable exhibitions related to French art and culture, including *Impressionism: Paintings Collected by European Museums*; *Picasso: Masterpieces from the Musée National Picasso, Paris*; *Gauguin & Polynesia: An Elusive Paradise*; and *Yves Saint Laurent: The Perfection of Style*.

Dr. Ishikawa is an adjunct professor in the Department of History of Art at the University of Washington in Seattle. Previously, she worked in the Department



of European Painting at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and in the Department of Paintings Conservation at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. She has a Ph.D. in Art History from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania.

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ABOUT SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

As the leading visual art institution in the Pacific Northwest, SAM draws on its global collections, powerful exhibitions, and dynamic programs to provide unique educational resources benefiting the Seattle region, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. SAM was founded in 1933 with a focus on Asian art. By the late 1980s the museum had outgrown its original home, and in 1991 a new 155,000-square-foot downtown building, designed by Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates, opened to the public. The 1933 building was renovated and reopened as the Asian Art Museum in 1994. SAM's desire to further serve its community was realized in 2007 with the opening of two stunning new facilities: the nine-acre Olympic Sculpture Park (designed by Weiss/Manfredi Architects)—a “museum without walls,” free and open to all—and the Allied Works Architecture-designed 118,000-square-foot expansion of its main, downtown location, including 232,000 square feet of additional space built for future expansion. The Olympic Sculpture Park and SAM's downtown expansion celebrate their tenth anniversary in 2017.

From a strong foundation of Asian art to noteworthy collections of African and Oceanic art, Northwest Coast Native American art, European and American art, and modern and contemporary art, the strength of SAM's collection of approximately 25,000 objects lies in its diversity of media, cultures, and time periods.