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Press Release

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KIRK VARNEDOE, RENOWNED ART HISTORIAN AND AUTHOR, IS FEATURED SPEAKER IN NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART'S 52ND A. W. MELLON LECTURES IN THE FINE ARTS

Washington, DC -- The National Gallery of Art's Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (CASVA) has announced the 52nd A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts. The lecture series, *Pictures of Nothing: Abstract Art since Pollock*, will be given by renowned art historian and author Kirk Varnedoe, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. All lectures are on Sundays at 2:00 p.m. in the East Building Auditorium, and are free of charge to the public; seating is first come, first served. The series includes the following lectures:

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| March 30 | <i>Why Abstract Art?</i> |
| April 6 | <i>Survivals and Fresh Starts</i> |
| April 13 | <i>Minimalism</i> |
| April 27 | <i>After Minimalism</i> |
| May 4 | <i>Satire, Irony, and Abstract Art</i> |
| May 11 | <i>Abstract Art Now</i> |

Kirk Varnedoe

Kirk Varnedoe was appointed in September 2001 as professor of the history of art in the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. Prior to that, he served for thirteen years (1988-2001) as chief curator of the department of painting and sculpture at The Museum of Modern Art in New York. He also teaches, as a visiting lecturer, at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, where he was on the faculty from 1980 to 1988. He received his B.A. from Williams College (1967) and his M.A. (1970) and Ph.D. (1972) from Stanford University.

During his graduate years Varnedoe was awarded a David E. Finley Fellowship by the National Gallery of Art and spent a period of residency as a fellow at the Gallery. He also taught at Columbia University from 1974 to 1980, and in 1992 he was the Slade Professor at Oxford University. As a curator, he has organized major exhibitions for The Museum of Modern Art and other institutions. Most recently, he was a member of the international team of curators that organized **Matisse Picasso**, currently on view at MoMAQNS (The Museum of Modern Art's temporary headquarters in Queens, N.Y.).

Varnedoe has authored 18 books, including volumes on many 19th-century topics- Gustave Caillebotte; Max Klinger; Auguste Rodin, with coauthor Albert Elsen; and Scandinavian art- as well as monographs on prominent artists of the 20th century, including Jackson Pollock, with coauthor Pepe Karmel; Cy Twombly; and Jasper Johns. His more thematically oriented publications include *A Fine Disregard: What Makes Modern Art Modern* (1990) and the exhibition catalogue, coauthored with Adam Gopnik, *High and Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture* (1990). Varnedoe is the recipient of numerous honors, and is a member of The American Academy of Arts and Sciences and The American Philosophical Society. He received the Royal Order of the Dannebrog from Denmark in 1983, and was awarded by France the title of Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 1999. He is also the recipient of honorary degrees from Williams College and Pratt Institute, and in 1984 he received a five-year MacArthur Foundation Fellowship.

Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts

CASVA was founded 24 years ago to promote the study of the history, theory, and criticism of art, architecture, and urbanism through the formation of a community of scholars. A variety of private sources supports the program of fellowships and research. The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts were formally established on December 6, 1949, and are designed to bring to the people of the United States the results of the best contemporary thought and scholarship bearing upon the subject of the Fine Arts.

General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden, located on the National Mall between Third and Ninth Streets at Constitution Avenue, NW, are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1.

Visitors will be asked to present all bags for inspection as they enter the Gallery. Luggage or garment bags will not be permitted in either building and may not be checked.

General information: (202) 737-4215
Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD): (202) 842-6176.
To receive the Gallery's free bimonthly Calendar of Events call (202) 842-6662

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