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## Jonathan Bober Named A. W. Mellon Senior Curator of Prints and Drawings at National Gallery of Art, Washington



Jonathan Bober in the prints and drawings study room at the National Gallery of Art, Washington  
Photo by Division of Imaging and Visual Services

Washington, DC—Jonathan Bober has been named the National Gallery of Art's Andrew W. Mellon Senior Curator of Prints and Drawings. Bober's appointment becomes effective on October 1, 2016, when he succeeds Andrew Robison, who retires from the position on September 30, 2016. Bober will oversee the continuing work and growth of the Gallery's three departments of prints and drawings that Robison cultivated and nurtured for more than 40 years.

"Jonathan Bober is a brilliant curator and connoisseur with an outstanding track record of exhibitions and publications, and a remarkable degree of knowledge about both prints and drawings," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "We are delighted that he is assuming this prestigious role in our curatorial ranks."

Bober asserts that "it is inspiring and more than a bit daunting to succeed a legendary curator. First and foremost, I hope to build on the most celebrated part of Andrew Robison's legacy: extraordinary acquisitions of exemplary quality that further strengthen the core of this great collection," said Bober. "The Division of Prints and Drawings has a dual tradition of breathtaking presentation and groundbreaking scholarship for our exhibitions and installations. It is an obligation to the field and to our visitors, today both physical and virtual, to maintain both traditions. But more than ever, the challenge—I believe the obligation—is to encourage an appreciation and understanding of art before that of our own time. No material can seem more remote and elusive than prints, and to a lesser extent, drawings. Yet the rewards, aesthetic and more broadly personal—patience, discrimination, grounding—are potentially the greatest."

Since 2011 Bober has served as curator and head of old master prints at the National Gallery of Art and has played a very active role across the institution, from key acquisitions to mentoring emerging scholars. Bober led the acquisition of some 2,000 prints by purchase, gift, and promised gift, most notably 18th-century Venetian and 19th-century Italian, making the Gallery's holdings the most significant in the U.S. During his tenure at the Gallery, Bober organized four Gallery exhibitions: *The Baroque Genius of Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione* (2012), *Northern Mannerist Prints from the Kainen Collection* (2013), *From Neoclassicism to Futurism: Italian Prints and Drawings, 1800–1925* (2014), and *Recent Acquisitions of Italian Renaissance Prints: Ideas Made Flesh* (2015). Since 2015, Bober has been the Gallery's curatorial liaison to the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (CASVA).

The Gallery's division of old master and modern prints and drawings, with nine curators, oversees one of the nation's finest collections of works on paper. In total, the Gallery's collection of prints, drawings, and illustrated books contains approximately 121,000 Western European and American works

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on paper and vellum dating from the 11th century to the present day.

Bober came to the Gallery in 2011 from the Blanton Museum at the University of Texas at Austin, where he served as a curator since 1987, first as curator of prints and drawings; from 1998 as curator of prints, drawings, and European painting; and from 2010 as senior curator of European art. Prior to his work at the Blanton Museum, he was curatorial associate in the print department of the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, from 1984 to 1987, where he completed his graduate work with Sydney Freedberg and Henri Zerner.

Over the course of Bober's career his exhibitions and publications have focused on old master paintings and old master and modern prints and drawings. They include *Luca Cambiaso, 1527–1585*, the international loan exhibition of the paintings, drawings, and prints of Luca Cambiaso and his Genoese contemporaries, (co-organized with the Palazzo Ducale, Genoa; Austin, September 2006–January 2007, and Genoa, March–July 2007), and *Capolavori della Suida-Manning Collection* (co-organized with Giulio Bora, Museo Civico, Cremona, October 2001–April 2002). In addition to catalogs of the Italian drawings in the Fogg Art Museum (1988) and Blanton Museum (2001), and numerous exhibition catalogs at the Blanton, Bober is the author of many catalog essays and scholarly articles appearing in such periodicals as *Master Drawings*, *The Burlington Magazine*, and *Arte Lombarda*. These concern painting and drawing as well as printmaking in 16th- and 17th-century Milan, Cremona, Venice, and Genoa.

Bober acquired for the Blanton Museum 11,000 of its 18,000 works (most with private support), including the extraordinary Suida-Manning Collection of old master paintings and drawings, art critic Leo Steinberg's extensive collection of old master prints, and many outstanding individual works in the field, including modern and contemporary. In addition to organizing exhibitions from the Blanton Museum's collection, such as *Prints of the Ancien Régime* (1996) and *The Language of Prints* (2008), Bober maintained a rotation of prints and drawings from the permanent collection in seven dedicated galleries. He helped develop the design of the new Blanton Museum and oversaw the creation of a new center for prints and drawings, which opened in April 2006.

Andrew Robison joined the curatorial staff of the National Gallery of Art in 1974, becoming Senior Curator in 1983 and A. W. Mellon Senior Curator in 1991. Over four decades Robison has curated dozens of exhibitions on art from the 15th through the 20th centuries, especially drawings and prints by early German artists, Rembrandt, 18th-century Venetian artists, German expressionists, and Pablo Picasso, as well as the multimedia exhibitions *Art for the Nation: Gifts in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art* (1991), *The Glory of Venice: Art in the Eighteenth Century* (1994–1995), *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: 1880–1938* (2003), and *Albrecht Dürer: Master Drawings, Watercolors, and Prints from the Albertina* (2013).

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**General Information**

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Avenue NW, and 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. For information call (202) 737-4215 or visit the Gallery's Web site at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov). Follow the Gallery on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt), Twitter at [www.twitter.com/ngadc](http://www.twitter.com/ngadc), and Instagram at <http://instagram.com/ngadc>.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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