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## **Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art Director Steps Down RISD Leadership and Interim Director to Build on Alswang's Accomplishments**

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**PROVIDENCE, RI – August 3, 2009** – Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) has announced Hope Alswang's resignation as the director of the RISD Museum of Art. Effective today, Alswang will leave to pursue other opportunities.

"We at RISD are grateful for all that Hope accomplished during her tenure here – from increased Museum visitation to the restoration of Museum buildings and her leadership in the community," said John Maeda, RISD's president. "We wish her all of the best as she continues her distinguished career."

Under Alswang's leadership, the Museum's visitor attendance increased to a record 150,000 last year, and participation in public programs such as free-for-all Saturdays increased significantly. An active and respected member of the Providence community, Alswang advocated for the Museum and forged local partnerships to achieve a new level of visibility for the institution.

Ann Woolsey will serve as interim director for the Museum beginning today. After serving as a curator in the Painting and Sculpture Department from 1988-1997, Woolsey returned to the Museum in 2004 to help in the planning and construction of the Chace Center. As assistant director for planning, Woolsey also secured a \$600,000 Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for the renovation of the permanent collection galleries in the Radeke building, the first two phases of which were completed in 2008.

"While the Providence community, Museum staff, Board of Governors and I are very sad to see Hope Alswang leave the RISD Museum, we are thankful that Ann Woolsey has agreed to serve as the Museum's interim director. Woolsey has more than a decade of experience at the RISD Museum and will be able to provide continuity to the Museum's mission and focus. We hope to build on the great advances that the Museum has enjoyed over the last few years," said Arnold-Peter Weiss, M.D., RISD trustee and chair of the Museum's Board of Governors.

The RISD Museum will be opening a full slate of exhibitions in the fall, including *Inner City*, an installation by ceramic artist Arnie Zimmerman and architect Tiago Montepagado, and *Brilliant Line: Following the Early Modern Engraver, 1480-1650*, organized by assistant curator Emily Peters. The Museum will also present the work of RISD faculty member and renowned photographer Joe Deal and hand-drawn animations, large-scale drawings and video by Avish Khebrezhadeh.

### **Hope Alswang's Contributions to the RISD Museum**

Under Alswang's leadership:

- In 2008, the RISD Museum enjoyed a record attendance of 150,000 visitors and participation in public programs such as free-for-all Saturdays increased dramatically.
- In 2008, following the opening of the Chace Center, the landmark *Chihuly at RISD* exhibit attracted more than 80,000 visitors during a three-month run, making it one of the highest-attended exhibitions in the Museum's history.

- In 2008, the Museum opened a newly-restored Main Gallery, which included the comprehensive reinstallation of the Museum's 1926 Radeke building, including the creation of a permanent home for the Twentieth Century collection.
- In 2006, the Museum mounted popular exhibitions including *From Goodnight Moon to Art Dog*, sparking an increase in attendance and membership.
- In 2005, the Museum remained open to the public throughout the construction of the new Chace Center.

### **About Rhode Island School of Design**

Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) has earned a worldwide reputation as the preeminent art and design college in the country. Today, with more than 26,000 alumni, the college enrolls more than 1,900 undergraduates and 400 graduate students from the United States and almost 50 countries, offering degree programs in the fine arts, architecture, and design disciplines, and art education. Academic programs include research and design initiatives, the exploration of art criticism and contemporary cultural concerns, as well as international exchange programs. Each year, RISD hosts prominent and accomplished artists, critics, and authors to its campus.

The RISD Museum of Art, a world-class museum in Providence, RI, was founded as part of Rhode Island School of Design in 1877. Its permanent collection of more than 84,000 objects includes paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, costume, furniture, and other works of art from every part of the world, including objects from Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and art of all periods from Asia, Europe, and the Americas, up to the latest in contemporary art. In addition, the Museum offers a wide array of educational and public programs to more than 100,000 visitors annually.

For more information, visit [www.risd.edu](http://www.risd.edu) or [our.risd.edu](http://our.risd.edu)

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