Code of Ethics

Association of Art Museum Directors
as adopted
in 1966 and revised in 1972

The position of a Museum Director is one of trust, involving
great responsibilities. It is the moral
obligation of a Museum Director, in implementing the policies of his
governing board, to accept and dis­
charge these to the best of his abil­
ity for the benefit of his institution
and the public. It is assumed that,
in all his activities, he will act with
integrity and in accordance with
the highest moral principles; that
he will assiduously avoid any and
all activities which could in any
way compromise him or the insti­
tution which he directs. It is fur­
ther assumed that, in all undertak­
ings within his jurisdiction, he will
be personally responsible for the
highest standards and excellence
of performance. Through his own
professional integrity he will set an
example to his staff, to whom he
should communicate the contents
of this Code of Ethics, in substance
and detail. Upon assuming the posi­
tion of Director, and to each mem­
er of his professional staff hired
subsequent to that occasion before
the latter’s acceptance of employ­
ment by the museum.

The members of the Association
of Art Museum Directors, maintain­
ing that the position of a Museum
Director is dependent upon his pro­
fessional competence and integrity,
and that it requires impartiality
and a sense of public responsibility,
especially in the area of mu­
seum acquisitions, declare that it
should be unprofessional for a Mu­
seum Director:

(A) to use his influence or position
in the art market for personal
gain. He should not traffic in
works of art for monetary rea­
sions, nor be party to the recom­
mandation of works of art for
purchase by museums or col­
lectors in which he has any un­
disclosed financial interest; nor
should he accept any commis­
sion or gift from any seller or
buyer of works of art. If he
himself is a collector he should
exercise extraordinary discre­
tion to assure that no conflict
of interest arises between him­
self and the concerns of his
museum. If such an occasion
should arise, it must be re­
solved by granting the mu­
seum’s governing board the first
option to acquire the work or
works of art in question.

(B) to give, for a fee or on a re­
tainer any certificate or state­
ment as to the authenticity or
authorship of a work of art, or
any statement of the monetary
value of a work of art, except
where authorized by and in ac­
cordance with the lawful pur­
poses of his own or other non­
profit institutions concerned or
government agencies.

Infractions of these canons of
professional conduct, when duly
established, will render a member
of the Association of Art Museum
Directors subject to discipline to
reprimand, suspension, or expulsion
from the Association.