

Vivian Li Appointed Asian Art Curator

Worcester, MA—May 20, 2015—The Worcester Art Museum (WAM) today announced the appointment of Vivian Li as its new curator of Asian art. Currently a doctoral candidate at University of Michigan, Li specializes in Chinese art, with a focus on sculpture in the development of modern art from the early 20th century through the postwar period. In her new role, Li will oversee the Museum’s Asian art program and collection, encompassing artworks from antiquity through the 20th century. Her specific responsibilities include developing a vibrant exhibition program, building on the Museum’s holdings with new acquisitions, and rethinking the narrative of WAM’s permanent collection galleries. Li will join the Museum on September 21, 2015.

In addition to her doctoral research, Li is a visiting scholar in the History of Art Department at Rice University. With the support of a Fulbright fellowship, she conducted research in Beijing and Sichuan, and her research has also been supported by the Freer and Sackler Galleries and the Getty Research Institute. Previously, Li interned at the Dallas Museum of Art and the Guggenheim Museum, and worked as a curatorial assistant of Asian art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, where she helped organize the opening of its first Korean art gallery and the reinstallation of its Asian art galleries. She was later invited back to the museum to serve as adjunct assistant curator to develop exhibition strategies for its new “Arts of the Islamic World” gallery. Li was recently an exhibition consultant at the Pacific Asia Museum.

Li has contributed articles to the *Encyclopedia of Modern China*, *The Contemporary Visual Studies Reader*, and the “Theorizing Imitation in a Global Context” special issue of the journal *Art History*. She holds an MA from the Ohio State University and a BA from the University of Texas at Austin.

“Vivian brings to the table a creativity and expertise that can be applied across the full breadth of the Museum’s Asian art collection, and the curiosity to rethink how we share the narrative of Asian cultures with our audiences,” said Jon L. Seydl, director of curatorial affairs and curator of European Art at the Worcester Art Museum. “During our search, Vivian stood out for her outstanding capacity to engage the community, which is foundational to the Museum’s curatorial approach and larger institutional vision. We look forward to welcoming her this fall, and to the meaningful connections she will forge between our holdings and our region.”

Launched in 1901 with a large bequest of Japanese prints from John Chandler Bancroft, WAM’s Asian Art department contains holdings spanning the entire continent with areas of particular depth in Japanese painting and Japanese prints, including extensive holdings from the Edo, Meiji, and postwar eras. Other areas of strength include Chinese painting, ceramics, and jades; modern Japanese ceramics; and Indian and Persian painting.

ABOUT THE WORCESTER ART MUSEUM:

Founded in 1898, the Worcester Art Museum serves Worcester and the broader region. The Museum houses an encyclopedic collection of paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, photography, prints, drawings, and new media. WAM’s collection has historically been strongest in European Renaissance paintings, but with recent acquisitions and donations, like Veronese’s *Venus Disarming Cupid* and the integration of the collection from the Higgins Armory Museum, it continues to diversify and expand its curatorial and programmatic offerings. Symbolized by the opening of the Salisbury Street doors in 2012, the Museum continues toward its goal of accessibility for all visitors.

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