

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The New Britain Museum of American Art Announces New Director

NEW BRITAIN, CT, December 27, 2021 – The Board of Trustees of the New Britain Museum of American Art is pleased to announce the selection of the Museum’s seventh executive director, Brett Abbott. Abbott currently serves as Director of Collections and Exhibitions at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, where he leads the Carter’s Curatorial, Conservation, Publications, Archives, and Registration departments, as well as Exhibition Design, Photo Services and Preparations. Since his appointment in 2016, Abbott has set the vision for the curatorial team, developed and overseen the implementation of a long range guide for acquisitions and collections growth, and has established the museum’s collection care and stewardship plan. He spearheaded a major renovation and re-imagining of the Carter’s internal galleries, completed in 2019, to improve visitor experience and was instrumental in a reinstallation of the permanent collection that moved towards an entirely new thematic presentation, connecting artists and work through time. Abbott has also helped to significantly expand the museum’s collections and endowment, with notable acquisitions of works including Ruth Asawa’s *Untitled (S.453, Hanging Three-Lobed, Three-Layered Continuous Form within a Form)* (c. 1957–1959), George Bellows’s *The Fisherman* (1917), Dawoud Bey’s *Night Coming Tenderly, Black: Untitled #4 (Leaves and Porch)* (2017), and Gabriel Dawe’s *Plexus no. 34* (2016).

“We are delighted to welcome Brett Abbott as the next Director of the New Britain Museum of American Art,” says Interim Director and Chair of the Board of Trustees Dona V. Cassella. “Brett will bring to the NBMAA his deep expertise in the interpretation of American Art and the broadening definition of what is American Art. Brett is someone who is both engaging and thoughtful, and can relate well to our diverse audience.”

Abbott commented, “I am absolutely thrilled to be joining the NBMAA. I look forward to working with the Museum’s esteemed collection and its talented staff, and to collaborating closely with its dedicated board and community on charting a bright path forward for the institution.”

Brett Abbott earned his Bachelor of Arts in Art History with distinction from Stanford University, his Master of Arts in Art History from Williams College, and completed the Executive Education Program for Museum Leaders at the Museum Leadership Institute. Over the past two decades, Abbott has organized more than thirty exhibitions and contributed to more than a dozen publications. A specialist in twentieth and twenty-first century American photography, Abbott

previously spent five years at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, where he served as Keough Family Curator of Photography and Head of Collections, and nine years at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles.

Among his many awards are the Ansel Adams Fellowship for work on Wynn Bullock at the Center for Creative Photography in 2012, and two Lucie Awards for Curator/Exhibition of the Year.

Abbott will take the helm at the NBMAA on February 15, 2022.

The NBMAA retained executive search consultants Museum Search & Reference for this nationwide search.

About the New Britain Museum of American Art

The New Britain Museum of American Art is the first institution dedicated solely to acquiring American art. Spanning four centuries of American history, the Museum's permanent collection is renowned for its strengths in colonial portraiture, the Hudson River School, American Impressionism, the Ash Can School, as well as the important mural series The Arts of Life in America by Thomas Hart Benton. The singular focus on American art and its panoramic view of American artistic achievement, realized through the Museum's extensive permanent collection, exhibitions, and educational programming, make the New Britain Museum of American Art a significant resource for a broad and diverse public.

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