

Thomas W. Gaehtgens Director of the Getty Research Institute

John Giurini

THOMAS W. GAEHTGENS NAMED
DIRECTOR OF THE GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Respected German Art Historian will Relocate from Europe to Los Angeles

August 14, 2007

LOS ANGELES – The J. Paul Getty Trust today announced that Professor Thomas W. Gaehtgens has been appointed Director of the Getty Research Institute (GRI) effective November 1, 2007.

Dr. Gaehtgens currently is the Director of the German Center for the History of Art in Paris, an organization he founded in 1997. He also was Chair of the Department of Art History at the Free University of Berlin where he served as a professor. Dr. Gaehtgens holds degrees in art history from the Universities of Bonn, Freiburg, Vienna and Paris, received his Doctorate from the University of Bonn in 1966, and achieved his Habilitation in 1972, the highest academic qualification in Germany, from the University of Göttingen. He was a visiting scholar at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton from 1979 to 1980 and at the Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities from 1985 to 1986. In 2004, he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London.

“Thomas Gaehtgens is uniquely qualified to serve as director of the Getty Research Institute,” said James N. Wood, president and CEO of the J. Paul Getty Trust. “His contributions to our appreciation and understanding of the visual arts through his own scholarship, his creation of opportunities for others, and his realization of a wide range of publications, combined with his international experience and network of colleagues, assure the continuing dynamism of the GRI and promises new opportunities for its exceptional staff.”

Jim Wood added that Professor Gaehtgens met all aspects of the criteria he was looking for in a candidate to lead the GRI. He said the qualities he sought included international respect as a scholar, a wide range of interest beyond one’s own areas of expertise, proven leadership with the

ability to inspire and manage a complex organization, a collegial personality, and a commitment to the centrality of original works of art and documentation to achieving the mission of the Research Institute.

Dr. Gaehtgens stated that he feels "honored to serve in this unique community of multifaceted institutions of excellence, and is looking forward to participate in this common and synergetic enterprise to enhance the study, the understanding, and the pleasure of art." The GRI will under his leadership "continue to be a place of the highest level of research in the spirit of his predecessors, and at the same time open up and develop methodologies to better understand the art of western and non-western cultures as well as cultural encounters."

Over his career, Professor Gaehtgens has developed several fields of interest, and has specialized in his publications in 18th and 19th century French and German art as well as the history of the museum. He has been a lecturer and professor at the universities of Bonn, Göttingen, Hamburg, Aachen, Chicago, and the Collège de France in Paris. He organized the XXVIIIth International Congress of Art History in Berlin in 1992 and served as the President of the Comité International d'histoire de l'art from 1992 to 1996.

He has received numerous honors and among many other responsibilities serves as a Trustee of the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, as member of the advisory boards of the Würth Museum, the Research Forum of the Courtauld Institute in London, the Château and Museum of Versailles, the Rodin Museum in Paris, and the Kuratorium Museumsinsel Berlin. He is also President of the Kuratorium of the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich, and numerous advisory boards of Museums in Germany and other countries. He is a member of the Academy of Science in Göttingen, and president of the Friends of the Prussian Châteaux and Gardens in Berlin and Potsdam.

Professor Gaehtgens, who will assume his role at the GRI in November 2007, and his wife, Dr. Barbara Gaehtgens, a respected art historian specializing in Dutch and French 17th century art, will relocate from Paris to Los Angeles. He succeeds Professor Thomas Crow, who joined the GRI as its director in 2000, and who announced in October 2006 that he was leaving the Getty to take a position as the Rosalie Solow Chair in Modern Art History at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.

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Reference:

ANN: Thomas W. Gaehtgens Director of the Getty Research Institute. In: ArtHist.net, Aug 15, 2007
(accessed Mar 15, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/29512>>.