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**JAY GATES, DIRECTOR OF THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION,
ANNOUNCES HIS RETIREMENT FOLLOWING
NEARLY A DECADE OF LEADERSHIP AT THE MUSEUM**

Washington, D.C. – Jay Gates, director of The Phillips Collection, announced today that he will retire, effective with the appointment of his successor by the Phillips Board of Trustees, likely sometime next year. His announcement comes exactly nine years after his becoming director.

“I have considered it a privilege to serve as director of this extraordinary museum, with its commitment to the highest standards. Like everyone else, I love The Phillips Collection. I always will,” Gates said. “I look forward to working closely with the Board to assure that our next leader is as passionate and committed to the Phillips as I, at this exciting time in the museum’s history.”



Jay Gates, director of The Phillips Collection. Photo © Carol Pratt, 2005.

George Vradenburg, chairman of the Board of Trustees, commented, “Jay Gates has provided inspired and spirited leadership for the Phillips during a period of major growth and development. His retirement next year represents a natural transition as we enter into a new and vital stage in our institutional life.”

The Phillips Board of Trustees and staff recently adopted a five-year strategic plan that outlines the museum’s programmatic and financial priorities. Key to securing the museum’s long-term financial stability will be a significant endowment. Other goals include maintaining a dynamic program of exhibitions and educational outreach, building on the work of The Phillips Collection Center for the Study of Modern Art, enhancing the museum’s opportunities to add important works to the permanent collection, and making use of the latest technology.

Jay Gates has spent more than 30 years in the museum world. At the Phillips, he led the implementation of a strategic plan that transformed nearly every aspect of the museum. A major building project, completed in April 2006, doubled the size of the museum with the state-of-the-art Sant Building, providing new galleries, main lobby, café, shop, courtyard, library, spaces for education programming, and the first auditorium in the Phillips's 85-year history. The renovation also made possible the realization of The Phillips Collection Center for the Study of Modern Art, an innovative collaboration with a major research institution, the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. The Center presents art-based, interdisciplinary research and programs for students and the general public.

Development of the permanent collection has been renewed on a scale not seen since founder Duncan Phillips's era, including the acquisition of major works from Edgar Degas to Richard Diebenkorn, which will be showcased along with many other works in an exhibition scheduled for winter 2008. The acquisition of three important works by Elizabeth Murray, the commissioning of a site-specific sculpture by Ellsworth Kelly, and the more than doubling of the museum's photography holdings also have taken place during Gates's tenure. An impressive record of major exhibitions since 1998, which toured to more than 40 cities nationally and internationally to great acclaim, includes *Impressionists in Winter: Effets de Neige*; *Georgia O'Keeffe: The Poetry of Things*; *Renoir to Rothko: The Eye of Duncan Phillips*; *Honoré Daumier: A Retrospective*; and *Over the Line: The Art and Life of Jacob Lawrence*. *European Masterworks from The Phillips Collection* alone was seen by more than two million visitors at a dozen venues in the U.S., Europe, and Japan.

Multiple award-winning education programming has been another hallmark of Gates's career at the Phillips. Art Links to Literacy combines programs for District of Columbia Public Schools elementary students and their parents/caregivers with professional development for their teachers in some of the city's most high-risk, underserved neighborhoods. Multimedia, interdisciplinary teaching kits are available for use nationwide and meet National Standards of Learning for grades K-12. At the museum, the Young Artists Exhibition Program displays art resulting from educational initiatives, publicly recognizing and celebrating the achievements of students, teachers, and parents.

Gates was previously the Eugene McDermott Director, Dallas Museum of Art (1993-1998), where he led a membership campaign that produced the highest revenues in the museum's history. As Illsley Ball Nordstrom Director, Seattle Museum of Art, between 1987 and 1995, he oversaw the fund raising and construction for a new \$35 million museum designed by Robert Venturi. Gates began his career at the Cleveland Museum of Art, and has held leadership positions at The Saint Louis Art Museum, the Brooks Memorial Art Gallery in Memphis, and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City.

ABOUT THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION

The Phillips Collection is home to one of the most exquisite collections of impressionist and modern American and European art in the world with works by artists such as Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Vincent van Gogh, Edgar Degas, Henri Matisse, Pierre Bonnard, Paul Cézanne, Pablo Picasso, Paul Klee, Claude Monet, Honoré Daumier, Georgia O'Keeffe, Arthur Dove, Mark Rothko, Milton Avery, Jacob Lawrence, and Richard Diebenkorn. Founded by Duncan Phillips and opened to the public in 1921, the museum is housed in Phillips's 1897 Georgian Revival home and similarly scaled additions that retain the intimacy of a private residence. The Phillips Collection has an active collecting program and regularly organizes acclaimed special exhibitions as well as traveling exhibitions. The museum also produces award-winning and in-depth education programs, with an active schedule for K-12 teachers and students, as well as for adults. Since 1941, the museum has hosted concerts in its wood-paneled Music Room installed with modern masterpieces.

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