

**Allen Memorial Art Museum
Oberlin College
87 North Main Street
Oberlin, Ohio 44074
(440) 775-8665
www.oberlin.edu/amam**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
contact: Andria Derstine
440-775-8665**

Joan Danforth Gift, NEH Grant, Endow Asian Art Curatorship at AMAM

The curatorship in Asian art at the Allen Memorial Art Museum (AMAM) has been endowed with a gift from Joan L. Danforth and a challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

In November 2012, the AMAM received a \$500,000 challenge grant from the NEH for the curator position. The grant was matched 3-to-1 with a \$1.5 million gift from Joan L. Danforth, a former Oberlin College trustee (1988-94) and a member of the museum's visiting committee. The position will be titled the Joan L. Danforth Curator of Asian Art.

The endowment will secure the necessary infrastructure at the museum that is essential to collections development and curricular outreach, further expanding the use of the AMAM's holdings by faculty and students throughout the College of Arts and Sciences and the Conservatory of Music.

The curator will strengthen and expand teaching and research with the Asian collections across a broad range of humanities disciplines in the college and conservatory. The curator will spearhead acquisitions for the college, ensure that the collection is researched and properly cared for, teach, and collaborate with faculty and students to organize exhibitions and museum-based courses.

"Asian art is central to the very founding of the AMAM," says John G.W. Cowles Director Andria Derstine. "This endowment will allow the study of Asian art to flourish at Oberlin, as it provides critical support for a curator who will research, exhibit, care for, and strengthen the AMAM's exceptional collection of more than 3,500 Asian artworks, while making it more accessible to the public and teaching with faculty and students. My colleagues and I are deeply grateful for the far-reaching support provided by Joan Danforth and the NEH."

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ADD ONE – Asian Curator

The prominence of China and other Asian countries in the world economy reinforces the need for students to understand not only the socioeconomic and political realities of the region, but also its artistic and cultural dimensions. Together with her husband Robert S. Danforth '47, who died in 1987, Joan Danforth endowed numerous professorships and other programs and scholarships at Oberlin. Danforth's contributions to Oberlin are only a part of the broad philanthropy that underlines her commitment to education and the arts.

"I have always been passionately interested in the arts, even throughout high school and my college days," Danforth says. "It gives me great joy to be able to add to the museum's already stellar reputation as a world-class teaching museum by finalizing the endowment of the curator position of Asian art."

Founded in 1917, the AMAM houses an encyclopedic collection of more than 14,000 objects selected to provide a comprehensive overview of the history of art from virtually every culture. A nonprofit organization, the AMAM is recognized as one of the five best academic museums in the country, and is open free to all.

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