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**CHEEKWOOD NAMES JAMES W. TOTTIS NEW VICE PRESIDENT OF MUSEUM AFFAIRS**

*Veteran Curator Specializes in American Art*

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – Cheekwood welcomes James W. Tottis as its new Vice President of Museum Affairs. Tottis comes to Cheekwood having spent 24 years as a curator in the Department of American Art at the Detroit Institute of Arts. During his tenure, he was responsible for several significant exhibitions including *Life's Pleasures: The Ashcan Artists' Brush with Leisure, 1895-1925*; *American Beauty: Paintings and Sculpture from The Detroit Institute of Arts 1770 – 1920*; and *From Hudson River to Impressionism: American Paintings from the Manoogian Collection*. Tottis was also responsible for numerous important acquisitions at the Detroit Institute, some of which were included in the museum's scholarly bulletin, "Twenty Years of Collecting American Furniture and Decorative Arts 1984-2004 at The Detroit Institute of Arts."

Tottis who also serves as Adjunct Director of Collections and Curatorial Affairs at the Saginaw Art Museum and Chair of the American Painting and Sculpture Vetting Committee for The Winter Antiques Show, has authored and coauthored numerous publications including, "The Guardian Building: Cathedral of Finance" and "Forging a Modern Identity: American Paintings in The Detroit Institute of Arts, Artists born after 1847, volume III." He has also served as Director of Collections at the Museum of the City of New York and for nearly 20 years as Adjunct Professor of Humanities at Wayne State University.

A museum consultant, Tottis has lectured widely, giving numerous presentations and panel discussions on American architecture, painting, sculpture, furniture, historic upholstery, frames, silver, art pottery glass and museum studies. He has and continues to serve on boards of arts organizations throughout the United States.

“Cheekwood is very fortunate to have a scholar and curator of Jim’s caliber as we launch new art initiatives to embrace Cheekwood’s role as Nashville’s preeminent fine arts collecting museum,” said Cheekwood’s President and CEO, Jane MacLeod.

In his new role, Tottis will serve on MacLeod’s senior leadership team and oversee all curatorial programs, including the care and enhancement of the Cheekwood Permanent Collection and the historically furnished rooms and galleries in the Cheekwood Mansion, in addition to the Ann & Monroe Carell Jr. Family Sculpture Trail.

"This an exciting period at Cheekwood and I am thrilled to join the team assembled by Jane MacLeod. The opportunity to guide the growth and evolution of the collections is immensely exciting, while also working with all stakeholders to enhance and invigorate the exhibition program," said Tottis.

Tottis will assume his role as VP of Museum Affairs on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### **About Cheekwood**

Cheekwood is considered one of the finest American Country Place Era estates in the nation. Formerly the family home of Mabel and Leslie Cheek, the extraordinary 1930s estate, with its Georgian mansion and 55 acres of cultivated gardens and expansive vistas, today serves the public as a botanical garden, arboretum, and museum with historic rooms and art galleries, showcasing works from its 7,000 piece permanent collection as well as traveling exhibitions. The property includes 12 distinct gardens and a mile-long woodland trail featuring modern and contemporary outdoor sculpture.

Cheekwood is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, and is a USA Today Top 10 Botanical Garden. Cheekwood is located just 8 miles southwest of downtown Nashville at 1200 Forrest Park Drive. Daily hours of operation: Tuesday through Sunday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. For further information, call 615-356-8000 or visit [cheekwood.org](http://cheekwood.org).

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