

CAA COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION

For Immediate Release

CAA PROTESTS ROSE ART MUSEUM'S CLOSING AND ART COLLECTION SALE AT BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

January 29, 2009, New York, NY – The College Art Association (CAA) was shocked and dismayed to learn of the decision by Brandeis University to close the Rose Art Museum and sell its entire art collection for operating revenue.

CAA supports the Codes of Ethics of the American Association of Museums and the Association of Art Museum Directors, which clearly state that works of art in museum collections are held as a public trust and that any proceeds of sales must *only* support the acquisition of new works. However, perceiving an entire art collection as a disposable financial asset and then dismantling that collection wholesale to cover other university expenses is deeply troubling for all college and university collections.

The closing of the museum at Brandeis will be devastating to the academic community, not only affecting our colleagues at the museum and students and faculty in the Department of Fine Arts, which offers programs in both studio art and art history, but also depriving the entire arts-loving public in New England and around the world. The teaching of art and art history in higher education is untenable without the direct study of physical works of art, and it appears the Brandeis Board of Trustees has disregarded the kind of scholarship and creativity that have been the hallmark of CAA members for nearly one hundred years.

According to news reports, neither Brandeis University nor the Rose Art Museum is on the brink of economic collapse, nor are they unable to maintain the collections. Given that no clear explanation has been offered on the school's financial exigencies, the closure of the Rose Art Museum and the sale of its collection appear to be in violation of professional museum standards and of academic transparency and due process; the decision also demonstrates a lack of academic responsibility and fiduciary foresight. We appeal to the Trustees of Brandeis to revisit and reverse their decision.



Paul B. Jaskot
President, College Art Association
Professor of Art History
Department of the History of Art and Architecture
DePaul University



Linda Downs
Executive Director, College Art Association