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University of **NOTRE DAME**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Joseph Antenucci Becherer Appointed Director of Snite Museum of Art



Joseph Antenucci Becherer, the founding director and curator of the sculpture program at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan, has been appointed the new director of the [Snite Museum of Art](#) at the University of Notre Dame. His term as director will start in January 2019.

Becherer joined Meijer Gardens in 1999, and became its chief curator and vice president of sculpture and horticulture, collections and exhibitions in 2009. He also is the Lena Meijer Professor in the History of Art at Aquinas College, where he teaches courses in Renaissance, Baroque and Contemporary art.

At Notre Dame, Becherer will lead a staff of 16 responsible for exhibition development and educational programs that serve Notre Dame students and faculty as well as thousands of primary and secondary school students who visit the Snite Museum of Art annually. He also will play a major role in helping design the University's new Raclin Murphy Museum of Art at Notre Dame.

"We are thrilled to have someone of Joseph's artistic vision, talents and operational experience joining our team at Notre Dame," said [Maura Ryan](#), vice president and associate provost for faculty affairs, who oversaw the national search that led to Becherer's appointment. "We are confident he will continue and enhance the museum's role in the University's vibrant arts district that is taking shape on the southern edge of our campus and includes the Charles B. Hayes Family Sculpture Park, which opened in 2017."

"This directorship is a great honor and opportunity beyond measure as the museum and entire academic community fully embrace the essential role of the arts at the heart of Notre Dame," Becherer said. "Following in the great tradition that is the Snite Museum of Art, I look forward to working with donors, staff, faculty, students and artists to create in the new Raclin Murphy Museum of Art one of the nation's pre-eminent and most innovative university art museums."

A scholar of modern and contemporary sculpture, Becherer has authored numerous books, catalogues and articles, and curated many major exhibitions. As curator at Meijer Gardens, he has overseen the development of one of the foremost collections of modern and contemporary sculpture in the world. In 2015, he debuted a new Japanese Garden designed by Hoichi Kurisu with the permanent installations by Jenny Holzer, Zhang Huan, Anish Kapoor, Masuyuki Koorida, David Nash and Giuseppe Penone.

Most recently, Becherer curated a monumental exhibition with Ai Weiwei and oversaw legacy gifts of George Segal and Beverly Pepper – including her entire repertoire of prints and drawings.

Becherer has served on numerous civic art advisory committees, including those which commissioned major public works by Dennis Oppenheim and Maya Lin, and acquisition of a major work by Robert Indiana. He chaired the national committee to commission a sculpture of President Gerald R. Ford for the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol dedicated in 2011.

Becherer earned bachelor's and master's of fine arts degrees at Ohio University, which in 2012 awarded him its Medal of Merit. He received his doctoral degree from Indiana University.

The Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame

The Snite Museum of Art is located on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, near South Bend, Indiana. Museum hours are 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday; until 7:30 p.m. on Thursday; and from noon–5:00 p.m. on Saturday. The Museum is closed on Sunday, Monday, and national holidays. Admission is free. Museum information is available at 574-631-5466 or at the Museum's website:

sniteartmuseum.nd.edu. Driving directions and parking information are available at <http://nd.edu/visitors/directions/>. Find us at inthebend.com and facebook.com.

The Snite Museum of Art is founded on the principle that art is essential to understanding individual, shared, and diverse human experiences and beliefs. The Museum encourages close looking and critical thinking to stimulate inquiry, dialogue, and wonder for audiences on campus and beyond. Fundamental activities include developing and stewarding an art collection, creating and sharing knowledge, serving our communities, and exploring the spiritual dimensions of art—all in support of the University of Notre Dame's Catholic mission.

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