



BERMUDA NATIONAL GALLERY

For immediate release

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**Bermuda National Gallery Trustees  
salute 17 years of leadership  
as Founding Director steps down**

**Hamilton, Bermuda, November 10, 2008 --** The Chairman and Board of Trustees of the Bermuda National Gallery wish to announce the departure of Founding Director Mrs. Laura T. Gorham. November 4 marked the 17<sup>th</sup> year for Mrs. Gorham in the role of Director at the Bermuda National Gallery, with a successful tenure at the helm of this important cultural institution. Mrs. Gorham feels confident in the staff of the BNG and she is ready to relinquish her position.

The Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Education & Programming Director, Lisa Howie as Acting Director, effective January 1, 2009, to take on the task of a smooth transition to new leadership while the Trustees oversee the search for a full time and permanent Director.

Mrs. Gorham has been involved with the BNG from its inception, firstly as Secretary of the Steering Committee starting 1986, and then as the first Director, 17 years ago this month. The BNG officially opened on March 15, 1992, and Mrs. Gorham has overseen the fledgling institution from those early days. She started her tenure as the sole employee, and has since built the institution from a budget of \$350k to \$1mill and from one staff member to 5 full-time and several part-time. The BNG has seen exciting times and projects, such as international exhibitions and showcases of local talents, building the BNG Collection, plus the introduction and development of the Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary Art. The BNG has gone from strength to strength, with the support of the Board and entire community.

Mrs. Gorham says of her tenure: "This has been the most satisfying experience anyone could have – being part of a start-up with an organisation that has so much resonance with this community, and seeing it grow from an idea to reality and beyond. There are young people in our community who assume there has always been an art museum at City Hall, and have had art be part of their lives since they can remember. The BNG has been my second family and my heart will always be here. It has been a

pleasure and an honour to work with the Founding and current Trustees. I believe in the team we have built over the past few years, and I believe it is time to let them spread their wings and for the institution to move on to a new stage with fresh enthusiasm and new ideas, keeping in mind the traditions of diversity and inclusiveness we have instilled in this organisation. We could never have accomplished what we have without whole-hearted support from our membership, donors and the cadre of wonderful volunteers.”

Lisa Howie has been on staff with BNG since August 2007 as the Education and Programming Director. She has a Masters in Education and she was head of the English Department at Bermuda High School for three years prior to joining the BNG’s creative team. As Director of Education & Programming she has effectively strengthened the educational outreach opportunities; she has strong communication skills and the right vision to oversee the transition to new leadership.

Chairman Mr. Gary Phillips says: “The Trustees wish to publicly salute Laura for the steadying force she has been since the creation of the Bermuda Fine Arts Trust and the Bermuda National Gallery. She has been a reliable and dependable resource to the Board of Trustees and in particular to Founding Chairman, the late Jay Bluck, former Chairperson, Louise Jackson and Chairman Emeritus, David L. White – who I know join me in wishing her the very best as she explores other opportunities. The Trustees will commence a search immediately for a new Director but in the interim, we are delighted that Lisa Howie, in whom we have the greatest confidence, has accepted our invitation to act as Director with effect from January 1, 2009 when Laura officially steps down.”

There are other changes happening on the BNG staff as well. The Board is announcing the resignation of Development Director, Gita Blakeney Saltus who has accepted a position with a not for profit organisation here in Bermuda. The BNG will miss Ms. Blakeney Saltus’ creative energy and passion for the arts, and congratulates her and wishes her all the very best with her new position.

Completing the team with Ms. Howie are, Sophie Cressall, as Curator, Jason Smith, as Registrar and Assistant to the Curatorial and the Education & Programming Departments, Tina Stovell, as Membership Secretary and Ellsworth Lambert as Bookkeeper.

Mrs. Gorham will remain with the BNG to ensure a smooth transition, and she will continue to serve on the Exhibitions and Collections Committees.

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**Note to editors**

***About the Bermuda National Gallery:***

*Opened in 1992 and located in the City Hall & Arts Centre in Hamilton, the Bermuda National Gallery is both the home of Bermuda’s national art collection and the centre of the Island’s thriving arts scene. It is the Island’s leading art museum with a richly diverse exhibition programme of past and present works by local and international artists that reflects Bermuda’s varied artistic heritage and multicultural community. The Bermuda National Gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. from Monday to Friday; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday. Admission free. For more details visit [www.bng.bm](http://www.bng.bm).*