

Press Release
Friday 20 January 2012



JAMES HOLLOWAY CBE TO RETIRE FROM THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

The National Galleries of Scotland announces today that James Holloway CBE will retire from his post as Director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery at the end of January 2012.

James Holloway (b. 1948) began his career in Scotland back in 1972 as a Research Assistant and Assistant Keeper at the National Gallery of Scotland (Department of Prints and Drawings). After a period as Assistant Keeper at the National Museum of Wales from 1980-1983, he returned to Scotland, joining the Portrait Gallery as Deputy Keeper. In 1997 he followed Dr Duncan Thomson as Keeper of the PG, a position later re-titled as Director.

As a scholar and curator James Holloway is probably best known for his work on Scottish art. His major projects included the exhibitions *The Discovery of Scotland* and *Patrons and Painters: Art in Scotland 1650-1760* and *Speaking Likeness: the latter project integrated archival voice recordings with the Portrait Gallery's collection. Holloway edited the National Galleries of Scotland's series of booklets, *Scottish Masters* for which he wrote the volumes on James Tassie, Jacob More, William Aikman and the*

Norie family. He has published numerous articles and has lectured frequently on Scottish art and collections.

Holloway led the highly successful project to refurbish and revitalize the SNPG which reopened on 1st December last year, on time and within budget. Since then over 80,000 visitors have flocked through the doors and the PG has attracted many favourable reviews both nationally and internationally.

Outside the National Galleries, he has been a member of the Collections Advisory Panel of the National Trust for Scotland and serves on the committees of the Hopetoun Preservation Trust and the Paxton House Trust.

John Leighton, Director-General of NGS comments: *“James has enjoyed an extraordinarily successful career at the Galleries as an author, curator, exhibition organiser and manager. And of course James ends his time at the Galleries on the highest possible note, shortly after the extremely successful reopening of the Portrait Gallery, a project which owes so much to his vision, leadership and passion. It has long been an open and rather badly kept secret that James intended to retire after the reopening of the new Portrait Gallery but it is still hard to imagine the Gallery without him. We are immensely grateful for all that he has achieved in a distinguished career here at the Galleries.”*

Ben Thomson, Chairman of NGS comments: *“It is very fitting that the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, full of the pictures of so many interesting people both past and present, should have been run by such a charismatic director as James. He leaves a legacy of a vibrant and successfully renovated gallery that seeks to set the current search for Scotland's identity into Scotland's rich heritage. He will be missed both by the staff and the many visitors who knew him.”*

The National Galleries has appointed Nicola Kalinsky, Chief Curator and Deputy Director to be the Interim Director of the PG. The search to find a successor for James

Holloway is now underway and will be assisted by Odgers Berndtson,
www.odgersberndtson.co.uk.

For further information please contact the National Galleries of Scotland press office on 0131 624 6325/6247/6314/6332 or pressinfo@nationalgalleries.org

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