

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **The Richard H. Driehaus Museum Appoints New Executive Director Richard P. Townsend Selected to Lead Institution**

**CHICAGO (March 20, 2018)** – The Richard H. Driehaus Museum is pleased to announce the selection of its new executive director, Richard P. Townsend. The appointment comes after an extensive national search by the Museum’s Board of Trustees. Townsend, who will be responsible for the leadership and overall vision of the Museum, assumes the position on April 2.

“Throughout his career Richard Townsend has proven himself to be a creative curator and talented fundraiser,” said Museum Founder and Board President Richard H. Driehaus. “His impressive track record includes providing visionary leadership to the institutions he has overseen and organizing unprecedented and critically-acclaimed exhibitions. I look forward to welcoming him to the Driehaus Museum.”

Townsend is an art historian and experienced museum professional whose career has taken him to institutions across the country. Under his most recent directorship at New York City’s Museum of Biblical Art, the institution enhanced engagement with the public, developed innovative exhibitions and partnerships, deepened the range of its educational and public programs, and further strengthened its highly successful fundraising initiatives.

“The Driehaus Museum deserves a larger piece of real estate on Chicago’s cultural map,” said Townsend. “I look forward to working with our founder and board to make that happen.”

In addition to his role at the Museum of Biblical Art, Townsend served in executive roles at the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach and at the Pérez Art Museum in Miami. As Executive Director of Price Tower Arts Center in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, he envisioned and repurposed the arts complex—an architectural landmark and Frank Lloyd Wright’s only skyscraper—as a museum of 20th- and 21st-century art, architecture, and design.

Townsend’s curatorial experience includes a named curatorial chair at the Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa and consulting curatorships at the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC, and the American Federation of Arts in New York. He holds degrees in art history from Virginia Commonwealth University and the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.

“This is still a young institution. Richard has the skills to guide the Driehaus Museum towards its full potential,” said Rena Zurofsky, a museum management consultant who has served as Interim Executive Director since August 2017.

The Driehaus Museum will celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> year this June. Recent exhibitions have featured French posters of the Belle Époque and masterpieces by Louis Comfort Tiffany. The current

exhibition, *The Art of Seating: 200 Years of American Design*, features chairs created between 1810 and 2010.

**[About the Richard H. Driehaus Museum:](#)**

The Richard H. Driehaus Museum explores the art, architecture, and design of the late 19th and early 20th centuries with a focus on the Gilded Age. The Museum is located just steps from the Magnificent Mile within the meticulously restored Nickerson Mansion, renowned as Gilded Age Chicago's "Marble Palace." The exquisite building was saved twice, first by a collective of over 100 Chicago citizens in 1919, and then by philanthropist Richard H. Driehaus, who sponsored its restoration from 2003-2008. Mr. Driehaus founded the Museum to feature his outstanding collection of decorative arts—particularly Tiffany glass—as well as special exhibitions from other fine museums. The Driehaus Museum further illuminates the period through numerous educational and cultural programs.

The Richard H. Driehaus Museum  
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[driehausmuseum.org](http://driehausmuseum.org)

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