

# DUMBARTON OAKS

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## **Dumbarton Oaks Director Jan Ziolkowski to Step Down**

WASHINGTON — Jan Ziolkowski, Arthur Kingsley Porter Professor of Medieval Latin at Harvard University, will leave the directorship of Dumbarton Oaks on July 1, 2020. In the fall of 2020, Professor Ziolkowski will be a Member of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. Thomas B.F. Cummins, Dumbarton Oaks Professor of the History of Pre-Columbian and Colonial Art at Harvard University, will serve as interim director, and a search will be conducted for a full-term director.

Appointed to the directorship in 2007, Professor Ziolkowski has worked tirelessly to renew and enrich the programs, collections, and facilities of Dumbarton Oaks. His transformative achievements include the renovation and expansion of what is now called The Fellowship Building and the renovation of an additional residency, La Quercia, to accommodate the institute's fellowship and internship programs. Dumbarton Oaks now offers 25% more academic fellowships than it did a decade ago, and the scope of the institution has broadened to provide increased opportunities for early-career humanists. He introduced new residencies and internships for undergraduate and graduate students, established educational programs for students from the D.C. public schools, expanded on-line access to collections, and initiated a program of art installations in the garden. He founded the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, a bilingual series that makes the written achievements of medieval and Byzantine culture available to the English-speaking world. A decade into its existence, the Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library numbers over 60 volumes. Under his leadership, Dumbarton Oaks, a unique center for humanities scholarship, has both strengthened its ties to the greater Harvard community and become more welcoming to the world at large. He leaves behind a stronger institution and a powerful legacy. "Thanks to Professor Ziolkowski's leadership," says Dean of Arts & Humanities Robin Kelsey, "Dumbarton Oaks is in a far better position now to fulfill its enduring mission than it was when he took office."

Tom Cummins is the Dumbarton Oaks Professor of the History of Pre-Columbian and Colonial

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Art in the Department of History of Art and Architecture, Harvard University. He is the author and editor of ten books, the latest of which is *Sacred Matters: Animism and Authority in the Pre-Columbian Americas*, co-edited with Steve Kosiba and John Janusek and published by Dumbarton Oaks in 2020. He has been a member of the Executive Committee of Dumbarton Oaks, and former member and Chair of the Pre-Columbian Senior Fellows. He also served as the Director of the University of Chicago Center for Latin American Studies, the Interim Director of the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard, the Chair of the Department of History of Art and Architecture, and Member of the Comisión Sectorial del Sistema Nacional de Museos, Perú. He is a Faculty Member of the Afro-Latin American Research Institute, Hutchins Center for African & African American Research at Harvard University where he is co-directing with Professor Alejandro de la Fuente a three-year international seminar, *Afro-Latin American Art Building the Field*, funded by a Getty Foundation Connecting Art History Grant. He is a member of the Patricia Phelps de Cisneros Research Institute for the Study of Art from Latin America, MoMA, Editor in Chief of the *Grove Encyclopedia of Latin American Art* by Oxford University Press, and Member of the Executive Committee of Villa I Tatti, Florence. He received La Orden "Al Mérito por Servicios Distinguidos" En el Grado de Gran Cruz bestowed by the Republic of Peru, the Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize from the Modern Language Association, and the Bryce Wood Book Award from the Latin American Studies Association. Professor Cummins is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

## ABOUT DUMBARTON OAKS

Dumbarton Oaks is a Harvard research institute, library, museum, and historic garden located in Washington, DC. The institution emerged thanks to the imagination and legacy of Robert and Mildred Woods Bliss, collectors of art and patrons of the humanities. The museum houses world-class galleries of Byzantine and Pre-Columbian art, two areas of interest to the Blisses. A third collection of a different sort exists in the historic garden, which Mildred Bliss created in close collaboration with renowned landscape designer Beatrix Farrand. The garden provides a resource for Garden and Landscape Studies. Since 1940, when the Blisses gifted the estate and collections to Harvard University, Dumbarton Oaks has supported the advance of knowledge in the three areas of Byzantine, Pre-Columbian, and Garden and Landscape Studies through a fellowship program and other awards; scholarly conferences; publications; and digital initiatives. In recent years, Dumbarton Oaks has extended its service to the community, already evident in the museum, garden, and public events, by developing collection-based educational programs for DC students.

The founders, Robert Woods Bliss and Mildred Barnes Bliss, called upon future policy-makers "to remember that Dumbarton Oaks is conceived in a new pattern, where quality and not number shall determine the choice of its scholars; that it is the home of the Humanities, not a mere aggregation of books and objects of art; that the house itself and the gardens have their

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educational importance and that all are of humanistic value.” These ambitions continue to guide Dumbarton Oaks, but with close attention to ensuring that the Blisses’ “new pattern” retains its vitality through constant renewal.

The research institute’s location in Washington, DC, is no accident. Robert Bliss was a diplomat who enjoyed a distinguished career in the Foreign Service and eventually served as Ambassador to Argentina. Dumbarton Oaks is known for hosting the Dumbarton Oaks Conversations, a series of important diplomatic meetings in 1944, at the height of the Second World War, whose outcome was the United Nations charter that was adopted in San Francisco in 1945. At these meetings, delegations from China, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States deliberated over proposals for the establishment of an organization to maintain peace and security in the world.

The historic garden and museum are the public face of Dumbarton Oaks and receive thousands of visitors each year. The garden is perhaps the last remaining landscape in North America that hews closely to the original Farrand design; it was voted by National Geographic one of the ten best gardens in the world. Buildings of architectural importance on the Dumbarton Oaks campus are the Pre-Columbian Pavilion, the museum wing housing the Pre-Columbian Collections, designed by Philip Johnson and completed in 1963, and the research Library designed by Venturi, Scott, Brown and completed in 2007.