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David Mickenberg to Lead Wellesley's Davis Museum and Cultural Center

Wellesley, Mass. -- David Mickenberg has been named Ruth Gordon Shapiro '37 Director of the Davis Museum and Cultural Center at Wellesley College. Mickenberg, who has been director of the Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University for 14 years, will assume his new post at Wellesley full time in January after a period of transition this fall. In addition to his museum duties, he will hold an academic appointment as senior lecturer in art. Mickenberg succeeds Susan M. Taylor who left Wellesley last summer to become the director of The Art Museum, Princeton University.

"David Mickenberg is an intellectually engaging collaborator with great energy and enthusiasm and an impressive record of achievement," said President Diana Chapman Walsh in announcing the appointment. "The search committee, which included trustees, senior staff, faculty, and museum professionals, was particularly impressed by his success at Northwestern in integrating the museum's collections and programs with the university's educational and scholarly activities. We anticipate that he will continue to strengthen the role of the Davis as a catalyst of explorations across boundaries that separate disciplines, departments, and other perspectives on the campus and beyond."

At Northwestern, Mickenberg spearheaded a \$25 million fund raising effort for the redesign, expansion and endowment of the Block Museum, which re-opened one year ago. He implemented an international guest curatorial program and a summer curatorial internship program in technology and curatorial development. He oversaw exhibitions that traveled throughout the United States and Europe and implemented interdisciplinary programming in conjunction with all exhibitions. He was one of the authors of the catalogue and organizers of the exhibition, *Printmaking in America: Collaborative Prints and Presses 1960-1990*, which opened at the Block in 1995 and then subsequently traveled to the National Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C. He was the co-curator of the exhibition, *Emigrants and Exiles: A Lost Generation of Austrian Artists in America, 1920-1950*, which opened at the Osterreichische Galerie in Vienna in 1996 and then was seen at the Block Museum later that year. He is currently the curator of the project, *The Last Expression: Art and Auschwitz*, scheduled to open in September 2002 and then travel in the United States and Europe.

In the museum's new space Mickenberg incorporated a digital gallery and classroom for

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technology-based arts projects, created a print, drawing and photography study center, moved the museum into close collaboration with the Center for Art and Technology and the Center for Interdisciplinary Research in the Arts at Northwestern, and developed partnerships with numerous departments and programs at the university. In collaboration with Northwestern's Academic Technologies unit, Mickenberg developed such interactive multimedia projects as the web site for *The Last Expression Project* (www.lastexpression.northwestern.edu), *The Wall of Respect* (www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu/wallofrespect) and *Picturing Music*, the latter two a product of the summer internship program in curatorial practices and technology.

Under his leadership the collections of the Block Museum of Art were dramatically expanded. He opened a major sculpture garden in 1989 with works by Joan Miro, Hans Arp, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Jacques Lipchitz, Arnaldo Pomodoro and has subsequently added works to the sculpture collection by Peter Reginato, Bryan Hunt, Lynn Chadwick, and Deborah Butterfield. The museum's collections of works on paper also have dramatically expanded on the areas of contemporary American and European works, the history of the arts in Chicago, and old masters.

Before his tenure at Northwestern, Mickenberg served as executive director of the Oklahoma Museum of Art during a period of major growth for the institution. He received his BA with honors in art history from Colgate University and his master's degree in art history from the University of Wisconsin. He also has undertaken additional graduate studies in medieval architectural history at Indiana University. At Northwestern, he has taught courses on museum architecture and on the politics and ethics of museums, has taught in the American Studies Program and in the Center for Art and Technology, and has lectured on international issues in arts administration.

"I am excited to be joining an academic community that has such an extraordinary commitment, at all levels of leadership, to the role of a museum on a college campus," said Mickenberg in accepting the appointment. "I look forward to working with the talented staff of the Davis Museum and with the faculty and students at Wellesley."

The director's position is named for Ruth Gordon Shapiro, a graduate in the Wellesley College class of 1937, who, with her husband Carl J. Shapiro, endowed the position last year with a gift of \$1,000,000. Currently living in Palm Beach, Florida, the Shapiros were long-time residents of the Boston area, where they continue to be prominent supporters of arts, medical, and educational institutions.

The Davis Museum and Cultural Center's origins go back to 1889, when the Wellesley College Museum was founded in the Farnsworth Art Building. In 1993, it moved into a new building designed by Rafael Moneo and became the Davis Museum and Cultural Center, named in honor of Shelby and Kathryn Davis, its principal donors. Its exhibitions and programs serve both the campus community and the public and are known for their innovations and fresh approach to art.

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