

CHARLES SAUMAREZ SMITH TO STEP DOWN FROM THE ROYAL ACADEMY

The Royal Academy of Arts announced today that Charles Saumarez Smith, Secretary and Chief Executive of the Royal Academy of Arts, has decided to step down after serving the organisation for 11 years.

Charles Saumarez Smith joined the Royal Academy of Arts in 2007, and, since that time, the RA has gone through one of the most successful periods in its history including the recent opening of the most significant redevelopment in the RA's 250 years. The many outstanding exhibitions over this period have included *From Russia*, which required a change in legislation in the House of Lords, *Anish Kapoor*, the first of the major contemporary shows, *David Hockney RA: A Bigger Picture* which broke all records, and, more recently *Anselm Kiefer*, *Ai Weiwei*, *Abstract Expressionism* and *Charles I: King and Collector*.

Charles Saumarez Smith, Secretary and Chief Executive of the Royal Academy of Arts, said: "I have been at the RA for eleven very interesting, rewarding and creative years in which there have been many changes, from the renovation of the Keeper's House in 2013 to the magnificent redevelopment of Burlington Gardens for the RA's 250th anniversary this year. The RA is a very distinctive place and I have enjoyed working closely with the staff, artists and the two presidents, Sir Nicholas Grimshaw PPR and Christopher Le Brun, PRA. There is never a good time to announce one's departure, but I wanted to leave at a time of obvious strength and success."

Christopher Le Brun PRA, President of the Royal Academy of Arts, said: "Charles has a natural sympathy for the painters, sculptors, printmakers and architects that make up the membership of the Royal Academy, and possesses the unique ability to move with equal authority in the worlds of art, design, scholarship, exhibitions, administration and fundraising. I am proud to have had him alongside me during my presidency, assisting us to renew and fully realise the potential of the modern Royal Academy. His tenure is marked by great achievement, for which the Academicians, our staff and supporters are immensely grateful. History is likely to judge him as the most successful of all Royal Academy Secretaries."

Rebecca Salter RA, Keeper of the Royal Academy of Arts, said: "Charles has worked brilliantly with the entire Royal Academy on the development of Burlington Gardens. As Keeper, I particularly value his appreciation of the central role of the Royal Academy Schools in the life of the RA."

Lord Davies of Abersoch, Chairman of the Royal Academy Development Trust, said: "It has been my privilege to work closely with Charles over many years. On behalf of all the trustees

of the RA Development Trust, I would like to thank him for his enormous contribution to the RA.”

Charles Saumarez Smith will leave the Royal Academy at the end of the year. He will be taking up a new role as Senior Director at Blain|Southern.

Recruitment for the new Secretary and Chief Executive will begin in September 2018.

Notes to Editors

Biography:

Sir Charles Robert Saumarez Smith CBE

Sir Charles Saumarez Smith was educated at Marlborough and King’s College, Cambridge, where he was a scholar and got a double first in History and History of Art. After graduating, he spent a year at Harvard University as a Henry Fellow studying at the Fogg Art Museum and then returned to the Warburg Institute as a postgraduate student.

In 1979, he was elected Christie’s Research Fellow at Christ’s College, Cambridge and, in 1982, he joined the staff of the Victoria and Albert Museum as an Assistant Keeper with special responsibility for V&A/RCA MA in the History of Design. In 1990, he was appointed Head of Research at the Victoria and Albert Museum. In 1994, he was appointed Director of the National Portrait Gallery and, in 2002, Director of the National Gallery.

In 2007, Sir Charles was appointed Secretary and Chief Executive of the Royal Academy of Arts, where he has concentrated on the renovation of the Keeper’s House in 2013 and the major redevelopment of Burlington Gardens for the RA’s 250th anniversary in 2018, including a major fund-raising campaign and successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

He is a Professor of Cultural History at Queen Mary, University of London and a Trustee of the Garden Museum.

In 2008, Charles was awarded a CBE and was knighted in 2018 for his service to the arts.

About the Royal Academy of Arts

The Royal Academy of Arts was founded by King George III in 1768. It has a unique position in being an independent, privately funded institution led by eminent artists and architects whose purpose is to be a clear, strong voice for art and artists. Its public programme promotes the creation, enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts through exhibitions, education and debate.

The Royal Academy has launched a new campus as part of the celebrations of its 250th anniversary year. Following a transformative redevelopment, designed by the internationally-

acclaimed architect Sir David Chipperfield RA and supported by the National Lottery, the new Royal Academy of Arts reveals more of the elements that make the RA unique – sharing with the public historic treasures from its Collection, the work of its Royal Academicians and the Royal Academy Schools, and its role as a centre for learning and debate about art and architecture – alongside its world-class exhibitions programme. Royalacademy.org.uk

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