



DeCordova Sculpture Park +
Museum
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For Immediate Release

DeCordova Announces
The Hamilton James Sculpture Park Acquisition Fund
*\$1 Million Contributed to the Fund in Honor of Hamilton R. James;
Challenge to Result in \$2.5 Million for Major Sculpture*

Lincoln, MA, August 25, 2009 – Dennis Kois, Executive Director of the DeCordova Sculpture Park + Museum, announced the creation of the *Hamilton James Sculpture Park Acquisition Fund* with a gift of one million dollars. Given by Tony James in honor of his late father Hamilton R. James, the grant consists of a one million dollar gift and a potential future gift of five hundred thousand dollars upon completion of a challenge for the acquisition or commission of seminal major works for DeCordova’s Sculpture Park.

This gift, the largest ever given specifically for the Park, recognizes the service and philanthropy of Hamilton R. James, a long-time supporter and former Trustee to the Museum. His widow, Waleska James, continues to be involved as a Museum Guide and member of DeCordova’s Education Committee.

“DeCordova has been important to our family and to the Lincoln community where we all lived, for many years” said Tony James. “I am very glad to be able to continue my father’s legacy in helping to take DeCordova to a new level behind the strong new leadership of Dennis Kois.”

This gift marks a key step in DeCordova Sculpture Park’s transformation into a pre-eminent American Sculpture Park. The *Hamilton James Sculpture Park Acquisition Fund* will allow DeCordova to acquire or commission several seminal works of sculpture, grow its collection of outdoor work, and have a profound impact on the national and international reputation of the Museum.

Tony James has challenged the Museum to raise an additional one million dollars over the next three years to acquire or commission sculpture. Upon successful completion of this challenge, James is intending to donate an additional five hundred thousand dollars to the Sculpture Park.

“The James Family have long been enthusiastic and generous supporters of DeCordova,” says Kois. “With this generous gift, DeCordova will be able to bring in stellar works by an international roster of artists to help us meet our goal of making DeCordova one of the pre-eminent sculpture parks in the country within a decade. This thoughtful gift truly commemorates the spirit of Hamilton James, whose longtime leadership and dedication to DeCordova were instrumental in taking it from a local museum to one all of New England can be proud of. It seems only fitting that this gift in his honor will continue that transformative arc, into a national and international leader in sculpture.”

This gift also allows DeCordova to think on a broader scale. “I could not be more thrilled with this extraordinary gift” says Senior Curator Nick Capasso. “For the first time, we will be able to think strategically and pro-actively about our Permanent Collection outdoors and offer to our visitors some of the very best contemporary sculpture in the world. The gift is also a signal honor to one of this institution’s most important and vital leaders, Hamilton James.” Capasso also noted that while DeCordova’s permanent collection continues to focus on New England artists, the Sculpture Park has always had a broader mandate, including work from artists across the nation and now, beyond.

Hamilton James was a long-time DeCordova Trustee who generously donated to and supported DeCordova’s programs throughout his lifetime. For almost sixty years, James and his wife Waleska, currently a DeCordova Overseer, member of the Sculpture Park Advisory Board, and former Trustee, resided in Lincoln, MA. Waleska has been a DeCordova museum guide for over 16 years, and her devotion to arts education and programming has helped The DeCordova Museum School grow into the largest non-degree granting studio art program in New England.

James was a pioneer in management consulting and the former chairman of Arthur D. Little International. He also served as a captain in the US Army and was a ranking officer in the military government of Luxembourg. Recognized by the King of Belgium, he was knighted as a Chevalier de la Couronne de Belgique for his extraordinary service.

James’s devoted family celebrated his life in a memorial service on May 2, 2009 and hosted a reception at the DeCordova Sculpture Park + Museum. Many of James’s friends, families and colleagues honored his memory with over \$25,000 dollars in gifts to the Museum, which will be added to the *Hamilton James Sculpture Park Acquisition Fund*.

In addition to his wife of sixty-one years, James is survived by four sons, Hamilton E. (Tony) James of New York, NY, David R. James of Bolton, Benjamin B. James of Concord, and Michael T. James of Haverford, PA, and ten grandchildren.

Kois noted that while it will take time to develop a final list of potential projects, DeCordova’s curatorial staff and recently formed Sculpture Park Committee are well positioned to consider the questions involved. “The range of great outdoor work being made today provides us with an amazing palette of options to think about. From the

landscape installations of Andy Goldsworthy to Antony Gormley’s current performative installation of the Fourth Plinth in London; from the large-scale abstractions of Nancy Rubins to artists rooted in representation like Louise Bourgeois or Kiki Smith; to those working across boundaries like Dan Graham or Jaume Plensa. We can also look to masters past and present, like Juan Munoz and Tony Cragg. We’ll have a lot to think and talk about—and what a great conversation to have at DeCordova.”

About DeCordova

DeCordova Sculpture Park + Museum was established in 1950 to educate as broad and diverse a public as possible about American contemporary art. DeCordova’s unique campus features both indoor and outdoor venues, allowing its visitors to celebrate and explore contemporary art across 35 acres. Inside, the Museum features a robust slate of rotating exhibitions and innovative interpretive programming. Outside, DeCordova’s Sculpture Park hosts more than 80 works, the majority of which are on loan to the Museum. The largest resource of its kind in New England, the Sculpture Park is continuously updated with new installations. DeCordova is also at the forefront of arts education, offering the largest non-degree granting studio art program in New England.

DeCordova attracts more than 100,000 visitors from New England and tourists from around the world to its campus each year; trains 200 teachers in arts education; and enrolls 4,000 students of all ages in studio art program

General Information: DeCordova is open Tuesday through Sunday, from 10 am to 5 pm and on selected Monday holidays. General admission during Museum hours is \$12 for adults; \$8 for senior citizens, students, and youth ages 6–12. Children age 5 and under, Lincoln residents, and Active Duty Military Personnel and their dependents are admitted free. The Sculpture Park is open year-round during daylight hours. Guided public tours of the Museum’s main galleries take place every Thursday at 1 pm and Sunday at 2 pm. Tours of the Sculpture Park are given on Saturday and Sunday at 1 pm from May to October. All guided public tours are free with Campus admission. Visit www.decordova.org or call 781/259-8355 for further information.

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