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Camp to Leave Barnes

by Lita Solis-Cohen

Kimberly Camp, president and CEO of the Barnes Foundation, resigned her position and will leave no later than January 1, 2006. Camp led the Barnes Foundation during its successful court fight to relocate the multibillion-dollar art collection from Merion to Philadelphia and to turn the teaching institution into a tourist attraction on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in downtown Philadelphia. She said she will be available as a consultant, but she has been relieved of her day-to-day responsibilities.

During her tenure, Camp increased the staff, changed educational programming, instituted a collection assessment program, and organized the archives.

Camp took over the Barnes Foundation when Richard Glanton resigned after spending the \$16 million he raised from traveling exhibitions of Barnes art on renovating the galleries. Then he spent much of the Barnes endowment on discrimination lawsuits he initiated against the neighbors who objected to tour buses on their street. The case was thrown out of court as frivolous, and the Barnes was ordered to pay the neighbors' legal bills, which have yet to be paid. The neighbors, who have been painted in the press as hostile to the Barnes Foundation, are the ones who are waging a public relations campaign to keep the Barnes in Merion.

On December 13, 2004, the Barnes Foundation received court approval to move to the Benjamin Franklin Parkway after three foundations, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Lenfest Foundation, and the Annenberg Foundation, pledged to raise \$100 million for the move and a new building plus \$50 million for endowment. The foundations petitioned the Orphans' Court to change Dr. Barnes's indenture to allow this to happen. Rebecca W. Rimel, president of the Pew Charitable Trusts, said pledges totaling \$100 million had been received, and that fundraising would now go national and international.

One year earlier, the court allowed the Barnes board to enlarge its number to 15 members. To date, 12 members have been named: Aileen Kennedy Roberts, wife of Brian Roberts, chairman of Comcast, a cable company, and president of the Aileen K. and Brian L. Roberts Foundation; Agnes Gund, well-known New York City art collector and philanthropist; Neil Rudenstine, former president of Harvard University, now president of ARTstor, New York City; Sheldon Bonovitz, chairman and chief executive officer of Duane Morris, LLP (another Philadelphia law firm) and trustee of the Philadelphia Museum of Art; André Duggin, chairman and CEO of AV International, Wayne, Pennsylvania; Ambassador Harold E. Doley Jr., founder of Doley Securities, LLC, New Orleans, Louisiana; Joseph Neubauer, chairman and CEO of ARAMARK Corporation, Philadelphia; and Gwendolyn Stewart King, retired vice president of

corporate and public affairs of PECO and currently president of Podium Prose (a Washington, D.C., speakers bureau), who had helped out with the world tour of Barnes art in the 1990's.

In addition are the trustees appointed by Lincoln University: Bernard Watson, former president of the William Penn Foundation; Jacqueline Allen, judge, Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas; Stephanie Bell-Rose, Esq., president of Goldman Sachs Foundation, New York City; and Stephen Harmelin, Philadelphia lawyer and managing partner of Dilworth Paxton LLC.

According to an article by Patricia Horn in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on May 22, the idea that the Barnes should move to Philadelphia came to Raymond Perelman, a wealthy Philadelphia art collector, in 1995 when he was attending the party Richard Glanton gave to open the newly renovated Barnes Gallery. According to the *Inquirer* story, Perelman shared his vision with Ed Rendell, then mayor of Philadelphia and now Pennsylvania's governor, and Bernard Watson, chairman of the Barnes board, who had served as head of the Philadelphia Convention Center. They thought it made sense to create a museum mile on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

The board of Lincoln University, however, initially thought otherwise, pointing out that it was an insult not to uphold Dr. Barnes's indenture, which gave Lincoln control of the Barnes. Julian Bond, a civil rights activist and NAACP chairman whose father, Horace Mann Bond, was president of Lincoln University at the time Barnes wrote his indenture giving the college the right to name four members of the board of the Barnes Foundation as vacancies occurred, was not pleased to see the institution surrender control of such a valuable asset.

Governor Rendell convinced the Lincoln board that the state would fund Lincoln's \$100 million capital campaign if Lincoln would agree to drop its opposition to the move to Philadelphia and have only five members on an expanded 15-member board, which would be controlled by the three foundations and which promised to put the Barnes on firm financial footing.

After trial testimony in which students tried to prove that the Barnes Foundation has sufficient resources to remain in Merion, Judge Ott ruled that the art collection could be moved to Philadelphia.

Even though the students demonstrated that by selling non-gallery assets, those not included in Dr. Barnes's indenture of trust, and by raising admission the Barnes could have been solvent in Merion, the court allowed the trustees to embark on the venture that will quadruple its deficit. In a recent public talk, Camp stated that the construction costs of the new museum could top \$200 million.

Never giving up the hope of saving the Barnes and its educational programs, a group calling itself Friends of the Barnes Foundation was formed in January to spearhead opposition to the proposed move. They are asking for pledges of money to enable the

Barnes Foundation to be solvent permanently in Merion. They seek to publicize "the wasteful and ultimately destructive plans to move...that will cost Philadelphia tax payers tens of millions of dollars." They hold that students who are passionate about the Barnes method of education were never given full standing.

When one of their numbers, Jay Raymond, brought an appeal seeking to overturn the court's decision changing the indenture, thus permitting the move, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court denied the appeal. He believes that moving the Barnes five miles to Philadelphia to benefit vested commercial interests makes no sense. "All the objectives they seek to accomplish by moving the collection downtown can be accomplished at one-third the cost by keeping the foundation right where it is," said Raymond.

"Moving the Barnes downtown will not put the Barnes on more secure financial footing. By their own projections, they will quadruple their annual need for fundraising, to an amount not achieved by ninety percent of similar institutions twice their size. As for increased access, their projections are for only an additional one hundred forty thousand visitors a year. This is a very modest increase in tourist numbers for what looks to be about two hundred million dollars in total expenditures, and much of this increase could be accomplished by intelligent planning at their present location."

Raymond went on to say that the Barnes could have a presence in Philadelphia where an orientation could be offered and shuttle buses could then take people to the Barnes where they can walk around the arboretum and see the collection and spend quality time. It is only a ten-minute ride from the Philadelphia Museum of Art to the Barnes, less time than it takes to go from the art museum to the Liberty Bell. "Just because they have permission to move doesn't mean they have to do it," he pointed out.

Others agree. New York City art dealer W. Graham Arader said he "cannot understand how Montgomery County, the richest county in Pennsylvania, can allow the greatest collection in the state to move to the poorest county, Philadelphia, which will not be able to support it."

Julian Bond, responding to Judge Ott's decision, wrote: "When power speaks, institutions are likely to crumble and lose. In this case, tourism trumped Albert Barnes's trust, and the accumulated interests of Philadelphia's wealth and might and political power broke Albert Barnes's intention." (Other quotes may be found at www.barnesfriends.org.)

Marie Malaro, writing in the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, noted, "...where an organization is seeking to change instructions imposed by a donor, the organization must prove to the court that through no fault on its part it is no longer possible or practical to adhere to the donor's instructions. Also, it must establish that the change it now seeks from the court actually furthers what the donor hopes to achieve. The law applies these tests because it recognizes the importance to society of protecting the unique missions of nonprofit organizations to put forward new and often challenging ideas. How, then, did the Pennsylvania court handle these tests? Simply put, it ignored them."

It has also been pointed out that other Philadelphia institutions are in poor financial condition. The Free Library has not raised enough money to pay for an addition designed by architect Moshe Safdie, and the Kimmel Center, home of the Philadelphia Orchestra, which received much of its funding from the same three foundations—Lenfest, Annenberg, and Pew—recently laid off staff and has been forced to reduce its budget. Moreover, the Philadelphia Museum of Art announced that plans for a \$500 million expansion and a proposed Alexander Calder Museum are still in the planning stage. Can Philadelphia support all these initiatives?

To make their suit in Judge Ott's court succeed and to allow the move, the Barnes Foundation trustees had to prove that the Barnes administration has been incompetent. They did little fundraising. They did not work with the mission of making it succeed in Merion.

It is true that the township commissioners of Merion did not speak out against the move until it was too late. They were hesitant because they had been sued during the Glanton years. Judy Zalesne, a former Barnes student who believes the Barnes should remain in Merion, said, "Like Bush's war in Iraq, the Barnes board had a goal in mind, making Barnes a major tourist attraction on the parkway, and put forth reasons to do so. Giverny is not in Paris, and it doesn't stop people from going there. That is where it was created, and its environment is part of the experience."

"The art collection is one part of the totality of the Barnes Foundation," said Sandy Bressler, a horticulture student at the Barnes. "Removing the art and taking it to Center City Philadelphia is an evisceration of the foundation. The sense of magic you have when you enter the gates, the beautiful arboretum, the magnificent building by Paul Philippe Cret, can never be replicated anywhere else, and the totality of the aesthetic experience that is the Barnes Foundation can never be re-created in Philadelphia."

Reflecting the thoughts of the art world, critic Peter Schjeldahl wrote in *The New Yorker* on February 16, 2004, "If there were other places like the Barnes, dispensing with it would not be tragic. But one minus one is zero."