

Press Release – 19 June 2012

**AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME
APPOINTS DR. SEBASTIAN HIERL
AS DRUE HEINZ LIBRARIAN**

Today the American Academy in Rome named the next Drue Heinz Librarian of the Arthur and Janet C. Ross Library, Dr. Sebastian Hierl. An American Academy search committee, chaired by Trustee Paul LeClerc, came to this decision after a sustained search, which garnered a number of highly qualified applicants.

Dr. Sebastian Hierl comes to the American Academy in Rome from Harvard University, where he held responsibility for and developed Widener Library's Western European collections. In addition to acquiring new resources and evaluating collections in terms of coverage, format, and distribution among Harvard's libraries, Hierl allocated the Western European unit's budget; consulted on preservation issues; collaborated with other library units on sharing resources and developing new-acquisitions work flows; and served as liaison to academic departments, faculty, and students.

Prior to joining Harvard University, Hierl was responsible for the University of Chicago's English and Romance Languages and Literatures collections. While at Chicago, Hierl worked closely with the Digital Library Development Center and the Project for American and French Research on the Treasury of the French Language (ARTFL) to develop electronic resources; with the Special Collections Research Center on expanding its Modern Poetry collections; and with the Library Society. Hierl's first professional librarian position was at North Carolina State University (NCSU), where he started as one of the initial NCSU Libraries Fellows and soon assumed responsibility for NCSU Libraries' collections in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Born of German and Dutch parents in Belgium, Hierl was raised in Paris where he attended the Lycée International de Saint Germain-en-Laye. He graduated from the Centre d'Études Supérieures Européennes de Management (CESEM) and the Europäisches Studienprogramm für Betriebswirtschaft (ESB) in Reutlingen, Germany, with a BA Honours in 1993. During his studies, Hierl worked with book clubs and publishing houses in Canada, France, and Germany, an experience that led him to pursue a degree in Comparative Literature at the University of South Carolina, from which he graduated with an MA (1995) and PhD (1997) with a focus on American and German post-WWII literature. Hierl embarked on a Masters in Library Science in 1998 and graduated from the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin in 1999.

The recipient of numerous academic and professional awards, Sebastian Hierl serves as chair of the Collaborative Initiative for French Language Collections and contributes to the German-North American Resources Partnership. He further is an active member of the American Library Association and the Western European Studies Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries, as well as the Collection Management and Development Section of the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services.

AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME

Academy President Adele Chatfield-Taylor, FAAR'84, observed, "The Arthur and Janet C. Ross Library is one of the great resources of the American Academy in Rome. Established over a century ago, it now contains over 140,000 volumes in classical studies and the history of Italian art and architecture, with additional strengths in ancient Mediterranean art and archaeology, classical literature, ancient topography, and related fields. The Ross Library has always been crucial to Academy Fellows, and to countless readers in the international scholarly community, all of whom depend on it daily. Sebastian Hierl becomes part of a great tradition as he assumes this position of leadership, and we welcome him from both sides of the Atlantic."

Director Christopher S. Celenza, FAAR'94, commented, "Dr. Hierl brings to the Academy a rich variety of practical experience combined with instincts of a trained scholar. His international profile, buttressed by years of work at the best academic libraries in the United States, makes him an ideal steward of the Arthur and Janet C. Ross Library. We look forward to opening up the 2012-13 year with Dr. Hierl as Drue Heinz Librarian."

Looking forward to joining the Academy in late August, Hierl commented, "It is a distinct honor and privilege to be able to serve the American Academy in Rome as its next Drue Heinz Librarian. I anticipate my responsibilities to be deeply rewarding and am full of enthusiasm about the long term and wide range of opportunities provided by the position. This is an exciting time for libraries and archives. While our fundamental mission of collecting, preserving, and providing access to information remains the same and we continue to build, facilitate access to, and preserve the collections we built over generations or centuries, we also have to adapt and seize the opportunities of the digital age. I am delighted by the prospect of finding that balance in close collaboration with the scholars, artists, and the staff of the Academy and to fully participating in and supporting its essential mission."

The American Academy in Rome, a leading overseas center for independent study and advanced research in the arts and humanities, has for over 118 years offered support, time, and a collaborative environment to some of America's most gifted artists and scholars. Through a national juried competition, the Academy offers up to 30 Rome Prize fellowships in architecture, design, historic preservation and conservation, landscape architecture, literature, musical composition, and the visual arts; as well as in ancient studies, medieval studies, Renaissance and early-modern studies, and modern Italian studies. The Academy also appoints Italian Fellows in the arts and humanities. The Fellows, who live in a dynamic and interactive community set high up on the Janiculum, are joined by a select group of Residents, distinguished artists and scholars invited by the Director. Founded in 1894 and chartered as a private institution by an act of Congress in 1905, the Academy is supported by gifts from individuals, foundations, and corporations, and competitive grants from the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities. Of the 30 foreign academies in Rome, only the American Academy relies on private rather than government support.

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