



April 28, 2023

Dear Mr. de Montebello, Mr. Kientz, members of the Board of Trustees, Hispanic Society of America Museum & Library,

We write to you as the Society for Iberian Global Art (formerly the American Society for Hispanic Art Historical Studies), the primary organization in the United States promoting research of the arts of the Iberian world. The Hispanic Society of America, its mission, and its collections have long been central to our organization. As such, with mounting concern we have followed the recent turmoil at the HSA and feel strongly that we cannot remain silent while this serious and uncertain situation persists.

Our shared values might best be summed up in the words of your founder Archer Milton Huntington: to promote the “advancement of the study of the Spanish and Portuguese languages, literature, and history, and advancement of the study of the countries wherein Spanish and Portuguese are or have been spoken languages.” Since our founding in 1974, many of our members and board have been closely associated with the HSA. Countless others of us have relied on its collection, archives, and library for its incomparable resources. In recent days, many of our members have shared recollections of time spent in your galleries, of visiting your familiar and beloved objects at other institutions as they have traveled the globe over the past few years, and of anxiously awaiting the reopening of your library and its valuable holdings.

Over the past weeks, our members and colleagues—art historians, museum professionals, independent scholars, historians, literary scholars, and the general public passionate about the arts and culture of the Iberian world—have expressed growing alarm at the events at the HSA. Our community has been unsettled by a situation that threatens not only the institution and its collection, but the livelihood of our esteemed colleagues and what we consider to be a living landmark of our field. As such, we urge you to redouble your efforts to seek a collaborative solution.

We have faith in the unique character and value of the HSA, and trust you will keep the history of the institution at heart as you work to reach an agreement. The HSA’s value is due in no small part to the staff who have dedicated their careers to its care and who have made the decision to accept significant personal hardship in this process; as such, their concerns cannot be taken lightly.

We applaud your efforts to implement much-needed improvements that will ensure the collection survives for the benefit of future generations. We urge the Board of Trustees, management of the institution, and striking workers to return to negotiations in good faith, with the

commitment to reaching a transparent solution that both respects the changing demands of the institution while fairly addressing the concerns of the striking workers.

The legacy of Archer Huntington, his vision, and collection are fundamental to the history of our field as well as its future. As such, damage to the HSA is detrimental not only to the institution but to all of us who have dedicated our careers to promoting the arts and cultures of the Iberian world. We urge that no more time be lost in resolving this pressing situation.

Sincerely,

Felipe Pereda (President)

Ilenia Colón Mendoza

Lisandra Estevez

Carmen Gaitán Salinas

Luis Gordo Peláez

Mark McDonald

Ellen Prokop

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