

July 2012

THE PRIME MINISTER APPOINTS DR BRIAN ALLEN TO THE BOARD OF THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

The Prime Minister has appointed Dr Brian Allen to the Board of the National Portrait Gallery for a period of four years from 3 September 2012.

Biographical Details

Dr Allen is, until October, Director of the Paul Mellon Centre, having previously served the Centre as Deputy Director and in other positions. Since 1997 to date Dr Allen has been a member of various committees including the Advisory Council, Sotheby's Institute of Art; the Art Fund (Chair) and Member of Council, Tate Britain. He has held a number of Trusteeships across arts, cultural and heritage bodies including The Foundling Museum, the Holburne Museum of Art, Bath, the Hermitage Foundation UK and the Strawberry Hill Collections Trust. He is an author and a regular contributor to learned publications.

Notes to Editors

1. We were looking for a person with a strong knowledge of portraiture, particularly within British collections. This appointment was made in accordance with the OCPA Code of Practice. Appointments are made on merit and political activity has no part in the selection process. Dr Brian Allen has not undertaken any significant political activity in the UK in the past five years. This post is not remunerated. Reasonable expenses can be claimed.
2. Sir William Proby is the recently elected Chairman of the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery. He succeeds Professor Sir David Cannadine who has stood down after 11½ years' service to the Gallery's Board, over 7 years of that time as Chairman.
3. The National Portrait Gallery holds the largest and most distinguished collection of portraits in the world. It has over 175,000 works from the 16th century to the present day and, now, over 100,000 of them are accessible online. The Gallery's principal aim is to promote through the medium of portraits the appreciation and understanding of men and women who have made and are making British history and culture, and to promote the appreciation and understanding of portraiture in all media. The Gallery fulfils a number of roles relating to the historic and contemporary aspects of this collection: a research and academic role, an educational role, and a wider role within public life.
4. The National Portrait Gallery has never been so popular in its 150 year history. Between April 2011 and March 2012 the Gallery attracted over two million visitors, its highest ever twelve-month total. Underpinning its appeal has been a number of successful temporary exhibitions; the latest, *Lucian Freud Portraits*, has been the Gallery's most popular ticketed exhibition ever, with over 241,000 visits and great critical acclaim. Early in 2012, the Gallery was delighted when HRH The Duchess of Cambridge selected the Gallery as one of the first charities of which she would become a Patron.