



5200 Woodward Avenue (313) 833 7900  
Detroit, Michigan 48202 www.dia.org

**Contact: Pamela Marcil 313-833-7899 [pmarcil@dia.org](mailto:pmarcil@dia.org)**

**James W. Tottis**  
**Associate Curator of American Art, Detroit Institute of Arts**

James Tottis joined the American art department in 1985 as assistant curator and is responsible for one of country's premier 18th-, 19th- and early 20th-century painting collections, as well as sculpture, furniture and decorative arts. Tottis is also the staff liaison for the DIA auxiliaries Associates of the American Wing and Founders Junior Council.

Tottis attended Wayne State University (WSU) in Detroit, where he earned a bachelor's degree in History, and bachelor's and master's degrees in Art History. He is currently an adjunct professor in the Humanities department at WSU.

In addition to organizing *Life's Pleasures: The Ashcan Artists' Brush with Leisure, 1895-1925*, Tottis has also organized and curated *American Beauty: Painting and Sculpture from the Detroit Institute of Arts, 1770-1920*, which toured in Europe and the U.S. (2002-2004); *Building Detroit* (2001) and *Selections of American Folk Art from the Detroit Institute of Arts* (1997).

Tottis coordinated several important projects at the DIA, including the restoration of Washington Alston's monumental painting *Belshazzar's Feast*. He also directed several gallery restorations and reinstallations including the Hudson River school galleries, the late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20th-century decorative arts gallery, and the gallery devoted to works from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

Tottis has contributed to numerous publications, including *Collecting American Decorative Arts 1985-2005*, *American Paintings in the Detroit Institute of Arts vol. III, An Exhibition at the Residence of the U.S. Ambassador Bratislava, Slovak Republic*, and *From the Hudson River School to Impressionism: American Paintings from the Manoogian Collection*.

Tottis is a member of the Association of Art Museum Curators and the National Academy of Design.