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David W. Penney
Vice President of Exhibitions and Collections Strategies

David W. Penney joined the staff of the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1980 as an assistant curator in the Department of African, Oceanic, and New World Cultures. Since then, he has served as the curator of Native American Art, Chief Curator (1996–2001); Vice President of Museum Programs (2001–2004), and currently as Vice President of Exhibitions and Collections Strategies. In this role, he led the staff efforts to plan and install the 150,000 square feet of gallery space for the DIA’s renovation project, completed in late 2007, and oversees the DIA’s exhibitions program. He is currently leading an institutional initiative to upgrade the DIA’s digital programming in partnership with a consortium of international museums and university-based open-source software developers and designers.

Penney is also an internationally recognized scholar of American Indian art and still functions as the curator of the DIA’s Native American art collections. He recently published *North American Indian Art* as part of the notable Thames and Hudson “World of Art” series. He has organized two major traveling exhibitions for the DIA, “Ancient Art of the American Woodland Indians” in 1985 and “Art of the American Indian Frontier, the Chandler/Pohrt Collection” in 1992. He is the author of many additional books, catalogues, and published essays.

In addition to his responsibilities at the DIA, Penney is often sought out for consultancies. Penney has been invited to participate in an advisory capacity by the National Museum of the American Indian, the Missouri Historical Museum, The Art Institute of Chicago, the Jefferson home at Monticello, The British Museum, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the National Gallery of Art, the Portland Art Museum, the American Federation of Arts, and several other arts and cultural organizations. Penney has served as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, and as a reviewer for the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

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