Barry R. Harwood, Curator of the Brooklyn Museum’s Decorative Arts Collection, Has Died

It is with sorrow that the Brooklyn Museum announces the passing of curator Dr. Barry R. Harwood earlier this week. Dr. Harwood joined the Brooklyn Museum in 1988 and dedicated the ensuing 30 years to developing the Museum’s Decorative Arts holdings. His vision and expertise transformed the collection, elevating it to international status.

Under his guidance and careful curation, Brooklyn exhibitions such as Tiffany Glass and Lamps; The Furniture of George Hunzinger: Invention and Innovation in Nineteenth-Century America; From the Village to Vogue: The Modernist Jewelry of Art Smith, and many more, came to life. In addition to his curatorial roles at the Museum, he served as Adjunct Professor at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum/Parsons Master’s Program in the History of Decorative Arts. From early on a devotee of the arts, he spent much of his childhood in New York exploring the city’s many museums. Dr. Harwood received his B.A. from Brandeis, and his M.F.A. and Ph.D. from Princeton University.

Dr. Harwood’s The Furniture of George Hunzinger received the Publication and Exhibition Award from the Victorian Society in America, Metropolitan Chapter. At the time of his death, he was conducting research for a planned book on the work of Kimbel & Cabus, to accompany the first museum exhibition devoted to this important but now little-known New York decorating and furniture-making firm.

“We are deeply saddened at the loss of our beloved Barry Harwood. His ready wit and distinctive personal style, his aesthetic creativity and curatorial intelligence, will be greatly missed,” said Anne Pasternak, the Museum’s Shelby White and Leon Levy Director.