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Transcript from the 2007 ArtTable Annual Awards Luncheon

Introductions:

Lowery Stokes Sims: Good Afternoon, could I have your attention please. See, now you know why I got the job of M.C., I got all of you quiet. Good Afternoon, and welcome to ArtTable's Annual Luncheon. I am Lowery Sims and I'll be your M.C. today. We're especially pleased to see you here this year and at this time I need to ask your indulgence and quiet while we have some remarks from ArtTable's current president and our new executive director. I'll be back when we have dessert to introduce the main program, but right now, please join me in welcoming Linda Sweet, President of ArtTable. (applause)

Linda Sweet: Thank you Lowery. It is my privilege and pleasure to welcome you to today's luncheon. We have an outstanding honoree and a wonderful program and I want to give you plenty of time to do what ArtTable members do best . . . talk, network, forge relationships. I'll keep my comments brief, but I do want to thank the truly extraordinary co-chairs of the luncheon, Nancy Kaufmann and Lowery Stokes Sims. Could you both stand. (applause) We would not be here today if it were not for their hard work and remarkable dedication. They had a terrific committee - listed in your program - and wonderful staff support, especially Cybele Maylone. But the luncheon wouldn't have happened without Nancy and Lowery, so thank you.

I also want to thank our key supporters, Altria, Agnes Gund and Lula Wang, for leadership tables, Doyle New York, Lowery Stokes Sims, Sotheby's and Ann Tenenbaum bought benefactor tables, we are truly grateful.

And I want to thank ArtTable's excellent board. We worked diligently this year to build the infrastructure of the organization, revising the by-laws, clarifying board and committee roles and responsibilities, and approving a new strategic plan. There are too many names to list, but would the board members please stand wherever you are seated. (applause) They were a fabulous group to work with. And I'm pleased to announce that the board will be led by long-time ArtTable member Peggy Loar. Peggy has been a member of ArtTable almost since its inception and she was a founding member of the Washington D.C. chapter and an active member of the Northern California Chapter. She's now in New York, and she's the perfect person as we begin to implement the new plan. We will be adding several new members to the board this year as some members rotate off. Will they and Peggy Loar please stand. (applause)

The board's most important charge this year was to select a new Executive Director for the organization. After a thorough search led by Search Committee Chairman Linda Downs, the board selected one of our own, Dena Muller, who had recently become a member of ArtTable. Dena has an undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin - Madison, and a Master's Degree from New York University. She comes to us following six years as director of the A.I.R. Gallery here in New York City. She was

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President and remains a member of the board of the Women's Caucus for Art, and she is on the Regional Coordinating Committee and has been Regional Chair of the Feminist Art Project. She has the experience and qualifications ArtTable needs at this moment in its evolution and growth, and she and Peggy will be a terrific team. It's with great pleasure that I introduce you to Dena Muller. (applause)

Dena Muller: Thank you, Linda, for that introduction! I will do my best to live up to it. Members of ArtTable, I want to thank you all for the opportunity to be here today as your new executive Director. It is an honor and a wonderful opportunity. Standing at the podium this afternoon, I can't help but reflect back on last year's luncheon. As a new member of ArtTable, I was out there at table 56 enjoying conversation with my table-mates and taking in the inspiring program. I was pregnant with my second child and as the director of A.I.R. Gallery for seven years, I knew that a job change was in my near future, but was only beginning to think about what that might be. As the luncheon concluded and everyone was negotiating for the orchid centerpieces and making their way to the exit, I was stunned to hear my name read aloud as the winner of the benefit raffle. Now, I'm not generally lucky or a gambler, but the piece being raffled was the Femfolio, a print portfolio produced and donated by the Brodsky Center for Innovative Print. It features new works by some of the most notable feminist artists of our time such as, Martha Wilson, Miriam Schapiro, Nancy Spero, Carolee Schneeman, and Nancy Azara and Faith Ringgold, both of whom are celebrating with us today. Seeing these amazing works displayed I had to buy a ticket. When I got over the shock of winning the raffle, I began to think of it as a thank you gift from the art world for all the work I had done on behalf of women through organizations like A.I.R., the Women's Caucus for Art and The Feminist Art Project. Standing here today, I realize that instead I should have seen it as an auspicious invitation to become more involved with ArtTable. Again, I am happy for the chance to be a more instrumental part of the organization and I look forward to meeting and working with you all in the future.

Each year the luncheon offers us the opportunity to acknowledge and thank key people in our community. We are pleased that several past board presidents are joining us today: Dr. Lila Harnett, the founding president of ArtTable -- and we've learned that congratulations are in order for her recent honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from University of Richmond, ArtTable was an important factor in the University's decision to award the degree -- and Frederieke Taylor, Kinshasha Holman Conwill, Sandra Lang, Adele Silver, Mary Sue Sweeney Price, and Judith Brodsky. Likewise, celebrating with us today are past distinguished service awardees Joan Mondale, Stephanie French, Dianne Pilgrim and Elizabeth Sackler. Also, we are very pleased that New York City Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kate Levin joins us in honoring Emily Rafferty.

Also, at just six weeks into my new position as Executive Director, I want to acknowledge and thank Interim Director Helene Bleiberg for her amazingly efficient and creative work during this transitional year. Stepping into my new role has been a pleasure in large part due to her good work. I also want to acknowledge the work of the

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rest of the ArtTable staff in helping me to acclimate and in preparing for today's event, Interim Membership Manager, Rachel Selekman, and chapter administrators, Elaine Azcona, Karolyn Hatton, Tracy Posey and Elyse Poppers. And finally if you'll bear with me for one more very important acknowledgement, we must thank the luncheon committee for all their work in making today a reality, Committee Members are: Anne Bergeron, Dianne Dec, Carol Cole Levin, Susan Mason, Margaret Mathews-Berenson, Miranda McClintic, Denise Mullen, Barbara Pollard, Ellen Slapeter, Marsha Semmel, and Marcia Yerman. And special thanks to Carolyn Mandelker for her tireless work on the program.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve ArtTable. Please enjoy your lunch and today's wonderful program!

Program:

Lowery Stokes Sims: Can you believe with all of the lists that we made so diligently, that we forgot the name of very important Past-President Serena Rattazzi, so I want to redress that situation right now. This is the moment in the program when we recognize those among us who have made extraordinary contributions to the arts and to the cause of women in the arts – but before we do, I want to ask you to remember two women who were closely associated with ArtTable who left us this year. None of us will ever forget the presence of Kitty Carlisle Hart. For me she was effervescence and youth incarnate, and I remember my own incredulity when they marked the 60th anniversary of “A Night at the Opera”, thinking she must have made that film as a precocious sixteen year old. She not only charmed us in the movies, on the stage and television, but also rocked the halls of state government when she ably served as the Chair of the New York State Council on the Arts. Many of us in this room were able to enjoy her post-council career where, in venues such as Feinstein's at the Regency, she would regale us with songs and memories of her friends and sing some of their songs . . . Gershwin, Porter, Berlin, Rogers and Hammerstein, and her beloved husband, Moss Hart.

We also remember Marcia Tucker, exemplary curator and innovative museum director. As founder of the New Museum of Contemporary Art, she organized and oversaw some of the most challenging exhibitions of the 1980s and 90s. These examined new image and new figuration that emerged during the period, the new Feminism, gay sensibility, and a range of subject areas that pointed to the diversity and multi-cultural character of the art world. I thought about the paradox of her career when viewing the Richard Tuttle exhibition at the Whitney a few years ago, and thinking about how her organization of a survey of his work at the same institution in 1975 was so fraught with controversy. Well, that was Marcia, always leading the way and waiting for us to catch up with her.

On a personal note, I'd like to remember Arlene Raven. Arlene was not formally associated with ArtTable, but as a co-founder of the Woman's Building in Los Angeles in the 1970s and as one of the most dedicated and perceptive women critics, who not only emerged out of that movement – her life and career was not only in sync with the goals

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and mission of ArtTable – but also formed the vanguard from which ArtTable could come into existence. She was a classmate of mine, a colleague and a dear friend, and I'm pleased that her long-time partner, the sculptor, Nancy Grossman is with us this afternoon.

So let's take a minute and applaud the lives of these three women.

And now I'm pleased to introduce our keynote speaker. Caroline Kennedy is vice-chair of the New York City Fund for Public Schools, she is also the author and editor of six best selling books on Civil Rights, American History, politics and poetry, her upcoming book, *A Family Christmas*, will be published in November. She received her B.A. in Fine Arts from Harvard University, and her J. D. from Columbia Law School. She also worked as a coordinating producer for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Office of Film and Television when I had to ask her not to script Big Bird looking at Jackson Pollock's "Autumn Rhythm" upside down between his legs. So please welcome Caroline Kennedy to the podium.

Caroline Kennedy: Good afternoon and thank you for inviting me to speak today at this event honoring my friend, Emily Rafferty. I have always looked up to Emily – as an older student at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Emily and her sisters set an example of faith and citizenship, qualities that continue to mark Emily's life and career. Later, when I worked at the Metropolitan, Emily was just a younger version of the dynamic, committed, effective professional she is today. We worked closely together then and later when she championed and managed the exhibition, *Jacqueline Kennedy: The White House Years*.

Working at the museum was a tremendous education for me, and education is what I would like to talk to you about today. My first job after college was at the Metropolitan Museum's Office of Film and Television. Its mission was to bring the museum's collections to the widest possible audience and the museum experience to those who could not visit in person. Although it hardly seems controversial to make programs about art, given what else is on TV, some argued this was not an appropriate activity for an institution committed to the scholarship and excellence the museum is known for, while others feared that TV would replace the one-on-one experience with a great work of art.

I didn't see it that way, believing instead that programs on the American Wing helped viewers see art in its historical and geographic context, while a Christmas special allowed the interdisciplinary combination of art and music, both of which would increase interest in experiencing works of art directly.

The program that had the greatest impact on me was *Don't Eat the Pictures: Sesame Street at the Metropolitan Museum*. In this musical, children and muppets get locked in the museum overnight, and discover an ancient Egyptian boy lost in the Temple of Dendur who must answer a riddle before midnight. The program was complete with a

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scene of Osiris weighing the boy's heart against a feather, provided, of course, by Big Bird.

This program brought the museum and its collections, not just to a wide television audience but to a different audience. It starred and appealed to children and families who do not often visit the Met, and it made the museum seem more accessible to people who often find the museum intimidating. Though the museum was founded in part to educate and civilize the newly arrived immigrants of the late nineteenth century, is generously supported by the City of New York, and has made tremendous efforts to reach out to the public in countless ways, many of the people who live here still don't feel like such institutions belong to them, and have never experienced the joy that art can bring into our lives.

Schools are the places that can change that. For many children schools are the first, and often the only place where they are exposed to art. Most people are aware that urban education in this country is a national crisis. New York is no exception. And it has reached the point that none of us – whether or not we have children in the schools or even grew up in New York - can afford to think of it as someone else's problem.

New York has approximately 1.1 million students in 1400 schools who speak 140 languages at home, and who are overwhelmingly poor. To give you an idea of how bad things had gotten, not long after I started working at the Department of Education, I visited a high school in the Bronx that had an enrollment of 3500 students. Yet that year, only 118 diplomas were given.

I am happy to say that things have started to change since then. Under Mayor Bloomberg, New York has launched the most ambitious school reform effort in the nation – starting hundreds of new and innovative small schools, training and empowering a new generation of principals, and increasing accountability throughout the system. Test scores are up for the first time in years and graduation rates are the highest in a generation – though still only 60%.

One of the key levers of change has been the effort to strengthen the connection between the schools and the broader city community - including the business sector, the cultural community and average New Yorkers. Of course, education takes place in the classroom, but the schools can't do it alone. In order for a school to be successful, it takes an entire community, faculty and staff, parents, alumni, local businesses and neighbors. That is the kind of spirit we are trying to build across New York City because the children in our schools are the future of this city, and it is up to all of us to make sure they get the education they need to succeed.

Creating strong public-private partnerships is absolutely critical to transforming our schools. Some of these partnerships are financial. For example, the business community understands and supports the training of school leaders, the philanthropic community has funded small school development and HR and infrastructure reform, and we have reached

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out to ordinary citizens through large public events like concerts, and city wide tag sales. Our annual “Shop 4 Class” retail promotion raises money for school libraries, literacy and arts. In addition to the financial support these efforts bring, we hope people will take the next step and think about how they can contribute, what kind of talent or time they might share with students in our schools through volunteering, mentoring or in-kind donations.

But to me, the most meaningful part of the effort to strengthen public-private partnerships and one that is unique to this city is in arts education. It is truly an area where the broader city community can, and does have, a direct impact on the education of our children. The pieces are in place to build and strengthen this relationship.

Our schools spend \$285 dollars on arts education for each child. Some schools have the very best, and some the worst, arts programs you can imagine. Some principals bring their schools to life with visual art, music, theater and dance taught in collaborative and interdisciplinary ways using the city as a resource, while others struggle to expose the children to the cultural resources around us. And sadly, some just write it off as recess.

Arts education has a tortured history in the schools. Decimated by the budget crisis in the 1970s, it has struggled to regain its footing ever since. In the 1990s, after years of effort by many of the people in this room, Project Arts was established. Hailed as a great victory by arts advocates, Project Arts set aside a sum of money to be used to hire and train arts teachers, buy equipment and materials, and create partnerships with cultural organizations, yet the level of funding has varied and suspicion remained that many schools didn't use the money for arts programs. Yet within this history lie the seeds for future success.

In recent years, arts education has become engulfed in the wider educational debate over standards and testing. Advocates have been asked to justify arts education in quantifiable ways which often are out of sync with the creative process. Yet research shows and anecdotal evidence confirms that a strong arts program is critical to student achievement.

Arts gives children from different cultural traditions a way to communicate with each other and share their heritage. We know that music helps math, and dance gives children who may not speak English, or who have trouble sitting still, an outlet for expression. Art teaches kids how to find their own voice and how to listen to others, how to analyze the world they live in, and how to make choices based on fundamental values – skills that are absolutely critical in today's world. And to put it bluntly, in a system where tens of thousands of kids are still dropping out every year, as one principal said to me “Art gives kids a reason to come to school .”

During the current administration, Mayor Bloomberg, his two art muses -Deputy Mayor Patti Harris and Cultural Commissioner Kate Levin - and Chancellor Joel Klein have made a profound commitment to improving arts in the schools. They have made it clear

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that arts education is critical, not just because it might help math scores but because arts literacy is an integral part of living in a civilized society.

Over the past five years, a number of significant steps have been taken to improve arts education in New York. They have been based on three important principles: Access, Equity and Excellence - How do we make sure that all students are receiving a high quality arts education in a system where the vast majority of students are poor and geographically isolated and schools are often their first and only exposure to the arts?

Most significant is the *BLUEPRINT for Teaching and Learning in the Arts*, a rigorous integrated K-12 arts curriculum. For the first time, the DOE convened groups of educators and representatives of leading cultural institutions and arts providers to create a framework for arts education. It contains five strands of learning – Arts Making, Arts Literacy, Making Connections, Community and Cultural Resources, and Careers and Lifelong Learning which are aligned with the state standards, and sets benchmarks for grades 2, 5, 8 and 12. Fully complete in 2004, it was the first of its kind, and has become a model for other cities across the country.

In addition, we recognized that the commitment of the principal is the key to a successful school – based arts program. We set up city wide and borough culture fairs to build awareness about the options and resources that are available to schools – one is happening next week at the Metropolitan in fact, and arranged for principals to get free passes to cultural institutions. Cultural organizations increased professional development, and the DOE provided scheduling workshops to help schools find the time for arts in a crowded and demanding school day. And the *Fifth Annual PS ART Exhibition*, showcasing the best in student artwork from across this city opened on Friday. I have served as a judge for the past five years and the improvement in the quality of the work has been breathtaking. All of these efforts require the active involvement of the cultural organizations you represent, and additional private sector financial support.

But the issue of what constitutes a quality arts education is one that we still need to work on. And we are at a critical moment right now. In brief, the schools are undergoing a radical restructuring – some are concerned that it is the third such effort in almost as many years – and authority is shifting to the schools from the central office. Principals are being given approximately \$200,000 in additional discretionary spending. In exchange, they will be held accountable for student assessment and student achievement. School based report cards will be issued showing how schools are functioning, and failing schools will be shut down.

So where does this leave the arts? Project Arts money will no longer be set aside, and arts advocates fear that principals, increasingly concerned about student test scores in reading and math will simply drop the arts.

But, the Chancellor has promised that if it appears that schools cut the arts, he will take action to reinstate them. And for the first time there will be an Annual Arts in Schools

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Survey and Report Card that will track access, participation, satisfaction and quality across the system. In addition, there are encouraging developments that the arts can stand on their own. Last year, the trial group of schools that were allowed greater discretion over their budgets, known as Empowerment Schools, spent more money on the arts than they had in the past. So that in the future, we will be able to confirm what many veteran educators will tell you - that schools with students that succeed across the board are the schools with strong art programs.

But that is not enough. For most of us here today, the arts are a way of life. It isn't possible to imagine this city without them. But that isn't true in our schools. The system cannot protect and cultivate the arts without the support and involvement of all of us. We know that the system is political, and it responds to political pressure. Now is the time to get serious about paying attention to what is happening, taking responsibility, and becoming involved. Cultural organizations and foundations need to give time and resources to the effort to monitor, and assess what is actually happening in the schools, not just what is reported by those with the most to gain or lose.

We need to have a better definition of what constitutes a quality arts education, one that can hold its own against the forces arguing that artistic achievement isn't measurable, or success is too subjective. And when we have this critical information, we need to work collaboratively through our public - private partnership to solve problems, innovate and build upon success.

ArtTable can play a critical role in this effort, and I urge you to do so. You represent the leading cultural institutions in the world, and the students in our schools are the artists and the audiences of the future.

Not only that, this is an issue of particular concern to women. It is still true that the vast majority of people who work in education are women, and that the arts are most often nurtured by women. If we need anything in this country today, it is greater tolerance and understanding of others, and an ability to thrive in a global society. It is hard to imagine how we can teach those lessons without the arts. And if any of you can get involved individually as a volunteer, mentor, staff developer, or teaching artist, I can promise you that nothing you do will be more rewarding.

Thank you.

Lowery Stokes Sims: As is the tradition at these luncheons, the honoree is introduced by the honoree of the previous year, so I am therefore pleased to invite Dr. Elizabeth A. Sackler, ArtTable's 2006 Honoree to the podium. Dr. Sackler is a public historian and arts activist as well as a lecturer and a writer. As President of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Foundation she is responsible for the 2002 gift to the Brooklyn Museum of the iconic feminist installation, which in my opinion is one of the key works in the history of American and world art, "The Dinner Party" by Judy Chicago. And for its permanent installation in the new Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art which opened at the

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Brooklyn Museum this year. She's a member of the National Advisory Board of the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington D.C.; the Founder and President of the American Indian ritual-object repatriation foundation; C.E.O. of the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation; and a member of the Board of Trustees for the Brooklyn Museum.

Elizabeth Sackler: Thank you very much. It's really a pleasure to be here this year introducing. I woke up this morning and had to remind myself that I didn't have to come up here and make a speech to receive something and it had to be perfect and wonderful, but I want it to be perfect and wonderful because I am delighted to be the person to really have the privilege of introducing Emily Kiernan Rafferty who is the recipient of this year's 14th Annual Award for Distinguished Service to the Visual Arts. It feels like we went on fast-forward from one year ago when I received this award. In that time, and thanks to the Brooklyn Museum, and to ArtTable, and to many of you women who are members of ArtTable, the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art continues to enjoy hundreds of visitors daily. I have spoken with women artists, feminist artists, dealers and galleries, in New York, across the country and internationally, since the Center opened and over and over and over and over and over again, not only am I given thanks which is very nice, but I am told that the Center has jumpstarted women's art and feminist art all over the world, and I am delighted to announce that.

It was at the beginning of Women's History Month, Mayor Bloomberg had it this year in Macy's amidst handbags and cosmetics – which was very strange at 8 in the morning, because the counters weren't open – but in any event, Ann Fuchs who is Head of Women's Issues for the Mayor's Department was there and she spoke. At that time, and it was before the Center for Feminist Art had opened in Brooklyn, she declared as she was speaking – because she was honoring the young women who were there that day and all women – “Isn't it great to be boldly feminist!” And I thought, wow, this is terrific, this is coming out of Bloomberg's office and we haven't even opened the Center yet. What I discovered after the Center opened was not only were there more and more women artists who had been saying they were not feminist artists because they were told by their galleries that they wouldn't be able to sell their work, but that there were a lot of women who were feminists who'd been hiding in the closet because of backlash – both the women's backlash and the governmental backlash. So it's been very interesting to watch and see women in positions of power, women who are not fearful of leading, women who have many of the privileges that men have enjoyed in our patriarchal society – not considering or understanding that they are walking examples of feminism – has always been amazing to me. And, I don't know Emily, whether or not you consider yourself a feminist, I have no idea, I didn't ask Emily, the only thing I asked Emily today was that I'd been dying to know what's it like to be President of the Metropolitan Museum? However, Emily's accomplishments, her leadership, and her power are undeniable, feminist acclaimed or not. In her position of President at the Metropolitan Museum of Art since 2005, Ms. Rafferty supervises more than 2500 museum employees, serves as an ex officio member of the Museum's Board of Trustees and has overall responsibility for corporate, foundation and individual fundraising. She is also responsible for technical and informational services, human resources, merchandising, communications, government

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relations, legal affairs, finances, and financial management, everything that a President is responsible for. The remodeling of the Grand Roman Court and Islamic Galleries came also under her purview and I congratulate you for that. Of course, I remember as a child, going there and having dinner, when it was indeed, a restaurant, but I guess that was many, many, many decades ago. Ms. Rafferty's distinguished career at the Met began in 1976 as a fundraising administrator, in 1981 she became the Manager of Development, and from 1984 – 1986 she served as a Vice President for Development and Membership. Since 1999 she has been the Met's Senior Vice President for External Affairs with responsibilities for the areas of development, visitor services, admissions and special events. I guess over the years, Emily, you have come to know every aspect of the Museum. She has also led the efforts to create and manage the museum's website as well as the multi-cultural audience and membership initiatives. Born and raised in New York City, Ms. Rafferty earned her B.A. degree cum laude from Boston University in 1971 and began her professional career that same year as an arts and philanthropy assistant to David Rockefeller, Jr in Boston. From 1973 – 1975 she served as the Deputy Director of Education at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art. She is affiliated with a number of arts and inter-museum organizations including: ArtTable; The Association of Fundraising Professionals; Women in Financial Development; the American Association of Museums; and Independent Sector; she is a lifelong, honorary trustee of the Convent of the Sacred Heart; has served on the board of the Independent School Chairman Association; and the Blue Ribbon Committee of the American Cancer Society Foundation; and was President of the Blue Hill Troupe Gilbert and Sullivan Repertory Theatre of 1998 and 1999. Ms. Rafferty is the recipient of numerous awards and honors and member of the Board of Directors of the World Trade Center Memorial Foundation. She's married to John Rafferty, a consulting audit partner at Ernst & Young, and they live in Manhattan with their two children. Please join me in welcoming and congratulating Emily Kernan Rafferty, winner of ArtTable's 2007 Award for Distinguished Service to the Visual Arts.

Emily Rafferty: Thank you all so very much. I do have to clarify that – thank you Elizabeth for your wonderful introduction – I do not do all of that by myself. I have the most extraordinary staff to work with, a great director, Phillip de Montebello, and an enormously important and supportive group of Trustees.

I confess today of a little nostalgia, because I was one of the founders of this luncheon in the early 90s. Some of you were still here and doing that, and what a job you have done! We were in a small room in the University Club the first year, and now, what a success. There could be a lot of speculation for why I am at this podium today, but I could give you a suggestion, and that is, ArtTable was founded by a group of women around dining room tables and I am one of five sisters, all of whom are here today. And I can tell you we have sat together around endless dining room tables in laughter and in sadness and everything under the sun from the arts, to politics, health, literature, parenting, travel destinations, hair styles, and the general state of the world. There's no doubt our bonds are steadfast. We had two parents who collectively and together told us without question that they expected us each to find a profession and to find lifestyles in which we would

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be happy. I think it's fair to say that we have done that in the fields of the arts, medicine, publishing, business and real estate.

If I look back to my education and see why I might speculate on standing here today, I went to a single-sex school through high school, the goals and criteria of the first school that I went to were very clear and stand out for me today: academic excellence, social justice, community service, and an active faith in God. They definitely shaped my behavior and my thinking, and I'm quite certain, led me into the non-profit sector, first in the field of education and the arts, and ultimately to the Met.

Along the way in college, through the study of world religions, I began to find my way into understanding world cultures. So what better way to continue this education than working in the most encyclopedic institution, or art institution, arguably, in the world. I recall when I came back to New York in 1975 from Boston that the only place I wanted to work was the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I thought I was going to do it in arts education; I landed in the development office. What you learn in development very quickly is, to be a good development officer you have to know your institution intimately. You have to be able to speak about it and write about it articulately, and you have to have a passion about it. And, I certainly have found my passion there. I will always and continue to have the greatest respect for development professionals. Their responsibility is enormous, they work hard, and it is hard work. As all of them who are here today that I work with know, my mantra when I interview people is leave your ego at the door and come in and join the team because no one person ever delivers a gift to an institution. It just doesn't work that way, and good development officers figure that out very quickly.

It was 27 years before I became president through which time I had the good fortune to marry, raise two children, with my husband being central to this, and served on a number of non-profit boards during my children's upbringing, and made some of the most superb friends I could ever ask for in these activities. For my professional colleagues in other institutions in the city, in the nation, many of whom are here today, I thank you. My staff at the Museum, particularly Director Phillip de Montebello, and an extraordinary group of Trustees, a whole table of the ladies are here today, I thank you for all that you do. We get everything in the press and the most recent story of the rambling and straying peacocks that you might have read in the paper, defy the seriousness with which we do run the museum. We take our responsibilities seriously every day of the year.

When I think of myself as a woman in this role, I have to be very honest with you and say, it has never been at the forefront of my thinking as I have gotten up in the morning and gone to work. I simply did what I had a passion about doing. I do, however, recollect very well, in 1984, the day I was elected the first woman vice-president of the museum, my first call was from Doris Devine, in the depths of the building she is our chief telephone operator. I went down, and we had a nice cup of coffee together and I realized at that time, what an important glass ceiling it was to break within this bastion of male administrators, many of whom we loved and continue to be very wonderful. And in fact, Caroline, I'd like to thank you now so much for your earlier remarks and for your

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thoughtful comments on arts education and to remind you, in case you forget, of one of those male administrators we shared together in Dick Doherty, one of the greatest of all time. I remember sitting at my desk outside – I can't remember what you did but it was something terrible – and he was furious, and you walked by my desk and you said, "How bad is it?" and I said, "Serious doghouse, I don't know what you did but it was so serious." And you went in and got royally screamed at but we loved him and in fact if it weren't for Dick, who persuaded then president Bill McCumbert that he really should take that leap and make a woman vice-president, I'm not sure it would have happened.

But I can't take all that myself, it was a time of change and the climate thanks to many of you in this room today have made it possible. Lila Harnett, Caroline Goldsmith, who was always a great friend and founder of this organization, Linda Nochlin, Lowery Sims, so many of you here today paved the way. The clichés are legend but of course they remain true. It's all a result of hard work, high standards of excellence, self-motivation, never complacent, taking risks all the time, having balance and perspective, and I think the most important is just being oneself. As I look ahead and try to identify and articulate my responsibilities I think of them as follows, to be focused on the Met and its future, to take time for myself for reflection and renewal. And everybody here who knows me, knows that I don't always get an "A" at this but I am working on it. My sisters collectively pick me up all the time, literally and figuratively, and remind me of this: to give back and serve the community. And to do this not only through the Met, but through other ways in which I am able to, right now working with the Trade Center Memorial Foundation to try and build that museum, and also to provide mentorship for colleagues coming up in the next generation and those in transition. I feel a real responsibility to this, and of course to be an advocate for women in these roles in any way that I can.

The reality is that the challenges before us are extremely real. Just to remind you of a few that have been our face in the news in recent history – really recent weeks – the woman gondolier and her struggle in Venice; the cooks in Iraq – the ladies who are having very difficult times in their kitchens; the women's beauty salon; the two ladies in Afghanistan who are the subject of *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, the new book just out; the Italian, Muslim, twenty-year old, originally of Egyptian descent, who has just completed her book, *Perhaps I Won't Kill Anyone Today*. She remains and says that she will always be a hybrid, as if anybody trying to find their identity at that point in their life has an easy time. So I urge all of us to continue the dialogue. It's as invigorating as ever, it needs us to be involved as Caroline said, in the arts and education and every way that we can continue to serve civil society. ArtTable has always held its mission for us to be interpreters and intermediaries. It is as apt today as it was at ArtTable's founding 25 years ago.

For myself, I often smile as I think of the words of Brooke Astor, long-time Trustee at the Met and a wonderful friend and mentor to me. When she spoke about her childhood, she would often tell us that her mother told her, "Brooke, never get ahead of yourself." It has become my guiding mantra.

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Thank you all so very much. I am very, very touched.