

Association of Art Museum Curators

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Statement on Hide/Seek at the National Portrait Gallery

The AAMC is very concerned about the removal of David Wojnarowicz's video *A Fire in my Belly* from the National Portrait Gallery's current exhibition *Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture*. One of the great powers of art is its ability to foster both nuanced and heartfelt discussions about serious cultural issues. It is inherent to the nature of such discussions that they elicit strong, and often conflicting, feelings. It is crucial that museums and curators feel free to address such issues and to take intellectual, political, and aesthetic risks without fear of retribution (political, financial, or other). We wish to express our strong support for the goals of the exhibition, for the National Portrait Gallery's bold decision to mount the exhibition in the first place, and for their decision to keep the exhibition on view in the face of strong political pressure to do otherwise.