



Former Secretary General of the European Commission Dr Catherine Day appointed Chair of Chester Beatty Library

13 September 2017

Chester Beatty Library has announced the appointment of former European Commission Secretary General Dr Catherine Day as Chair of its Board of Trustees. Dr Day has been a Trustee of the Library for 2 years and takes over from out-going Chair, Dr T.P. Hardiman. Both Dr Day and the Director of the Library Fionnuala Croke, have paid tribute to Dr Hardiman for his significant contribution steering the Chester Beatty Library in its development over some two decades.

Dr Day was Secretary General of the European Commission for ten years from 2005 to 2015 and was the first woman to hold this position. Prior to that, she served as Director General for Environment and worked in the external relations division of the Commission as a Director and deputy Director General. Dr Day worked in the Cabinets of Commissioners Richard Burke, Peter Sutherland and Leon Brittan between 1982 and 1996.

She is currently a special adviser to the President of the European Commission, Jean Claude Juncker.

Commenting on her appointment, Dr Day said: “I am honoured to be appointed as the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Library and to serve one of the most significant cultural institutions in the country. The Chester Beatty Library has an important role to play in intercultural learning and understanding. Increased visitor numbers and positive visitor reactions show that our visitors are delighted to discover the treasures that were gifted to the people of Ireland by Chester Beatty. I look forward to working with the dedicated staff of the Library, very ably led by led by Fionnuala Croke, to promote the enjoyment and benefits of this magnificent collection.

Fionnuala Croke has paid tribute to Dr Hardiman on his retirement from the Board of Trustees:

“Dr Hardiman has been an inspirational Chairman. Under his guidance the Library has developed into ‘not just the best museum in Dublin but one of the best in Europe’ (Lonely Planet) with over 370,000 visitors in 2016. Dr Hardiman’s standing in the international business community opened many doors for us, as we sought to expand and conserve the collection and to develop programmes to bring it to the wider public. He has increased Chester Beatty’s reputation immeasurably, both in Ireland and abroad”.

Welcoming Dr Day’s appointment, Ms Croke said: “We are delighted that a person with such a wealth of expertise and an impressive record of achievement has agreed to become Chair of our Board of

Trustees. Dr Day will lead us as we build on our achievements and continue to the next phase of our development.”

A Dubliner, Dr Day has a B.A in economics and politics and an M.A. in international trade from UCD. She chairs the Governing Body of University College Cork, she is on the board of the European Movement Ireland, the Institute of International and European Affairs in Dublin and the Advisory Council of the European Policy Centre in Brussels.

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