

University of Delaware Honorary Degree

**CHARLES F.
HUMMEL**
DOCTOR OF FINE ARTS

Esteemed long-time curator at the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, you earned a Bachelor of Arts degree *magna cum laude* from the City College of New York and a Master's degree in Early American Culture from the University of Delaware. You continued your education through graduate courses, seminars, and certificate studies in American Civilization and Museum Management.

In the late 1950s, you began a distinguished career at Winterthur Museum. The former home of renowned collector and horticulturalist Henry Francis du Pont, Winterthur is regarded as the premier museum of American decorative arts, with a collection of nearly 90,000 objects made or used in America between 1640 and 1860.

Your impact on the world-renowned museum and, the museum world, cannot be overstated. Beginning as an Assistant Curator in 1958, you rose to the rank of Senior Deputy Director of Winterthur for the Museum and Library Department before retiring in 1991. For thirty years, you were responsible for the progressive expansion of staff and facilities at the museum and library. Likewise, you oversaw the staff and facilities of Winterthur's highly regarded conservation programs. For your many contributions to the museum, upon your retirement you were honored by the Winterthur Board of Trustees with the title of Curator Emeritus.

Authoritative scholar of the American decorative arts, throughout your career you published three books and dozens of articles, reviews, and introductions to books on topics that ranged from Chippendale furniture to the arts of the Pennsylvania Germans to the business of 18th and 19th century woodworking.

For 57 years you were a speaker sought out by museums, historical societies and professional organizations. You have lectured at the Colonial Williamsburg Antiques Forum, the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts, the Smithsonian Institution, The Vatican Museum, and the Antiquarian Horological Society in London, among others.

President Bill Clinton appointed you to serve on the National Museum Services Board of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Your most recent honors include receiving the Distinguished Service to Museums Award from the American Association of Museums and the Allied Professionals Special Recognition Award from the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works.

Revered educator, you were one of the leading founders of the Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation, which next year will celebrate its fortieth anniversary. You were also an instrumental figure in the University's Winterthur Program in American Material Culture, of which you yourself are a graduate.

The impact of these two programs can be felt at arts institutions throughout the world. They have educated museum directors, curators, art conservators, consultants, professors, authors, and editors working in 41 U.S. states and eight other countries. Brock Jobe, UD professor of American decorative arts, has stated that your importance to these two programs is unparalleled.

As historian David McCullough has said, "History is a guide to navigation in perilous times. History is who we are and why we are the way we are." History, I might add, is not just what is written in books. It is also the stuff of daily life, the objects we use and the arts and crafts we create. Charles Hummel, you have devoted your life to the conservation and study of those historical and cultural treasures, and to the education of the next generation of museum professionals. And for that, we owe you our respect and our gratitude.

Therefore, under the authority of the Board of Trustees of the University of Delaware, I have the pleasure and honor of conferring upon you, Charles F. Hummel, the degree of Doctor of Fine Arts and do declare you entitled to all the rights, honors, and privileges to that degree appertaining throughout the world. In testimony thereof, I am pleased to present to you this diploma.

A. Gilchrist Sparks III
May 25, 2013