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Terra Foundation President and CEO Awarded French Medal of Honour

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(ArtfixDaily.com) Elizabeth Glassman, President and CEO of the [Terra Foundation for American Art](#), has been awarded the distinction of Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, an honour bestowed by the French government in recognition of "eminent artists and writers, and people who have contributed significantly to furthering the arts in France and throughout the world." Henri Loyrette, President and Director of the Musée du Louvre, presented her with a medal designating this accolade at a ceremony in Paris on 12 December 2012.

I'm both honoured and humbled by this distinction, which goes hand in hand with the work of the Terra Foundation in general," said Glassman. "I cannot imagine a better way to usher in the 35th anniversary of the organisation in 2013 than to accept this award on its behalf."



Elizabeth Glassman,
President and CEO of the
Terra Foundation for
American Art.

Since the French Ministry of Culture established the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 1957, American recipients have included jazz artist and composer Ornette Coleman, architect Richard Meier, and actors Robert Redford, Morgan Freeman, and Meryl Streep.

The Terra Foundation for American Art was established in 1978 by Chicago businessman, art collector, and United States Ambassador-at-Large Daniel J. Terra (1911-1996), who believed that engaging with original works of art could transform

people's lives. In 1992 he opened a museum in the village of Giverny, about 50 miles northwest of Paris and home to painter Claude Monet (1840-1926), to showcase international impressionism.

“The Foundation operates on the core belief that art has the power to both distinguish cultures and unite them,” added Glassman. “Dan Terra’s dream to share American art with audiences across the globe comes to life in our work in France, where we work to inspire a meaningful cross-cultural dialogue.”

Glassman and Loyrette met in 2003 when the two institutions partnered to present The Independence of American Art, a major conference on American art at the Louvre. Three years later, the collaboration produced the first-ever exhibition of American art at the museum, temporarily returning the Foundation’s monumental Gallery of the Louvre to the Salon Carré, where Samuel F. B. Morse originally worked on the painting.

Earlier this year, the Louvre and Terra Foundation cooperated with the High Museum of Art in Atlanta and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas, on another exhibition, New Frontier: Thomas Cole and the Birth of Landscape Painting in America.

Loyrette noted at the exhibition’s opening, “For the past several years, the Louvre has been revitalising its interest in American art. This project is a natural extension of our previous collaborations and responds to a great demand for seeing and studying American art in France.”

Glassman responded to this demand in 2009 by opening the Terra Foundation’s Paris Center, which has been welcoming and nurturing the growing international community of American art scholars and providing a regular forum on art of the United States – the only one of its kind in Europe – through lectures, workshops, and symposia.

The Paris Center is also home to the Terra Foundation Library of American Art, Europe’s only research library devoted exclusively to the visual arts of the United States. Specialising in the art of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Library contains more than 9,000 English-language titles on painting, sculpture, and

graphic arts, as well as photography and decorative arts, all of which are catalogued [online](#).

Under Glassman's leadership, the Foundation has partnered with the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art to award [postdoctoral teaching fellowships](#) and [visiting professorships](#), supporting advanced inquiry in American art history at leading academic institutions in Paris and beyond, including the Ecole Normale Supérieure, the Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense, and the Université de Tours.

Additionally, the Terra Foundation has funded conferences and symposia at Ecole Normale Supérieure, Université Paris 7 Denis-Diderot, Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, and Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon, among other institutions. In November 2011, for example, a study day on pioneering American artist Henry Ossawa Tanner was co-organised by the Foundation, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and the Musée d'Orsay, where the event was held.

Since joining the organisation in 2001, Glassman has led the Terra Foundation in developing and launching its expanded grant programme, which has since awarded approximately \$45 million for some 450 exhibitions and scholarly programmes in more than 30 countries.

Glassman also oversees the Foundation's renowned collection of American art, which continues to grow and be shown at venues across the world.

American Encounters: Genre Painting and Everyday Life, the second installment of the four-year collaboration between the Louvre and Terra Foundation, will provide a close look at three major genre paintings when it opens at the museum on 23 January 2013 as part of the 35th anniversary celebrations.

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