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Oxford Acquires Copyright of a landmark French reference set, the 14 Volume **Benezit Dictionary of Artists**

October 1, 2010, New York City—Oxford University Press is pleased to announce the acquisition of the Benezit Dictionary of Artists, a landmark multivolume reference in art history. A biographical dictionary of painters, sculptors, draughtsmen, and engravers in 14 volumes, the French edition released in 1999 and the English version followed (with some updates) in 2006 (the French first edition came out in three volumes in 1911-1920). Library Journal notes of the Benezit, “This authoritative and useful work is the standard biographical listing of artists, outdoing similar resources in both size and scope.”

“Editis congratulates Oxford University Press and Editions First-Gründ for this transaction. The Grove Dictionary of Art’s publisher is certainly the most suitable home for the Benezit,” noted Alain Kouck, Editis CEO, “which has always been a key work for art amateurs. I hope now the Benezit will be as successful abroad as it was in France.”

With entries on over 175,000 artists including 5,000+ new and updated entries, the Benezit is one of the most comprehensive and definitive resources on artists. Entries are clear and concise, and often contain auction records, museum holdings, and bibliographies. “Setting the Benezit Dictionary apart is its coverage of obscure artists, and the inclusion of images of artists’ signatures, monograms, and stamps,” said Tanya Laplante, Executive Editor for Online Reference Products at OUP. “Valued for both its wide coverage of lesser-known artists and its deep coverage of artists occupying the core pantheon of art, the Benezit is an essential resource for scholars, librarians, museum curators, art dealers, and collectors.”

“OUP is honored to carry on as steward to the Benezit Dictionary of Artists,” Casper Grathwohl, Online and Reference Publisher at OUP said, “When Editis approached us we immediately saw the potential for OUP to bring the Dictionary into the digital age and take its place among the select electronic resources that sit at that heart of the serious art research community. With Benezit and Grove Art under one roof, we are excited by the growing role OUP can play in maintaining a stable canon of biographical content to aid in the development of scholarship.”

“I am ecstatic that the Benezit found such a prestigious home,” said Editions First-Gründ CEO Vincent Barbare. “I am sure The Benezit Dictionary of Artists will continue to grow and thrive at Oxford University Press and will serve as an invaluable reference by more amateur and professionals in the art community.”

CHOICE reviews noted: “Benezit’s work has served as a mainstay for art historians, researchers, collectors, and dealers. Best known for its references to obscure artists, along with samples of their signatures or marks, it is the book of first (and last!) resort in tracking down biographical information.”

Oxford will distribute both English and French editions of the Benezit Dictionary of Artists. For more information regarding these editions, or to request sample editions for possible review please contact Purdy, Director of Publicity at 212.726.6033, or christian.purdy@oup.com