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Miles Is Named Director King-Tisdell Starts New Era Monday

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Minnie Marianne Miles, an author, artist, and former college professor, has been named director of the King-Tisdell Cottage Foundation and Beach Institute, replacing the retired W.W. Law.

Miles, who was director of a Nashville, Tenn., museum and art gallery, starts work Monday.

She was named to the post at a January meeting of the board of trustees of the cottage and institute. The action followed Law's resignation on Feb. 4.

"The fact that she was an artist, as well as having a background in administration," is what led to the hiring of Miles, said Dr. Rose J. Gordon, director of testing for the psychology department at Savannah State College.

"That's hard to find. You usually get one or the other," Gordon said.

At the news conference announcing his resignation, Law, 70, said he found it increasingly difficult to juggle the leadership responsibilities of both agencies.

Law said he had planned to resign as volunteer director of the organization last year, but stayed on through the fund raising efforts that made it possible for the museum to acquire the Ulysses Davis wood sculpture collection.

Law is also founder of King-Tisdell and acted as president of it and the Beach Institute. He said he thinks Miles' qualifications will serve her well in running the organizations he has kept a watchful eye over for more than 15 years.

"She comes here with a great deal . . . we will benefit from it," Law said. "It would be my hope that she will get the cooperation of the entire community in making her effort a success, and I pledge to her my full support."

Miles leaves her post as director of the Carl Van Vechten Museums and Galleries at Fisk University in Nashville, of which she is a graduate. She also holds a master of arts degree in art from New York University.

As an artist, Miles has shown her work in more than 56 shows, 20 of which have solely featured her works, and she has written articles for professional publications.

Miles was also an art professor and head of the art department at Austin Community College in Austin, Texas, before becoming director of the Fisk museums and gallery.

A published poet, Miles is listed in Who's Who in the World, and has been featured in the book, Personalities of the South.

At the foundation, Miles will continue the preservation of the Davis collection, as well as make acquisitions that will enlarge the collection of African-American art at the King-Tisdell Cottage and the Beach Institute.

"We are wealthy in art history," Miles said at the opening ceremonies of the Georgia Historical Celebration honoring the work of Davis on Jan. 31.

"African-American history is important to the history of Georgia," said Miles, who also said she is interested in changing the art exhibits periodically and "plans to expand on the work by Law and the board of trustees of the Beach Institute."

Staff writer Melissa Alexander contributed to this report.