



For Immediate Release

LACMA and ASU launch partnership to advance a new generation of art museum leaders and a more inclusive museum field

Los Angeles and Tempe, Ariz. (May 8, 2018) — The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the largest encyclopedic art museum in the western United States, and the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University (ASU), the largest comprehensive design and arts school in the nation, are launching a partnership to establish and develop a program that combines academic training and work experience to advance the careers of a new generation of curators, directors and other museum professionals who are committed to disrupting and diversifying the field.

“Both ASU and LACMA are laser-focused on creating new educational opportunities, encouraging broader public engagement and advancing knowledge,” said Michael Crow, president of ASU. “We are both seeking a more powerful role for arts and culture in public life and in our democracy. We are both committed to disrupting old models—in higher education and museums—to increase equity and inclusion and engage new perspectives, cultures and backgrounds. This program expands our ability to introduce new ideas and pursue new answers to serve a changing America.”

The LACMA-ASU Master’s Fellowship in Art History combines rigorous academic instruction through traditional masters-level coursework and a thesis with on-the-job work experience at LACMA or Herberger Institute’s ASU Art Museum. This first-of-its-kind program provides unique mentorship opportunities between students, curators and faculty. Participation in this three-year program means that talented students will not have to choose between work and getting a degree, in addition to accelerating their careers.

“Too many talented students from diverse backgrounds get stuck or delayed in finding their place as curators in art museums due to the lack of resources or the difficulty of pursuing the very long road to earning a graduate degree and accumulating enough work experience to advance in our field and make a difference,” said Michael Govan, LACMA CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director. “This partnership and program will help open the pipeline for more talent and diverse ideas to feed the art museums of the near future.”

In addition to working at one of the museums while earning their master’s degree in art history, the cohort of fellows will gain access to resources from both LACMA and

Herberger Institute, including ASU's internationally recognized art faculty and LACMA's renowned staff, curators and educators.

Building on the ASU School of Art's distinguished art history program in Herberger Institute, the LACMA-ASU Master's Fellowship in Art History will emphasize museum context, object-based learning, collaborative working skills and global perspective, grounded in a framework of equity and inclusion. The fellowship is intended to complement and expand the value of other important programs at LACMA — such as the Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship and the LACMA Emerging Art Professionals (LEAP) Fellowship — to help diversify the ranks of curators and other professionals in art museums.

"I'm excited about the difference we can make together," said Steven J. Tepper, dean of the Herberger Institute. "The School of Art, led by Joanna Grabski, is already making great strides toward a world in which museums and the artists in them reflect who we are as a country and world. This program represents a prototype for a new kind of arts education and this partnership helps propel us toward our goal of projecting all voices through arts and culture."

Students will contribute to investigating how museums can be more equitable and include an increasingly diverse range of voices and experiences. LACMA staff, in association with ASU faculty, will offer a new course on curatorial and museum practice in the 21st century.

"We believe museums are positioned to address some of the most pressing global challenges of our time," said ASU Art Museum Director Miki Garcia. "ASU Art Museum embraces an experimental approach, testing cutting-edge ideas in the museum field to reinvent the paradigm. The fellows will be an integral part of re-thinking how museums of the future can become spaces that best reflect the full diversity of the communities they serve."

The agreement, which was announced May 8 at the American Alliance of Museums conference in Phoenix, calls for a five-year commitment. The initial cohort will start in August and is slated to include staff from both the ASU Art Museum and LACMA.

Tepper called the agreement "the beginning of an important partnership that we hope will grow to include significant exchange between LACMA and the ASU Art Museum, collaborative research projects, and mutual efforts to scale, at a global level, access to art history education and to the collections and exhibitions of our museums."

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About Arizona State University

Arizona State University has developed a new model for the American Research University, creating an institution that is committed to access, excellence and impact. ASU measures itself by those it includes, not by those it excludes. As the prototype for a New American University,

ASU pursues research that contributes to the public good, and ASU assumes major responsibility for the economic, social and cultural vitality of the communities that surround it. For three straight years, ASU has been named the nation's most innovative university by US News & World Report, ahead of Stanford and MIT.

About LACMA

Since its inception in 1965, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography, mirroring Los Angeles's rich cultural heritage and uniquely diverse population. Today LACMA is the largest art museum in the western United States, with a collection of over 135,000 objects that illuminate 6,000 years of art history from new and unexpected points of view. A museum of international stature as well as a vital cultural center for Southern California, LACMA shares its vast collection with the Greater Los Angeles County and beyond through exhibitions, public programs, and research facilities that attract over 1.5 million visitors annually, in addition to serving millions more through community partnerships, school outreach programs, and creative digital initiatives. LACMA's main campus is located halfway between the ocean and downtown, adjacent to the La Brea Tar Pits and Museum and the future home of the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures. Dedicated to serving all of Los Angeles, LACMA collaborates with a range of curators, educators, and artists on exhibitions and programs at various sites throughout the County.

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