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# Palm Springs Art Museum announces Luisa Heredia as Chief Education and Community Engagement Officer



Coachella Valley native will prioritize expanding museum's reach into underrepresented audiences



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**PALM SPRINGS, CA.-** *Palm Springs Art Museum* announced today that Luisa Heredia has been named Chief Education & Community Engagement Officer. In this newly created role, Heredia—who was born and raised in the Coachella Valley —will draw upon her personal and professional experience in the region to help the museum realize its vision of becoming an inclusive, dynamic, and evolving institution that truly reflects the fullness of the community. Currently serving as the Joanne Woodward Chair in Public Policy at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York, Heredia will begin her new position on May 31, 2022.

"Luisa is vitally important to my vision for the museum," says JoAnn McGrath Executive Director/CEO Adam Lerner. "She has all the strengths we were looking for as someone who can create opportunities for a diverse range of audiences to engage with the museum. She's a unique individual: an academic powerhouse with a deep commitment to supporting communities. We looked outside of the usual museum box for this hire, and bringing Luisa onboard represents our commitment to not just the value of excellence, but also being a more community-focused institution. Her appointment accelerates our efforts to breakdown the elitism that can be inherent in so many museum structures. She's a rare find."

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Heredia earned a B.A. in Anthropology and Sociology at the University of Notre Dame, and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology from Harvard University. In addition to Sarah Lawrence, her other academic appointments include positions at Harvard University, New York University, and the University of California, Riverside. She has spent the majority of her career devoting her research, teaching, and program development to immigrant and racial politics and power, with an emphasis on Latinx communities.

Heredia has designed dynamic programs in Public Policy, Latinx Studies, and Migration, Mobilities, and Social Justice. These programs engage contemporary issues, foster belonging, and engagement, and create connections between institutions and their local, regional, and national contexts.


"I want to help Palm Springs Art Museum in its evolution as a central cultural and critical arts institution within the Coachella Valley, surrounding region, and on a broader regional and national scale," says Heredia of her new role. "Building bridges and cultivating new audiences can be challenging, but I firmly believe it is possible and necessary. This will require voicing our commitments and following through on them. Over my career I have been driven by a commitment to reflect, represent, and open institutional space for Latinx, migrant, BIPOC, and queer communities. In this new position, I look forward to designing and implementing far-reaching programs that will create an inclusive space that is representative of the community."

Heredia's past programming initiatives have included public talks and events on arts and politics that draw from a broad range of academics, artists, activists, and organizers. They include a series of policy and arts-based events on Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, an academic and local DJs panel on Indigenous and Afro resistance across the Americas, and talks and workshops with Favianna Rodriguez, co-founder of The Center for Cultural Power, and filmmaker Alex Rivera, a 2021 winner of the MacArthur Genius grant. She has also overseen a series of yearly town halls highlighting the work of faculty members and of community-based organizations on relevant issues like the state of immigration politics, family separation, sanctuary, and detention and deportation. Heredia has participated in numerous academic and arts panels as both moderator and participant, including Palm Springs's celebrated site-specific art exhibition Desert X in 2021.




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