

USC Pacific Asia Museum

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USC PACIFIC ASIA MUSEUM APPOINTS DR. BETHANY MONTAGANO AS NEW DIRECTOR

PASADENA, CA (March 26, 2019) – Following an international search, the USC Pacific Asia Museum and USC Provost's Office announced today the appointment of cultural historian, Dr. Bethany Montagano as USC PAM's next director.

A visionary and creative museum curator, Dr. Montagano comes to USC PAM from the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, where she served as senior Curator. For the past three years, she originated major art, photography and fashion exhibitions that aim to create a more just society. She curated *Pop for the People: Roy Lichtenstein in L.A.*, *Black is Beautiful: The Photography of Kwame Brathwaite* and most recently *Fearless Fashion: Rudi Gernreich*, where she worked with Humberto Leon of Opening Ceremony and Kenzo to bring this values driven fashion exhibition to life.

As director of USC PAM, Dr. Montagano will assume leadership of the only university affiliated art museum dedicated to the arts and cultures of Asia and the Pacific Islands, holding an extraordinary collection of 17,000 objects. After a seventeen month closure for a seismic retrofit to strengthen the building, the museum reopened in December 2017 with updated galleries, a new museum store and secondary branding. Its most recent exhibitions have traveled internationally and nationally.

Interim Director, Selma Holo, who led the search committee comprised of USC administrators, faculty and artists, said, "Bethany brings to USC PAM an extraordinary expertise in cultural curation, as well as museum management. She has done amazing work at the Skirball in bringing cross cultural exhibitions, something that is at the heart of USC PAM's mission of intercultural understanding. Bethany is a seasoned museum professional, and a dynamic leading force in the museum field. Her energy will revitalize the museum's exhibitions, programs and cultural outreach, we are thrilled to have her start."

Dr. Montagano said, "I hope to bring a strong sense of inclusivity and access to the USC Pacific Asia Museum and ensure that all feel honored and welcome at the Museum."

USC Provost, Michael Quick adds, "This is an exciting time for the USC Pacific Asia Museum, the first U.S. university museum exclusively dedicated to the arts of Asia and the Pacific Islands. We are sure that Dr. Montagano's energy and expertise in the museum field will revitalize the gallery's exhibitions, programs, and cultural outreach."

Dr. Montagano earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Asian Studies, and studied at Kansai Gaidai University in Osaka Japan. She has a master's degree in Museum Studies and earned her doctorate in American History with an emphasis on gender, race and cultural representation from the University of Notre Dame. Dr. Montagano played a formidable role in the opening of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and on exhibitions and publications at the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian that illuminate issues of displacement,

representation and stereotyping. Currently, she is senior Curator of the Skirball Cultural Center, she will assume her post at the USC Pacific Asia Museum on May 9, 2019.

About the USC Pacific Asia Museum

USC Pacific Asia Museum is Southern California’s only museum exclusively devoted to the arts of Asia and the Pacific, and the only U.S. university museum dedicated to the subject. Since 1971, the museum's mission is to further intercultural understanding through the arts of Asia and the Pacific Islands. The museum holds a collection of more than 17,000 items from across Asia and the Pacific Islands, spanning more than 5,000 years.

Admission:

Members: Free; General Admission: \$10; Students with I.D.: \$7; Seniors (65+): \$7; Children under 12: Free; USC Staff, Faculty & Students: Free; Admission is free every Thursday from 5pm to 8pm

Hours:

Wednesday - Sunday: 11-5PM; Thursdays: 5-8PM; Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays

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