



Press Release
November 18, 2021

Desert X 2023 will open in the Coachella Valley, CA March 4 – May 7, 2023

Diana Campbell to co-curate with returning artistic director Neville Wakefield.

Board elects new members Jarvis Crawford, Nicholas Galanin and Bill Sanchez.

Executive team bolstered with appointments of Mara Gladstone, Deputy Director & Head of Programs and Diane Mailey, Director of Development.



Left to right top to bottom: Diana Campbell, Jarvis Crawford, Nicholas Galanin, Bill Sanchez, Mara Gladstone, Diane Mailey.

Palm Springs, California, November 17, 2021 – [Desert X](#), the recurring site-specific, international art exhibition, announced today that its fourth edition in the Coachella Valley will be open to the public from March 4 to May 7, 2023.

The organization, which has drawn a total audience of more than 1.25 million to its three previous exhibitions in the Coachella Valley and has received critical acclaim and worldwide attention, announced today the addition of three dynamic and diverse new board members, the co-curator for the 2023 exhibition and an expanded executive team.

Newly-appointed 2023 Co-curator **Diana Campbell** is the founding artistic director of Dhaka-based Samdani Art Foundation in Bangladesh and chief curator of the Dhaka Art Summit and is credited with its development into a leading research and exhibitions platform. Campbell has been working in South and Southeast Asia since 2010 and is committed to fostering a transnational art world and to amplifying the reach of indigenous voices in the art world, inspired by her cultural background as a member of the CHamoru diaspora from Guam.

Desert X Artistic Director, **Neville Wakefield** said, “Diana brings to Desert X both a body of knowledge gleaned from founding one of the most successful art programs in South East Asia, and a global vision that will expand on Desert X's commitment to nurturing inclusive conversations.”

“Desert X 2023 presents a compelling opportunity to connect communities around the globe, especially when it comes to how we survive in a world with increasingly volatile environmental conditions,” said Desert X 2023 Co-curator **Diana Campbell**. “For my first project of this scale in the United States I am driven to draw translocal connections across contexts of extreme weather – from the droughts of the California desert to the floods of Bangladesh.”

Desert X also confirmed the election of three new board members, expanding its leadership to 16 members. Joining the board are **Jarvis Crawford**, Community Center Manager at the James O. Jessie Desert Highland Unity Center for the City of Palm Springs Parks & Recreation Department; **Nicholas Galanin**, Desert X 2021 artist; and

Commissioner **Guillermo “Bill” Sanchez**, chairman, Riverside County Planning Commission, principal of Capital Building Services in Rancho Mirage and partner at Memo Design, an architectural design firm.

Desert X President and Founder **Susan Davis** said, “We are growing a formidable, diverse board that brings the resources, expertise, vision and courage we need as Desert X advances its mission to promote cultural exchange, new dialogue and understanding through art that is accessible to all.”

Mara Gladstone, who led the public and educational programming for the exhibition in 2021, has been named to the newly-created position of deputy director and head of programs. Gladstone was previously a curator at the Palm Springs Art Museum. **Diane Mailey**, who most recently was director of the Institute at the Golden Gate, a program of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy in San Francisco, has been named director of development. Gladstone and Mailey join an expanding and accomplished executive and curatorial team led by Artistic Director **Neville Wakefield** and Executive Director **Jenny Gil**.

“Desert X has grown into a catalyzing force in the community and this expanded team will invigorate our public and education programs and increase community impact,” said Desert X Executive Director **Jenny Gil**.

Desert X is funded by its board of directors and an extraordinary group of individuals, foundations and sponsors.

About Diana Campbell

Diana Campbell is a Princeton educated American curator who has been working in South and Southeast Asia since 2010, primarily in India, Bangladesh, and the Philippines. She is committed to fostering a transnational art world, and her plural and long-range vision addresses the concerns of underrepresented regions and artists alongside the more established in manifold forums. While she was born in Los Angeles, her maternal family being indigenous CHamoru from the island of Guam, her heritage inspires her curatorial practice which seeks to amplify the reach of indigenous voices.

Since 2013, she has served as the Founding Artistic Director of Dhaka-based Samdani Art Foundation, Bangladesh and Chief Curator of the Dhaka Art Summit, leading the critically acclaimed 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020 editions and envisioning the upcoming 2023 edition. In addition to her exhibition making practice, Campbell is responsible for developing the Samdani Art Foundation collection and drives its international collaborations ahead of opening the foundation's permanent home and community-based residency program at Srihatta, the Samdani Art Centre and Sculpture Park in Sylhet.

Concurrent to her work in Bangladesh from 2016 – 2018, Campbell was also the Founding Artistic Director of Bellas Artes Projects in the Philippines, a non-profit international residency and exhibition program with sites in Manila and Bataan, and curated Frieze Projects in London for the 2018 and 2019 editions of the fair. Her writing has been published by *Mousse*, *Frieze*, *Art in America*, and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) among others.

About Jarvis Crawford

Jarvis Crawford, born and raised in the Coachella Valley, works with the City of Palm Springs Parks & Recreation Department as Community Center Manager at the James O. Jessie Desert Highland Unity Center. There, he has managed and implemented new structures, programs and activities serving the community. A graduate of Palm Springs High School, Jarvis holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Langston University in Oklahoma. Returning to the Palm Springs area to raise a family and give back to the community, Jarvis has for more than 20 years, contributed time to many boards, groups and committees--all with a focus on community service, education and youth leadership. He has previously held board positions at Well in the Desert and Palm Springs Police Activities League and is currently an advisor for Palm Springs High School's Black Student Union. Jarvis is a member of the Martin Luther King Commemoration Committee and the California Parks & Recreation Society, District 11, having served as president. He is a faithful member in several ministries at First Baptist Church of Palm Springs and assists in many Black History Month activities. He and his wife, Resha and their two children live in Desert Hot Springs.

About Nicholas Galanin

Nicholas Galanin is a Tlingit and Unanga̓ artist whose installation, *Never Forget*, was the most visited and visible art installation of Desert X 2021. His work engages contemporary culture from a perspective rooted in connection to land. He embeds incisive observation into his work, investigating intersections of culture and concept using form, image and sound. Nicholas's works embody critical thought as vessels of knowledge, culture and technology--inherently political, generous, unflinching, and poetic. His works critique commodification of culture, while contributing to the continuum of Tlingit art and dialogue on Indigenous artistic production, and how culture can be carried. Nicholas's work is in numerous public and private collections and has been exhibited worldwide, including in the 2019 Whitney Biennial and the 2020 Biennale of Sydney. His expansive practice includes numerous collaborations with visual and recording artists. Having apprenticed with master carvers, Nicholas earned a BFA at London Guildhall University, and a MFA at Massey University. He lives and works with his family in Sitka, Alaska.

About Guillermo "Bill" Sanchez

A native of the Coachella Valley, Bill Sanchez returned to his roots upon graduating from Long Beach State University and a four-year career as a financial analyst for a national vehicle manufacturer. Since his return to the Coachella Valley in 2000, Bill has taken part in the development of over one million square feet of local commercial /retail real estate. Bill has also taken part in guiding development, serving seven years as a Planning Commissioner for the City of Coachella and is currently in his ninth year as a Riverside County Planning Commissioner, where he has served as chairman for two years. Bill continues his career in real estate development as the principal in Capital Building Services, a commercial contracting firm and as a partner of Memo Design, an architectural design firm. Bill and his wife of 20 years, Myra, have two daughters and live in Indio.

About Mara Gladstone

Mara Gladstone has worked in the arts for two decades as a curator, educator, fundraiser and writer. As Deputy Director and Head of Programs at Desert X, Mara develops and implements audience engagement strategies, community partnerships, and long-term planning for the organization. Previously, at the Palm Springs Art Museum she curated exhibitions including *Brave New Worlds* with Kelly Akashi, Gisela Colon, Karen Lofgren, Victoria Fu, and Adee Roberson (2019), *Todd Gray: Pluralities of Being* (2018), and *Pat Lasch: Journeys of the Heart* (2016), as well as more than 30 permanent collection exhibitions and special projects. Mara served on the Public Arts Commission for the City of Palm Springs from 2015–2021, and created programs and fundraising strategies at the J. Paul Getty Museum and MoMA. She is a member of Bayanihan Desert, a Filipinx community action network, and is treasurer on the board of the Project X Foundation for Art and Criticism, which publishes X-TRA art journal. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Rochester and a B.A. from Brown University.

About Diane Mailey

Diane Mailey has more than 20 years of fundraising, strategic planning, and business development experience in building and sustaining mission-driven nonprofits and B corporations. Her work spans higher education, affordable housing, healthcare, and international development. Most recently, she led a nationally-recognized innovation lab for the National Park Service, identifying and funding new ways to utilize public lands that advance social good. Diane's role at Desert X is a natural progression from working at the intersection of social innovation, community development, and sustainability on both U.S. coasts and in communities in Africa and Asia.

Acknowledgment of Native Land

We acknowledge the Cahuilla People as the original stewards of the land on which Desert X takes place. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work with the indigenous people in this place. We pay our respect to the Cahuilla People, past, present and emerging, who have been here since time immemorial.

About Desert X

Desert X is produced by The Desert Biennial, a 501(c)3 charitable organization, conceived to produce recurring international contemporary art exhibitions that activate desert locations through site-specific installations by acclaimed international artists. Its guiding principles include presenting public exhibitions of art that respond meaningfully to the conditions of desert locations, the environment and the indigenous communities; promoting cultural exchange and education programs that foster dialogue and understanding among cultures and communities about shared artistic, historical, and societal issues; and providing an accessible platform for artists from around the world to address ecological, cultural, spiritual and other existential themes.

Press Kit and Installation Images

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