



**KAITLIN GARCIA-MAESTAS NAMED CO-CURATOR OF
DESERT X 2025**

**FIFTH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ART EXHIBITION IN THE
COACHELLA VALLEY WILL OPEN MARCH 8–MAY 11, 2025**



Kaitlin Garcia-Maestas, photo by Luis Corzo, courtesy Desert X

(Palm Springs, CA, September 7, 2023) – Desert X announced today the appointment of **Kaitlin Garcia-Maestas** as co-curator of Desert X 2025, which will open March 8–May 11, 2025 at sites across the Coachella Valley, California. Garcia-Maestas joins the organization’s curatorial team under the leadership of Artistic Director **Neville Wakefield** and Executive Director **Jenny Gil**.

Concurrent with her position at Desert X, Garcia-Maestas is Curator and Director of Exhibitions at Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City, NY. Her research and curatorial interests have primarily been devoted to exploring themes of displacement, decolonial resistance, and cultural hybridity in the United States and the Americas. Prior to joining Socrates, she was Acting Curator of Visual Arts at the Momentary in Bentonville, Arkansas, where she developed an outdoor art program and a robust exhibition program focused on site-specific architectural interventions.

Wakefield's and Garcia-Maestas's collaboration for the upcoming fifth edition of the free, international contemporary art exhibition in the California desert follows their work together in 2022 as curators of *A Divided Landscape* at the Momentary, in which artists confronted the historical and cultural narratives of the American West, ideas of wilderness and indigeneity, interactions between humans and animals, and humans' conquest of nature through work presented both in gallery spaces and outdoors.

"It's a rare and exciting opportunity to be able to continue the curatorial dialogue, exploration and journey that brought Kaitlin and I together with *A Divided Landscape* in the expanded field of Desert X," said Wakefield. "Kaitlin's intimate knowledge of the desert - its ecologies, cultures and conflicts - promises to be an invaluable part of the next edition."

"I am honored to co-curate the fifth edition of Desert X, a biennial that not only commissions some of the most significant outdoor artworks being created today but also pushes the boundaries of art, nature, and community. Having grown up in New Mexico, my relationship to the desert landscape - as a home and as a colonial myth - has greatly informed my curatorial perspective. I look forward to collaborating with artists and immersing myself in the unique social and historical ecologies of the Coachella Valley," said Garcia-Maestas.

"I am delighted to welcome Kaitlin Garcia-Maestas to the Desert X curatorial team for our fifth edition. Kaitlin brings invaluable and relevant experience in working with international artists on outdoor, site-responsive works and has developed a deep knowledge of and sensibility for the social and historical narratives that are central to the Coachella Valley," added Gil.

Garcia-Maestas has held curatorial positions at the Denver Art Museum, the Biennial of the Americas, and MCA Denver. While at the Denver Art Museum she worked on several major exhibitions, most notably *Mi Tierra: Contemporary Artists Explore Place*, an exhibition featuring site-specific installations by 13 Latinx and Chicanx artists examining themes of displacement and visibility. In 2015, she co-founded the Biennial Ambassadors artist residency program, a collaboration between the Biennial of the Americas and SOMA Mexico City. Garcia-Maestas' curated exhibitions include *Diana Al-Hadid: Ash in the Trade Winds, In Some Form or Fashion, Esteban Cabeza de Baca: Let Earth Breathe, A Divided Landscape*, co-curated with Neville Wakefield, *Yvette Mayorga: What a Time to Be*, and recently *Mary Mattingly: Ebb of a Spring Tide*. She has organized site-specific projects, outdoor installations, and residencies with artists including Matthew Barney, Andrea Carlson, Justin Favela, Martine Gutierrez, Xaviera Simmons, and Tavares Strachan.

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 are open free to the public and respond meaningfully to the conditions of desert locations, the environment, indigenous communities, and promote cultural exchange. Desert X is committed to education and public programming with a robust series of initiatives that expand the breadth and depth of the organization's engagement with the surrounding community. The exhibitions provide a platform for artists from around the world to address ecological, cultural, spiritual and other existential themes.

From its inception in 2017, Desert X has presented four exhibitions in the Coachella Valley. In 2020, the organization began to engage with exhibitions outside the United States and helped establish Desert X AIUla in the desert of Saudi Arabia. The exhibitions to date have explored new configurations of site-responsive work by more than 80 artists from North America, South America, South Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa creating a new paradigm for the presentation and experience of art and welcoming an audience of over 1.7 million.

Desert X is free and open to all and is funded by its board of directors and an international group of individual donors, foundations, and sponsors.

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