

Phoenix Art Museum

News Release

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Phoenix Art Museum Names adjunct curator of American Art

Betsy Fahlman, ASU professor and scholar, to oversee Museum's historical American art collection

PHOENIX (September 7, 2016) – Phoenix Art Museum announces the appointment of Dr. Betsy Fahlman, PhD, to the role of adjunct curator of American art. Dr. Fahlman will officially begin her role overseeing the care and scholarship of the Museum's historical American art collection in the fall of 2016 and will divide her time between Phoenix Art Museum and Arizona State University's Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, where she has served as a professor of art history for more than 28 years.

"Dr. Fahlman's reputation as a scholar of American art distinguishes her as the ideal candidate to lead the Museum's efforts in this key area," said Amada Cruz, the Sybil Harrington Director. "The adjunct curator model deepens our partnerships with our university communities, creating a symbiotic relationship that provides scholars with access to objects, while enriching the Museum with invaluable expertise, enabling us to be better stewards of the collection with which we have been entrusted."

Phoenix Art Museum has valued its cooperative partnerships with the state's university community. Beginning in 2006, the Museum formed a new partnership with The University of Arizona's Center for Creative Photograph in Tucson. The Center's chief curator, Rebecca Senf, PhD, serves a dual-role as the Norton Family Curator of Photography at Phoenix Art Museum, where she annually organizes three exhibitions of photography drawn from the Center's extensive archives. This relationship profoundly expanded the local community's access to significant works of photography from across the 20th and 21st centuries. Beginning in 2016, the Jacquie Dorrance Curator of Fashion Design, Dennita Sewell, accepted a dual role with the Museum and Arizona State University's Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, overseeing the school's new Bachelor of Arts in fashion program. Through these partnerships, the institutions experience rich opportunities for engagement that create new learning opportunities for their shared communities.

Dr. Fahlman's appointment is the latest of this kind. A resident of Arizona since 1988, Dr. Fahlman earned her Masters of Art and PhD from the University of Delaware. An accomplished author on American art, Dr. Fahlman has penned more than 30 books, catalogues, articles, and essays published between 1980 and 2016. Her research centers on the relationship between industry and art, the influence of infrastructure, such as dams and railroads, on American art and the representation of gender in American art. Dr. Fahlman also demonstrates a strong interest in the history of Arizona with her books *New Deal Art in Arizona* (2009) and *The Cowboy's Dream: The Mythic Life and Art of Lon Megargee* (2002).

Along with an impressive academic record, Dr. Fahlman has collaborated with a number of museums and art galleries over the years, including include Denver Art Museum, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State University, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens in Florida, Joseph and Margaret Muscarelle Museum of Art in Virginia, the Amon Carter Museum of American Art, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, and the Museum of Northern Arizona, among others.

"Dr. Fahlman brings an expansive knowledge of American and Western art to the Museum," said Gilbert Vicario, the Selig Family Chief Curator. "Coupled with her extensive experience collaborating with museums around the country and her comprehensive knowledge on the subject, Dr. Fahlman complements the existing strengths of our curatorial team.

About Phoenix Art Museum Curatorial Team: The Curatorial Department at Phoenix Art Museum is overseen by Gilbert Vicario, the Selig Family Chief Curator and is composed of Janet Baker, curator of Asian Art; Dennita Sewell, the Jacquie Dorrance Curator of Fashion; Vanessa Davidson, the Lampe Curator of Latin American Art; Becky Senf, the Norton Family Curator of Photography and Dr. Betsy Fahlman, adjunct curator of American art.

About Phoenix Art Museum

Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for more than 50 years and is the largest art museum in the Southwestern United States. In addition to an annual calendar of special exhibitions, Phoenix Art Museum's permanent collection galleries are drawn from more than 18,000 objects of modern and contemporary art, fashion design, and photography, as well as American, Asian, Latin American, and European art. Each month, the Museum hosts a wide variety of public programs, including lectures, performances, tours, workshops, and film screenings designed for audiences of all ages to enjoy.

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