

Phoenix Art Museum

News Release

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Phoenix Art Museum receives \$300,000 grant from Ford Foundation for first mid-career survey of contemporary artist Teresita Fernández

The gift helps fund the first major traveling exhibition of works by the 2005 MacArthur Foundation Fellow, co-organized with Pérez Art Museum Miami

PHOENIX (February 11, 2019) – Phoenix Art Museum has been named the recipient of a \$300,000 grant from the Ford Foundation that provides core support for the upcoming exhibition [Teresita Fernández: Elemental](#), scheduled to open in 2020. Co-organized with Pérez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) and the first mid-career survey of the 2005 MacArthur Foundation Fellow, the retrospective will bring approximately 60 works, including large-scale sculptures, installations, drawings, and wall works, by one of the nation’s leading contemporary artists and one of the most prominent Latinx artists in the United States to Arizona, continuing the Museum’s initiative to diversify its exhibitions and showcase works by artists from underrepresented communities. The grant is the second awarded to Phoenix Art Museum by the Ford Foundation since 2017 in support of increasing diversity across the Museum.

“We are grateful to the Ford Foundation for this generous and substantial gift,” said Amada Cruz, the Sybil Harrington Director and CEO of Phoenix Art Museum, who will co-curate the grant-supported retrospective with Franklin Sirmans, the Director of Pérez Art Museum Miami; Gilbert Vicario, the Selig Family Chief Curator of Phoenix Art Museum; and María Elena Ortiz, Assistant Curator of Pérez Art Museum Miami. “The funds will enable the Museum to present a wide selection of evocative installations, sculptures, and mixed-media works by Teresita Fernández, considered one of the most innovative artists of her generation, and strengthen our efforts to continue diversifying our exhibition schedule.”

The Ford Foundation grant provides major support for *Teresita Fernández: Elemental*, the first collaboration between Phoenix Art Museum and Pérez Art Museum Miami and the first major retrospective on the work of the 2005 MacArthur Foundation Fellow, renowned for her experiential sculptures and prominent public installations that have appeared in such spaces as Harvard College, Madison Square Park, and Olympic Sculpture Park in Seattle. Spanning the mid-1990s to the present, the mid-career survey offers Arizona audiences the opportunity to experience the artist’s large-scale sculptures, installations, and mixed-media wall works that merge formal and conceptual aspects of her practice through the use of natural materials and the historic genre of landscape to reinterpret relationships between nature, history, and identity.

Premiering at Pérez Art Museum Miami from October 17 through February 16, 2020 before it is presented at Phoenix Art Museum from March 21 through May 24, 2020 (dates subject to change), the exhibition, which is also made possible through the generosity of The Diane & Bruce Halle Foundation, aligns with the Museum’s ongoing commitment to increase diversity among its exhibitions, education programs, collections, and staff to better reflect and engage its surrounding community. Since 2018, *Teresita Fernández: Elemental* will be the sixth major exhibition at Phoenix Art Museum dedicated to the work of a woman artist, the fifth to focus on a living woman artist, and the second to survey the work of a woman artist of color.

The major gift is the second awarded in just over a year to Phoenix Art Museum by the Ford Foundation to support the Museum’s ongoing diversity efforts. In December 2017, the Museum was named one of 20 museums nationwide to receive funding from the [Diversifying Art Museum Leadership Initiative \(DAMLI\)](#), a partnership between the Walton Family Foundation and the Ford Foundation in support of efforts to diversify leadership staff in art museums. Fiscally sponsored by Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, DAMLI supports innovative strategies and programs at museums across the country, with the goals of hiring professionals from underrepresented populations and offering fellowships, mentorships, and other career-development options for diverse professionals. The funds awarded to Phoenix Art Museum currently support a

curatorial fellowship with a focus on Latinx art, paid internships for undergraduate and graduate students, and the Museum's Teen Art Council initiative.

For more information on *Teresita Fernández: Elemental*, visit <http://www.phxart.org/exhibition/teresitafernandez>. For more information about Phoenix Art Museum and its diversity efforts, contact the Marketing and Communications Office of Phoenix Art Museum at 602.257.2105 or margaree.bigler@phxart.org.

About Phoenix Art Museum

Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for nearly 60 years and is the largest art museum in the southwestern United States. Critically acclaimed national and international exhibitions are shown alongside the Museum's permanent collection of more than 19,000 works of American, Asian, European, Latin American, modern and contemporary art, and fashion design. The Museum also presents festivals, a comprehensive film program, live performances, and educational programs designed to enlighten, entertain, and stimulate visitors of all ages. Visitors also enjoy vibrant photography exhibitions through the Museum's landmark partnership with the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. To learn more about Phoenix Art Museum, visit phxart.org, or call 602.257.1880.

About the Ford Foundation

The [Ford Foundation](http://fordfoundation.org) is an independent, nonprofit grant-making organization. For more than 80 years, it has worked with courageous people on the frontlines of social change worldwide, guided by its mission to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement. With headquarters in New York, the foundation has offices in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

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