

Dallas Museum of Art Appoints Michelle Rich as Assistant Curator of the Arts of the Americas

Dallas, TX—August 29, 2018— Dr. Michelle Rich has been named The Ellen and Harry S. Parker III Assistant Curator of the Arts of the Americas at the Dallas Museum of Art. The appointment was announced today by Dr. Agustín Arteaga, the DMA’s Eugene McDermott Director. Dr. Rich will join the DMA after the completion of two prestigious Mellon Postdoctoral Curatorial Fellowships at national museums: first at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), and currently at the San Antonio Museum of Art. She will begin her new role in Dallas on September 17, 2018.

“Michelle Rich brings to the DMA extensive archaeological field experience and expertise in researching, conserving, and exhibiting important historical objects from across the Americas,” said Arteaga. “We look forward to welcoming her to the Museum to work with the DMA’s significant collection of art of the Americas—bringing their stories to life for all of our visitors.”

As The Ellen and Harry S. Parker III Assistant Curator of the Arts of the Americas, Dr. Rich will be responsible for ancient through modern arts from Native North America, Mesoamerica, lower Central America, and the Andean regions. The DMA’s important collection ranges in media from wood to shell, with the greatest representation in ceramic and textile arts from across the Americas. Dr. Rich will contribute to the organization of exhibitions; conduct and develop scholarly research on the DMA’s collection; play an integral role in making departmental acquisitions; and collaborate on installations throughout the Museum, all celebrating the artistic achievements of indigenous Americans.

With her primary expertise in Maya art, ritual objects, and architecture, Rich is an Assistant Director of the U.S.-Guatemalan El Perú-Waka’ Regional Archaeological Project, whose team has been implementing a diverse research program since 2003 exploring the prominent ancient Maya site widely known for its central location and longevity. She coordinated a groundbreaking international collaboration to excavate, restore, and conserve a narrative scene composed of more than 20 ceramic figurines discovered during her investigations at the site.

“The Dallas Museum of Art has such impressive exhibitions and programming. I am thrilled at the opportunity to collaborate with the amazing team here to foster dynamic experiences for visitors, as well as to conduct and present exciting, accessible scholarship featuring the Art of the Americas collection,” said Rich. “In bringing my passion for the art of the Americas—and particularly the ancient Americas—to this museum and its significant collection, I hope to inspire a sense of cross-cultural appreciation and stewardship for indigenous art in our communities.”

As a Mellon Postdoctoral Curatorial Fellow from 2015 to 2017 at LACMA, Rich curated *Ancient Bodies: Archaeological Perspectives on Mesoamerican Figures*, a 2017 exhibition of figurines from Burial 39, one of the royal tombs she excavated at El Perú-Waka’, and nearly 50 additional figurines from LACMA’s collection that explored the central role of archaeological excavation in situating ancient art and artifacts in a cultural framework.

A number of fellowships and grants have supported her work, and she has delivered lectures and scholarly papers both in the U.S. and abroad and contributed to numerous publications, including co-editing a multi-author volume about ritual activity at El Perú-Waka'. Rich has also served as an adjunct instructor at Santa Monica College and Sul Ross State University, conducted cultural resource management with Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc. and is co-organizing the Ninth Annual South Central Conference of Mesoamerica with the University of Texas at San Antonio in October 2018.

Michelle Rich is a member of the Society for American Archaeology, Association of Art Museum Curators, and Association of Latin American Art. She also holds an appointment as a research associate at the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History. Dr. Rich earned her master's and doctorate degrees in anthropology from Southern Methodist University. She is a *summa cum laude* graduate of University of Minnesota – Twin Cities.

About the Dallas Museum of Art and Its Arts of the Americas Collection

The Arts of the Americas collection at the Dallas Museum of Art, which includes more than 3,500 works of art spanning more than 4,000 years and representing sixteen countries, is remarkably representative of the great artistic achievements and cultural heritage of the Western Hemisphere.

Established in 1903, the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) is among the 10 largest art museums in the country and is distinguished by its commitment to research, innovation, and public engagement. At the heart of the Museum and its programs is its global collection, which encompasses more than 24,000 works and spans 5,000 years of history, representing a full range of world cultures. Located in the nation's largest arts district, the Museum acts as a catalyst for community creativity, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse spectrum of programming, from exhibitions and lectures to concerts, literary events, and dramatic and dance presentations. Since the Museum's return to free general admission in 2013, the DMA has welcomed more than 4 million visitors. For more information, visit DMA.org.

The Dallas Museum of Art is supported, in part, by the generosity of DMA Members and donors, the citizens of Dallas through the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

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