

Denver Art Museum Announces Dakota Hoska as Assistant Curator of Native Arts

DENVER – July 25, 2019 – Concluding an extensive search, the Denver Art Museum (DAM) is proud to announce Dakota Hoska as the new assistant curator of Native arts. After working as a curatorial research assistant for the Arts of Africa and the Americas department at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) for four years, Hoska will join the DAM's Native arts department, which is internationally recognized for its holdings of American Indian art collections and is composed of the arts of Indigenous peoples of North America, Africa and Oceania.

“We are fortunate to have such a passionate, creative and knowledgeable professional joining our Native arts department,” said Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director of the DAM. “Dakota shares the Denver Art Museum’s ongoing commitment to engaging Native communities, and I look forward to seeing how she will strengthen the connection between the museum and its surrounding communities as assistant curator of Native arts.”

Hoska’s curatorial work can be seen at Mia in the exhibition *Hearts of Our People: Native Women Artists*, which opened in June 2019. As the curatorial assistant for the exhibition, she assisted with the selection of objects, wrote five essays in the exhibition catalogue, spearheaded community engagement initiatives and facilitated communications between Native board members, lenders and museum staff. She also co-curated two



Native arts-focused exhibitions at Mia titled *Brilliant* and *Horse Nation*.

“Dakota’s curatorial, research and in-community experience will prove to be invaluable for the Denver Art Museum,” said John P. Lukavic, Andrew W. Mellon Curator of Native Arts and department head at the DAM. “I look forward to her supportive and insightful knowledge, especially in planning the reinstallation of our permanent Native arts collection in the museum’s North Building.”

Through her work at Mia, Hoska was involved in collaborating with local Native community members to

facilitate better communication between them and the institute. She served on many planning committees for community events such as Indian Month kick-off and Indigenous People's Day event planning.

"Though different than Minneapolis, I'm excited to serve and learn from the local Native populations from the Rocky Mountain region, while also studying those Native nations who traditionally called the Denver area their homeland," Hoska said. "I appreciate DAM's commitment to the collection of Native art, both historical and contemporary, and I look forward to stewarding and growing this collection, hoping it will serve as a great source of inspiration and strength for Native people today and into the future."

Hoska also cultivated her expertise at Mia by developing programs that combined language and art to bring Native families into the museum to enjoy the collection. Hoska facilitated the Community Engagement Board—a 12-person panel composed of local Native women artistic leaders all tasked with helping Mia understand how to make the institution welcoming to Native visitors during the run of *Hearts of Our People*.

"In her time at Mia, Dakota has been dedicated to the tasks at hand, creative in finding solutions when problems arise and highly motivated in what she undertakes," said Jan-Lodewijk Grootaers, curator of African art and department head of Arts of Africa and the Americas at the Mia. "Her contributions to the exhibition and catalogue *Hearts of Our People: Native Women Artists* are manifold and were crucial. I look forward to seeing her continue to grow professionally at the Denver Art Museum."

In addition to curatorial work, Hoska has served as an educator of art and Native American language. She was an adjunct professor at Minneapolis Community and Technical College, where she taught Beginning Dakhóta Language. Hoska was also an instructor at Nawayee

Center School, teaching Introduction to Art as well as Beginning Dakhóta Language.

Hoska graduated with a Master of Arts in Art History, with a focus on Native American Art History, from the University of St. Thomas in May 2019. She received the Sister Pat Kowalski Women's Leadership Award from the University of St. Thomas in 2018. Hoska completed courses in the Dakhóta Language at the University of Minnesota in 2016. She received her Bachelor of Fine Art degree in Drawing and Painting from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design in 2012. Hoska is a citizen of the Oglála Lak'hóta Nation from Pine Ridge, Wounded Knee. She will take on her role as the new assistant curator of Native arts at the DAM on July 31, 2019.

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THE DENVER ART MUSEUM

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro citizens support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture and scientific organizations. For museum information, call 720-865-5000 or visit www.denverartmuseum.org.

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