

DESERT X

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DESERT X 2021 OPENS TODAY THROUGH MAY 16, 2021

FIRST ART EXPERIENCE IN THE REGION SINCE WIDESPREAD LOCKDOWNS

NEWLY-COMMISSIONED WORKS BY THIRTEEN ARTISTS FROM EIGHT COUNTRIES
EXPLORE THE DESERT AS BOTH A PLACE AND IDEA, LOOKING DEEPER AT IDEAS
ESSENTIAL TO THE SUSTENANCE OF OUR FUTURE AND IDENTITY AND THE
HISTORIES, REALITIES AND POSSIBILITIES OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY AND ITS
MANY COMMUNITIES



NOW ON VIEW, FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Palm Springs, Calif., March 12, 2021 – Desert X, the recurring site-specific, international art exhibition, opens its third edition today through May 16, 2021 at site across the Coachella Valley. Free, safe and open to all, Desert X 2021 is among the first art experiences in the region since widespread lockdowns.

Curated by **Artistic Director Neville Wakefield** and **Co-Curator César García-Alvarez**, the exhibition will activate the desert landscape through thirteen newly-commissioned installations by a diverse roster of artists from eight countries.

Artists include:

Zahrah Alghamdi (born 1977, Al Bahah, Saudi Arabia, based in Jeddah)
Ghada Amer (born 1963, Cairo, Egypt, based in New York)
Felipe Baeza (born 1987, Guanajuato, Mexico, based in New York)
Judy Chicago (born 1939, Chicago, US, based in Belen, New Mexico)
Serge Attukwei Clottey (born 1985, Accra, Ghana, based in Accra)
Nicholas Galanin (born 1979, Sitka, Alaska, US, based in Sitka)
Alicja Kwade (born 1979, Katowice, Poland, based in Berlin)
Oscar Murillo (born 1986, Valle del Cauca, Colombia, based in various locations)
Christopher Myers (born 1974, New York, US, based in New York)
Eduardo Sarabia (born 1976, Los Angeles, US, based in Guadalajara, Mexico)
Xavier Simmons (born 1974, New York, US based in New York)
Kim Stringfellow (born 1963, San Mateo, CA, US, based in Joshua Tree)
Vivian Suter (born 1949, Buenos Aires, Argentina, based in Panajachel, Guatemala)

Full descriptions and installation images of the 2021 artists' projects are now available [here](#), and a site map, opening dates and hours for each project can be found at desertx.org.

The exhibition explores the desert as both a place and idea, acknowledging the histories, realities and possibilities of people those who reside in the Coachella Valley and the political, social, and cultural contexts that shape their stories. Imagining the landscape as both an amalgamation of natural forms and a terrain forged by people, the 2021 edition refuses the notion of the desert as homogenous entity. Newly-commissioned works address themes of land rights and ownership, the desert as border, migration, water exploitation, social justice, racial narratives of the west, the gendered landscape and the role of women and young people and the creation of new dialogues between regional and global desert experiences.

In an effort to make the exhibition and the ideas and conversations provoked by it available to the widest possible audience, Desert X 2021 will present *Currents*, a robust series of public and education programs inspired by the desert's layered geological forms and the forces that shape deserts and the immediacy of this moment. The programs will amplify the ideas and questions raised in the exhibition. Through Virtual Gatherings, Hybrid Programs, and Educational

Resources, the public programming is grounded in the pasts, presents, and futures of both the Coachella Valley and communities around the globe that are shaped by shared circumstances.

A dedicated Desert X 2021 film, produced by Desert X and presenting sponsor Richard Mille, will be released globally across multiple platforms. Premiere date to be announced.

EXPERIENCE THE EXHIBITION

Desert X Visitor Guide and Map

A special Desert X printed program available at the Desert X Hub at the Ace Hotel & Swim Club will contain up-to-date information on how to experience the exhibition and its public and education programs safely in compliance with CDC, State and County regulations. The map of the 2021 installations can also be found online at desertx.org and via the Desert X 2021 app.

COVID-19 Safety

The health and safety of Desert X visitors, artists, employees, volunteers, and community is our priority. Please visit desertx.org for information on how to experience Desert X safely.

Leave No Trace

Desert X encourages visitors to follow official *Leave No Trace* guidelines. Plan ahead and prepare, walk on designated paths, dispose of waste properly, leave what you find, respect wildlife, don't smoke, and be considerate of other visitors.

Desert X Hub at the Ace Hotel & Swim Club

701 E Palm Canyon Dr, Palm Springs

Stop by to pick up your Desert X 2021 guide, map of artist installations and visitor information.

Opening Hours: Thursday, March 11 – Sunday, March 14 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Visit desertx.org for opening hours during the run of the exhibition.

Guided and docent-led tours

For guided tours and accommodations throughout the duration of the exhibition, please contact info@desertx.org. Docents are available to provide information at most sites every Saturday between March 12 and May 16, 2021 from 10 a.m. to noon.

Pop-In Store – Super Number One x DX 21

463 North Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs

Stop by for Desert X swag, made with Windmill City Printing and other local companies.

Visit super-number-one.com for hours.

The North Face X Gucci Pit Stop

327 W. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs

In celebration of the recent collaboration between Gucci and The North Face, the Pit Stop will feature a unique geodesic dome welcoming visitors to Desert X. The installation uses different materials to recall the temporary and transient nature of landscapes, travel, and exploration.

For further information and to plan your visit, go to desertx.org.

Desert X 2021 is funded by its board of directors and an extraordinary group of individuals, foundations, and sponsors.

Desert X 2021 is presented by Richard Mille.

With support from Gucci.

Media Partners: *artnet, Cultured Magazine, frieze Magazine, Here TV, LocaliQ, part of The Desert Sun, NBC Palm Springs, Open Spaces Magazine and Palm Springs Life Magazine.*

EDITORS' NOTES

About Desert X

Acknowledgement of Native Land

We acknowledge the Cahuilla People as the original stewards of the land on which Desert X takes place. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work with the indigenous people in this place. We pay our respect to the Cahuilla People, past, present and emerging, who have been here since time immemorial.

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 respond meaningfully to the conditions of desert locations, the environment and the indigenous communities; promoting cultural exchange and education programs that foster dialogue and understanding among cultures and communities about shared artistic, historical, and societal issues; and providing an accessible platform for artists from around the world to address ecological, cultural, spiritual and other existential themes. Founded on the principles of the Land Art movement of the late '60s and early '70s, when artists sought to create work outside of the confines of institutional walls, Desert X has, since its inception in 2017, explored new configurations of site-responsive work by artists from around the world creating a new paradigm for the presentation and experience of art that is both unrivalled and accessible to all.

Desert X Artistic Director Neville Wakefield

Neville Wakefield is a modern curator interested in exploring the ways in which art behaves outside of institutional contexts. This interest led him to co-found Elevation1049, a site-specific biennial in Gstaad, Switzerland, while shaping the recurring Desert X exhibitions in the Coachella Valley region of Southern California. He is also co-curator, with Raneem Farsi and Aya Alireza, of Desert X AIUla 2020, a site-specific exhibition of international artists, taking place in AIUla, northwest Saudi Arabia, home to the country's first UNESCO World Heritage Site, Hegra. As senior curatorial advisor for PS1 MoMA and curator of Frieze Projects, he gained a reputation for challenging the conditions that shape art in both commercial and noncommercial contexts. He has worked extensively with international institutions, including the Schaulager Switzerland, where he curated the Matthew Barney retrospective *Prayer Sheet with the Wound and the Nail*.

Desert X 2021 Co-Curator César García-Alvarez

César García-Alvarez is founder and executive and artistic director of The Mistake Room (TMR), a Los Angeles-based independent space and platform for contemporary art, culture, and ideas. At TMR, García-Alvarez has organized exhibitions and projects with Oscar Murillo, Korakrit Arunanondchai, Ed Clark, Diana Thater, Mandy El-Sayegh, Thomas Hirschhorn, Henry Taylor, Tuan Andrew Nguyen, Gordon Matta-Clark, and others. From 2007 to 2012, García-Alvarez held various positions at LAXART, including associate director and senior curator. He was one of the curators of *Made in L.A. 2012* — the first Los Angeles biennial organized by the Hammer Museum — and, in 2013, served as U.S. commissioner for the 13th International Cairo Biennial. García-Alvarez has also organized notable museum exhibitions, including mid-career surveys of Marcos Ramirez ERRE (with Kevin Power) at the Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil, Mexico City (2011), and Eduardo Sarabia at the Instituto Cultural Cabañas, Guadalajara (2014). García-Alvarez's recent books include monographs on Eduardo Sarabia and Brenna Youngblood. He is currently working on monographs on artists Felipe Baeza and Tiffany Alfonseca, as well as a book on the first seven years of TMR's programs. García-Alvarez lives and works in Los Angeles.

Image credits left to right, top to bottom: Desert X installation view of Kim Stringfellow, *Jackrabbit Homestead*, 2021; Eduardo Sarabia, *The Passenger*, 2021; Serge Attukwei Clottey, *The Wishing Well*, 2021; Zahrah Alghamdi, *What Lies Behind the Walls*, 2021; Nicholas Galanin, *Never Forget*, 2021; Alicja Kwade, *ParaPivot (sempiternal clouds)*, 2021; Xaviera Simmons, *Because You Know Ultimately We Will Band A Militia*, 2021; Ghada Amer, *Women's Qualities*, 2021; Vivian Suter, *Tamanrasset*, 2021. All photography by Lance Gerber. Courtesy the artist and Desert X.

Exhibition Dates: March 12–May 16, 2021.

Opening hours and locations: Visit desertx.org for details.

Free Admission

Follow Desert X

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Desertx.org

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[PRESS KIT AND INSTALLATION IMAGES](#)

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