

# DESERT X

DESERT X 2023 OPENS TODAY

NEWLY-COMMISSIONED WORKS BY 12 ARTISTS FROM EUROPE, NORTH AMERICA AND SOUTH ASIA EXAMINE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL THEMES, THE CHANGES THAT GIVE FORM TO A WORLD INCREASINGLY SHAPED BY CLIMATE CRISIS, GLOBALISM, AND THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC MIGRATIONS THAT FOLLOW IN THEIR WAKE



NOW ON VIEW, FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Palm Springs, Calif., March 4, 2023 – [Desert X](#), the recurring site-specific, international art exhibition, opens its fourth edition today at sites across the Coachella Valley, California. The exhibition is free and open to all and will remain on view through May 7, 2023.

Curated by Artistic Director **Neville Wakefield** and Co-Curator **Diana Campbell**, the exhibition will activate the desert landscape through 12 installations by artists from Europe, North America and South Asia, whose poetic and immersive works span sculpture, painting, photography, writing, architecture, design, film, music, performance and choreography, education, and environmental activism.

Participating artists:

**Rana Begum**, b. 1977, Bangladesh, based in London

**Lauren Bon**, b. 1962, USA, based in Los Angeles

**Gerald Clarke**, b. 1967, USA, based in Anza, California

**Paloma Contreras Lomas**, b. 1991, Mexico, based in Mexico City

**Torkwase Dyson**, b. 1973, USA, based in Beacon, New York

**Mario García Torres**, b.1975, Mexico, based in Mexico City

**Hylozoic/Desires (Himali Singh Soin**, b. 1987, India, based in London and Delhi and **David**

**Soin Tappeser**, b.1985, Germany, based in London and Delhi)

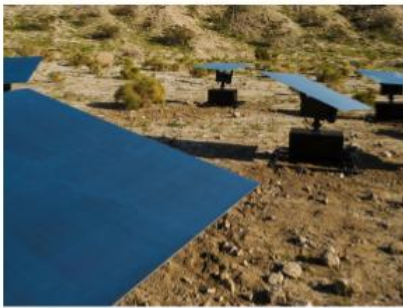
**Matt Johnson**, b. 1978, USA, based in Los Angeles

**Tyre D. Nichols**, b. 1993, USA

**Tschabalala Self**, b. 1990, USA, based in New York

**Marina Tabassum**, b. 1968, Bangladesh, based in Dhaka

**Héctor Zamora**, b. 1974, Mexico, based in Mexico City



Full descriptions and installation images of the artists' projects are now available [here](#).

“There’s a saying attributed to the Kwakwaka’wakw nation that a place is a story happening many times,” said Wakefield. “This idea of place as the multiplicity of stories flowing through it is central to Desert X. Artists are an essential part of this understanding and the ideas they bring to it irrigate our perception of place, nourishing the narratives already there and propagating those that have yet to be told.”

In the exhibition, which builds on social and environmental themes explored in earlier editions, newly-commissioned works make visible, as instruments of self-awareness and devices of wonder, the forces that we exert on the world: how we design our environments, how we live, and the messages we send that reinforce systems that might or might not be beneficial for us. From the local to the global, from schools and roads to global trade routes that define the ebb and flow of goods and many things in-between, infrastructure has subsumed creative ways of being that are inconvenient to forces of power.

“Desert X 2023 can be seen as a collection of artistic interventions that make visible how our energy has a transference far beyond what we see just in front of us in our own localities,” said Campbell. “From deserts to floodplains, finding, building and developing tools and tactics to shelter our minds and bodies from the harshness of the world outside are essential to survival. In a time of global crisis, many of the artists have created spaces of freedom and possibility, suggesting new ways to build healing cultures of care that embrace and protect (bio) diversity, opening up opportunities for joy and hope anchored in justice. Immersing ourselves in the stories of place also awakens us to its mythologies, whether they be religious texts or oral traditions across multitudes of belief systems that see us creating vessels to escape the flood as well as being cast into the arid wilderness to test the limits of existential and spiritual survival.”

Image block one credits left to right, top to bottom: Desert X 2023 installation views of Gerald Clarke, *Immersion*; Rana Begum, *No.1225 Chainlink*; Paloma Contreras Lomas, *Amar a Dios en Tierra de Indios, Es Oficio Maternal*; Tschabalala Self, *Pioneer*; Matt Johnson, *Sleeping Figure*; Hylozoic/Desires, *Namak Nazar*, photos by Lance Gerber.

Image block two credits left to right, top to bottom: Desert X 2023 installation views of Mario García Torres, *Searching for the Sky (While Maintaining Equilibrium)*; Lauren Bon, *The Smallest Sea with the Largest Heart*; film still from Marina Tabassum, *Khudi Bari*; performance view of Héctor Zamora, *Chimera*; installation view of Torkwase Dyson, *Liquid A Place*; installation view of Tyre Nichols, *Originals*, [GoFundMe Tyre Nichols Memorial Fund](#) - all photos by Lance Gerber.

## **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 contains the map and up-to-date information on how to experience the exhibition and its public and education programs. The map of the 2023 installations can also be found online at [desertx.org](https://desertx.org) and via the Desert X 2023 app.

### **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 2023 guide, map of artist installations and visitor information. Visit [desertx.org](https://desertx.org) for opening hours during the run of the exhibition.

## **Exhibition Hours**

Visiting hours for the installations are usually sunrise to sunset Sunday through Saturday, unless otherwise noted.

## **Guided and Docent-led tours**

Desert X docents are at most sites every Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon.

## **Desert X Merchandise**

463 North Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs

Stop by to browse and buy Desert X merchandise made with Windmill City Printing and other local companies. Visit [super-number-one.com](http://super-number-one.com) for hours.

## **Education and Public Programs**

Desert X educational initiatives are a cornerstone of the exhibition's outreach. Public programs include conversations, site activations, and artist-led workshops, and have connected with more than 10,000 visitors. Since 2017, Desert X has provided 800 cumulative in-class instruction hours to 2,000 students and 50 teachers in the region. In 2023, Desert X is growing the breadth and depth of its reach through expanded learning programs in K-12 schools and community centers in all three Title 1 school districts in the Coachella Valley, internships, and a curatorial fellowship.

**For further information and to plan your visit, go to [desertx.org](http://desertx.org).**

Desert X 2023 is funded by its board of directors and an extraordinary group of individuals, foundations, and sponsors.

With support from Hennessy Paradis, Hourglass Cosmetics, and Diptyque.

Additional support from the California Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Media Partners: artnet, ArtReview, Cultured Magazine, *frieze* Magazine, Here Media, Palm Springs Life Magazine, Take on Art, Terremoto, and Visit Greater Palm Springs

## **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 unrivaled and accessible to all.

### **About Neville Wakefield**

Neville Wakefield is a writer and curator interested in exploring the ways in which art behaves outside of institutional contexts. It is his belief that where art is most successful – its most epiphanic and challenging – is not within the white spaces and clean-cut definitions that have traditionally encased it. Rather it is to be found in new territories; hybrid spaces that break free of containment to suggest new paradigms. While a 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 non-commercial contexts. He has worked extensively with institutions in the U.S. and abroad including the Schaulager Switzerland where he curated the ground-breaking Matthew Barney retrospective 'Prayer Sheet with the Wound and the Nail' and more recently 'Divided Landscape' which placed historical works from the Crystal Bridges's collection in dialogue with contemporary visions shaped by non-settler indigenous and African American experiences. He co-founded Elevation1049, a site-specific biennial in Gstaad, Switzerland, currently in its fifth edition while maintaining his role as artistic director of Desert X in the Coachella Valley region of Southern California. Wakefield also led Desert X's iterations in the desert of AlUla, an ancient oasis in Saudi Arabia. His interests in international cultural exchange while focusing attention on the environmental, natural, social and historical ecologies of the desert informed his recent appointment as lead curator of the Noor Riyadh Light Festival and his multiple roles on advisory boards in the Middle East and elsewhere.

### **About Diana Campbell**

Diana Campbell is a Princeton-educated American curator and writer who has been working in South and Southeast Asia since 2010, primarily in India, Bangladesh, and the Philippines. She is committed to fostering a transnational art world, and her plural and long-range vision addresses the concerns of underrepresented regions and artists alongside the more established in manifold forums. Born in Los Angeles, her maternal family is indigenous CHamoru from the island of Guam and her heritage inspires her curatorial practice which seeks to amplify the reach of indigenous voices. Since 2013, she has served as the Founding Artistic Director of Dhaka-based Samdani Art Foundation, Bangladesh and Chief Curator of the Dhaka Art Summit, celebrated both critically for its artistic and scholarly content and for its popularity as the highest

daily-visited contemporary art show globally. Campbell also leads the Samdani Art Foundation collection and programming and drives its international collaborations ahead of the opening of the foundation's permanent home and community-based residency program at Srihatta, the Samdani Art Centre and Sculpture Park in Sylhet. Concurrent to her work in Bangladesh from 2016 – 2018, Campbell was the Founding Artistic Director of Bellas Artes Projects in the Philippines, a non-profit international residency and exhibition program with sites in Manila and Bataan, and curated Frieze Projects in London for the 2018 and 2019 editions of the fair. Campbell also serves on the acquisitions committee of KANAL, Centre Pompidou in Brussels set to open in 2025. She is passionate about the role that artistic thinking can play in transformational social change, and is part of the Facilitation Group of Afield, an international network of cultural change-makers. Her writing has been published by *Mousse*, *Frieze*, *Art in America*, and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), among others.

**Exhibition Dates: March 4–May 7, 2023**

**Opening hours and locations: Visit [desertx.org](http://desertx.org) for details.**

**Free Admission**

**Follow Desert X**

**Instagram: [@\\_desertx](https://www.instagram.com/_desertx)**

**Facebook.com/DesertX/**

**Vimeo: [vimeo.com/desertx](https://vimeo.com/desertx)**

**Follow on social media with #DesertX #DX23**

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**[PRESS KIT AND INSTALLATION IMAGES](#)**

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