



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

First *Desert r&d* launches March 8-10, 2024

New weekend program of panels, workshops, discussions, and artists studio visits explores global questions with a local focus, employing the desert as a research laboratory

In partnership with Palm Springs Art Museum



Desert X 2019 installation view, Cara Romero, *Jackrabbit, Cottontail & Spirits of the Desert*, photo by Lance Gerber

[Reserve *Desert r&d* tickets here](#)

Palm Springs, Calif., – Desert X, the recurring site-specific, international art exhibition in the California desert will present the first ***Desert r&d***, a weekend-long program of free panels, workshops, discussions, and artists studio visits taking place March 8-10, 2024. The new and vibrant program presented in partnership with Palm Springs Art Museum (PSAM), will explore global questions with a local focus, employing the desert as a research laboratory, and reinforces the organization’s expanding role as an art and cultural resource for the Coachella Valley community.

Taking place outside of the Desert X exhibition, *Desert r&d* is free and open to the public and will bring together a diverse group of creative practitioners, artists, scientists, writers, and thinkers to celebrate and make space for research and development in all its forms; half-baked thoughts, process-based practices, ongoing experiments, and questions still unanswered.

Desert r&d is curated by Desert X Artistic Director **Neville Wakefield**, Desert X 2025 Co-curator **Kaitlin Garcia-Maestas**, Palm Springs Art Museum Chief Education and Community Engagement Officer **Luisa Heredia**, and Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art **Sharrissa Iqbal**, with the support of the Desert X and PSAM teams and volunteers.

On Friday, March 8 the public is invited to join a conversation with **Adam Lerner**, JoAnn McGrath, Executive Director of Palm Springs Art Museum, and Neville Wakefield, moderated by Kaitlin Garcia-Maestas, to discuss what it means to work curatorially in the desert landscape. Among other events is a presentation by Desert X 2019 artist **Cara Romero** whose photographs, myths, and stories of the desert landscape will be shared as gifts to illuminate the inseparability of people and place.

On Saturday, March 9 a conversation with **Hans Baumann**, Desert X 2023 artist **Lauren Bon**, **Christian Rodriguez**, and **Debra Scacco** moderated by Desert X Curatorial Liaison **Edwin Ramoran** will mine collective expertise spanning visual art, poetry, urban planning, and policy to explore climate-related work and fuel us to imagine alternative hopeful futures.



Desert X 2023 installation view, Lauren Bon, *The Smallest Sea with the Largest Heart*, photo by Lance Gerber

On Sunday, March 10, BoxoHOUSE artist-in-residence **Eshan Rafi** will share their artistic approaches of working with communities, including most recently documenting sites in Lahore, Pakistan based on their father's stories growing up, and a performance project drawing parallels between political action and art-making.

Desert r&d programming will also include:

Lunch & Black History Tour with Deiter Crawford

A ticketed tour led by Deiter Crawford will introduce you to Black pioneers of Palm Springs, whose talents and perseverance overcame the prejudices in the city.

Material Language: Adobe and Palms

Use your hands to get acquainted with the structural, sculptural, and poetic potentials of these organic materials with **Maria Maea**, whose mythical sculptures are woven from plants, and **Ronald Rael**, who is pioneering earthen architecture using 3D printing. Through discussion and practice, Maria and Ron will facilitate an intimate introduction to these raw materials.

High Desert Open Studios

A self-driving tour of artists' studios in the high desert with featured artists **Dan John Anderson**, **John Flores**, **Ryan Schneider**, **Mansi Shah**, and Desert X 2021 artist **Kim Stringfellow**.



Desert X installation view of Kim Stringfellow, *Jackrabbit Homestead*, 2021, photo by Lance Gerber

Desert r&d is a part of Desert X's ongoing public programming that takes place outside of the exhibition, such as its arts education programs which have impacted over 10,000 k-12 students across all three Coachella Valley school districts since 2017. The **Desert X Art Club**, a dynamic cross-disciplinary program for K-12 students launched in 2023, focuses on digital storytelling and visual arts and is running across 14 after-school clubs in DSUSD during the current 2023-2024 academic year. Through painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, video journalism and personal storytelling, the program cultivates the creativity of Coachella Valley youth as they investigate and respond to the artworks of Desert X and meet the people who made them. All work produced in the Desert X Art club will be showcased and celebrated in a public exhibition in May 2024.

To view the full *Desert r&d* schedule and locations, visit desertx.org

Reserve *Desert r&d* tickets [here](#).

Editors' Notes

Additional Support for *Desert r&d* comes from Urban Palm Springs, Boxo Projects, Rosemary Hi-Fi, the Ace Hotel & Swim Club Palm Springs, Bubbling Wells Ranch, Desert Hot Springs Inn, Drift Palm Springs, Miracle Manor, Saguaro Palm Springs, and Topo Chico.

Desert X education programs are made possible with the support of Jordan Schnitzer and the Harold & Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation, Desert Sands Unified School District, California Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts, Western Wind Foundation, H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation, Christine & James Scott, The Sheffer/Scheffler Advised Fund at The Inland Empire Community Foundation, Blick Art Supplies, Palm Springs Art Museum, and Sunnylands Center & Gardens, as well as teachers and friends in education and community partners.

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.

The next edition of the [Desert X exhibition](#) will open at sites across the Coachella Valley on March 8–May 11, 2025.

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Communications and media relations:

Lyn Winter, Inc.
desertx@lynwinter.com
+1 (213) 446-0788

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