



For Immediate Release

LAGUNA ART MUSEUM NAMES JULIE PERLIN LEE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lee leaves the Catalina Island Museum to assume leadership at Laguna Art Museum on May 3.



Julie Perlin Lee

LAGUNA BEACH, CA (March 31, 2021) – Following a national search, Laguna Art Museum has announced Julie Perlin Lee as its new executive director. Lee, who most recently served as executive director of Catalina Island Museum, will assume her new role on May 3. She succeeds Dr. Malcolm Warner, who led LAM from January 2012 through December 2020.

“The Museum’s search for its next executive director came at an ideal time,” said Joe Hanauer, chair of the museum’s board of trustees. “For the past nine years, recently retired executive director Dr. Malcolm Warner did a wonderful job positioning the museum as a leader for California art and artists. Once viewed as primarily a place focused on early California and plein air art, a visit to the museum today reveals all periods of California art including modern and contemporary works. This enviable platform provides opportunities to expand the reach of the museum by appealing to our region’s residents, attracting more of the area’s tourists, and serving the schools to which the museum provides art education. With Julie we have a person with strong experience managing exhibitions and collections, and yet someone with experience in senior level museum administration. It’s typically one or the other, but usually not both.”

At Catalina Island Museum since 2016, Lee has led a period of growth including high-profile exhibitions and educational programs, and the completion of a capital project for the museum’s new permanent facility which opened in 2016. She was curator of the exhibitions *Elizabeth Turk: Tipping Point* in 2019 (Turk was LAM’s commissioned artist for Art & Nature in 2018) and *Peter Shire, Sculptures* in 2018. She is responsible for a significant rise in individual, foundation, and legacy giving, enhanced the care and quality of the museum’s collections, and increased Catalina Island Museum’s recognition and prominence. Personally, she and her family participated in service groups and clubs throughout Avalon.

Before joining Catalina Island Museum, Lee was the vice president of collections and exhibition development at the Bowers Museum where she worked from 2008 to 2016. There she procured acquisitions for the museum’s permanent collection, directed research and preservation, organized exhibitions, and contributed to publications including *A Legacy of Bounty: Paintings from the Bowers Museum* and *Traditions and Transitions: Tribal Art from North America*. She holds a BA in Art History, MFA in Exhibition Design, and Certificate in Museum Studies from California State University, Fullerton.



LAGUNA ART MUSEUM

In recent years, Laguna Art Museum has doubled its endowment and annual budget; expanded its staff, especially in the areas of education and development; and elevated its status and visibility by presenting critically acclaimed exhibitions, outstanding art education programs, and Art & Nature, the annual program centered on the theme of art's engagement with the natural world.

Lee said, "I am energized by the board's commitment to expand and strengthen the organization's collection of art, its ambition to ensure the longevity of the museum by growing its endowment and financial standing, and especially by its driving vision to stand out as a museum that gets people excited about California's rich artistic history."

LAM's search committee engaged Koya Partners, a leading executive search and advising firm, to identify candidates who would continue to broaden and diversify the museum's exhibitions and to expand its audiences. "Julie is perfectly positioned to achieve both of these goals," said Hanauer. "With a strong academic background, and her experience and responsibility for collections and exhibitions, she left a strong mark at the Bowers and at Catalina Island Museum."

Lee added, "I feel so fortunate to be joining Laguna Art Museum at this time in its history. After one hundred years of achievements, we are in position to get started right away on new growth and success; I really see the opportunities as limitless."

About Laguna Art Museum

Laguna Art Museum is the museum of California art. It collects, cares for, and exhibits works of art that were created by California artists or represent the life and history of the state. Through its permanent collection, its special loan exhibitions, its educational programs, and its library and archive, the museum enhances the public's knowledge and appreciation of California art of all periods and styles, and encourages art-historical scholarship in this field.

Laguna Art Museum stands just steps from the Pacific Ocean in the beautiful city of Laguna Beach. The museum is proud to continue the tradition of the Laguna Beach Art Association, founded in 1918 by the early California artists who fostered a vibrant arts community. The gallery that the association built in 1929 is part of today's Laguna Art Museum.

Location

Laguna Art Museum is located at 307 Cliff Drive in Laguna Beach, on the corner of Coast Highway and Cliff Drive.

Hours

Monday - Tuesday, Thursday - Sunday: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Closed Wednesdays

Closed Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day

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