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**NEVADA MUSEUM OF ART ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF MELISSA MELERO-MOOSE AS COMMUNITY ADVISOR, ALONG WITH A LARGER INSTITUTIONAL ENDOWMENT TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS ART & ARTISTS**

*Indigenous artist Melissa Melero-Moose named as Community Advisor for Great Basin Native Artists at the Nevada Museum of Art. In this role, she will support the Museum's long-term commitment to Indigenous art and artists and the goals of the of the Indigenous Art Futures Initiative.*

**Reno, NV (January 30, 2023)** - Great Basin Indigenous artist Melissa Melero-Moose—whose own work is inspired by the traditions of her *Numu (Northern Paiute)* culture and its people—has stepped into a new role to support a larger vision for Indigenous artists. Melero-Moose has been named Community Advisor for Great Basin Native Artists (GBNA) at the Nevada Museum of Art. As Community Advisor, Melero-Moose will provide input, support, and guidance for the Museum's ongoing endeavor to collect materials for the GBNA Archives, while developing programs and outreach efforts to augment, support and complete long-term exhibition and art collection visioning.

Supporting Indigenous artists is a longtime initiative of the Museum. "The Nevada Museum of Art is a world-class institution that educates the public about the first stewards of this land as well as serving as a powerful vehicle for real change. The Museum has proven its commitment to our 28 Tribal Nations, Bands, and Colonies by sharing Indigenous communities' opinions, values, and experiences which challenge society to think differently. The Nevada Museum of Art continues to demonstrate that it is an ally for our Indigenous voices," said Stacey Montooth, Walker River Paiute and Executive Director, Nevada Indian Commission.

In her role as Community Advisor, Melero-Moose will provide input and outreach to ensure that Indigenous perspectives remain at the core of the Museum's commitment to Indigenous art and artists. At the heart of this institutional initiative is a deep respect and appreciation for First Peoples of the Great Basin Region, as well as a recognition of the important ties our regional community has to the Indigenous communities of the Greater West, a geographic super-region stretching from present-day Alaska to the tip of South America, and from America's Intermountain West to Australia and New Zealand.

"I am thrilled to formalize my ongoing work with the Nevada Museum of Art through this new role as Community Advisor," said Melero-Moose. "The Nevada Museum of Art is doing more than any other art museum on the west coast to support the Native American artists it serves. To see the art of our region on view in the galleries in relation to the work of Indigenous artists from across the Americas and the world only helps to elevate the important work that is being done in our community."

Melero-Moose's new official role comes after many years of her collaboration with the Museum on its work to build exhibitions, programs and support for Indigenous artists. This initiative, called the Indigenous Art Futures Initiative, began fifteen years ago when the Museum began developing grass-roots relationships with Indigenous artists, leaders, and knowledge keepers in the Great Basin and beyond. The Museum is home to the Great Basin Native American Artists (GBNA) Archives and Directory, a free, open, and public resource dedicated to Native artists working in the Sierra Nevada and Great Basin region. Melero-Moose founded the archive in 2014 and will continue to actively shepherd its growth. GBNA Archive is

comprised of physical artist files consisting of materials such as artist images, resumes, artist statements, biographies, publications, exhibition records, related correspondence, videos, slides, printed photographs, sketchbooks and other original working materials.

Over the past decade, the Nevada Museum of Art has acquired over 85 artworks and 74 works in the archive by Indigenous artists, with more acquisitions and gifts in the pipeline. Many of these acquisitions are thanks to a generous gift from the Robert S. and Dorothy J. Keyser Foundation and the Orchard House Foundation, both of which helped the Museum to jumpstart its collection of contemporary Native American Art beginning in 2012. “The artworks by Indigenous artists in our collection are the heart of the work we do. As we continue our efforts to expand the museum, its permanent collection, and our education and research initiatives, you can expect to see Indigenous voices and artworks at the forefront of these initiatives. It is an honor to have Melissa Melero-Moose on our team during this period of dynamic growth for the museum,” says Ann M. Wolfe, who holds the endowed position of *Andrea and John C. Deane Family Chief Curator and Associate Director*.

To date, exhibitions focusing on Indigenous artists presented by the Museum have been many. These include *The Way we Live: American. Indian Art of the Great Basin* (2012); *The Paruku Project: Art & Science in Aboriginal Australia* (2014); *No Boundaries: Aboriginal Australian Contemporary Abstract Painting* (2015); *Tahoe A Visual History/Washoe Basketry* (2015); *A Place in the Country: Aboriginal Australian Paintings* (2016); *Spinifix: Aboriginal Paintings from the Robert Kaplan and Margaret Levi Collection* (2017); *Marking the Infinite: Contemporary Women Artists from Aboriginal Australia* (2018); *The Art of Jack Malotte* (2019); *The Inside World: Australian Memorial Poles from the Collection of Debra and Dennis Scholl* (2019); *Material Expressions of the Dreaming: The Aboriginal Collection of Ellen Crawford* (2019); *The Art of Jean LaMarr* (2021); *Rose B. Simpson: The Four* (2021); *Harry Fonseca: Stone Poem #4* (2021); and *In Frequencies* (2022). In 2023, the Museum is presenting two exhibitions of Native American artists: *The Art of Ben Aleck* which opens on April 1, and an exhibition featuring the work of Native American artist *Cannupa Hanska Luger: Speechless*, opening on October 7.

## INDIGENOUS ART FUTURES ENDOWMENT

The Indigenous Art Futures Initiative will be supported by an endowment that solidifies a permanent funding stream for the Museum’s work with its Indigenous partners. The endowment goal is to raise \$5 million to support the programs of the Initiative into the future. The Museum recently received a seed gift of \$500,000 from the Six Talents Foundation towards the endowment to support the Museum’s ongoing work in this area.

“The Museum has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to engaging audiences and holding space for Indigenous voices. Our desire is to continue this important work and to do so we have established an endowment that will assure the perpetuity of our Indigenous Art Futures Initiative,” says David B. Walker, the Museum’s CEO. “We are thankful to the Six Talents Foundation for stepping up to launch this endowment and we look forward to continued momentum for this programming in the coming years.”

The Museum’s Indigenous Art Futures Initiative comprises a long-time institutional focus on supporting Indigenous Peoples across the globe in maintaining ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live, or from where they have been displaced. The art and dialogue produced in and about the Greater West region aspires to elucidate these issues and to elevate the voices and aspirations of Indigenous people.

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**The Nevada Museum of Art** is the only art museum in Nevada accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). A private, nonprofit organization founded in 1931, the statewide institution is supported by its membership as well as sponsorships, gifts and grants. Through its permanent collections, original exhibitions and programming, and E.L. Cord Museum School, the Nevada Museum of Art provides meaningful opportunities for people to engage with a range of art and education experiences. The Museum’s **Center for Art + Environment** is an internationally recognized research center dedicated to supporting the practice, study, and awareness of creative interactions between people and their environments. The Center houses unique archive materials from more than 1,000 artists working on all seven continents, including Cape Farewell, Michael Heizer, Walter de Maria, Lita Albuquerque, Burning Man, the Center for Land Use Interpretation, Great Basin Native Artists Archive, Ugo Rondinone’s *Seven Magic Mountains*, and Trevor Paglen’s *Orbital Reflector*. Learn more at [nevadaart.org](https://nevadaart.org).

### Land Acknowledgement

The Nevada Museum of Art acknowledges the traditional homelands of the *Wa She Shu* (Washoe), *Numu* (Northern Paiute), *Newe* (Western Shoshone), and *Nuwu* (Southern Paiute) people of the Great Basin. This includes the 28 tribal nations that exist as sovereign nations and continue as stewards of this land. We appreciate the opportunity to live and learn on these Indigenous homelands.