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**TWO NEW HIRES JOIN THE CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM**

**Taylor Renee Aldridge and Susan D. Anderson assume curatorial roles**



L: Taylor Renee Aldridge, Photo: Paper Monday. R: Susan D. Anderson

(Los Angeles, CA) — The California African American Museum (CAAM) announced today the addition of two new staff members in key curatorial positions: Taylor Renee Aldridge, visual arts curator and program manager; and Susan D. Anderson, history curator and program manager.

“At this moment of great uncertainty for many cultural institutions, when museums have had to close their doors to the public, and some are facing layoffs or reckoning with institutional racism, it is all the more meaningful that we are able to welcome onto our team these extraordinary curators,” said Cameron Shaw, Deputy Director and Chief Curator of CAAM.

Curator and writer **Taylor Renee Aldridge** will commence her new position at CAAM in August. She has organized critically acclaimed exhibitions with the Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit Artists Market, Cranbrook Art Museum, and The Luminary (St. Louis). In 2015, along with art critic Jessica Lynne, she co-founded ARTS.BLACK, an influential journal of art criticism for Black perspectives. Her writing has appeared in *Artforum*, *The Art Newspaper*, *Art21*, *ARTNews*, *Canadian Art*, *Contemporary And*, *Detroit Metro Times*, *Hyperallergic*, and SFMOMA’s *Open Space*.

Aldridge is the recipient of the 2016 Creative Capital | Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant for Short Form Writing and the 2019 Rabkin Foundation Award for Art Journalism. She holds an M.L.A. from Harvard University with a concentration in Museum Studies and B.A. from Howard University with a concentration in Art History. Her first project at CAAM will be *Enunciated Life*, a contemporary art exhibition in which Black spiritual beliefs—as well as the movements, sounds, and other bodily expressions that have engendered communication within and beyond Black

churches—operate as a point of departure for considering modes of surrender.

**Susan D. Anderson** joined the CAAM staff in July 2020 from the California Historical Society, where she was director of public programs. Anderson was interim chief curator at the African American Museum & Library at Oakland. Prior to that time she was a curator at UCLA Library Special Collections, where she acquired several landmark collections including the Miriam Matthews Photography Collection, the records of *SOUL* magazine, the photographs of Walter L. Gordon, the personal papers of Ivan J. Houston and Congresswoman Diane Watson, and the historical records of Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company. Anderson was also the managing director of L.A. as Subject based at USC Libraries, a research alliance dedicated to preserving and improving access to archival material throughout Los Angeles County.

As principal and founder of Memory House, Anderson provided public history and curatorial consulting to a variety of clients including the City of Berkeley, the National Park Service, Golden Gate Recreation Area, the Richmond Museum of History, and the Mazisi Kunene Museum in Durban, South Africa. She lectures and writes widely about California with an emphasis on the history of African Americans in the state. Her forthcoming book, *African Americans and the California Dream* (Heyday Books), is a civic history from the Gold Rush to Black Lives Matter.

George O. Davis, Executive Director of CAAM said, “We are delighted to welcome Susan and Taylor to CAAM. Each brings a wealth of experience and an exciting vision to their respective positions. I am confident that they will be instrumental in propelling CAAM’s trajectory as a vital hub for examining African American art, history, and culture.”

#### **About the California African American Museum**

CAAM explores the art, history, and culture of African Americans, with an emphasis on California and the West. Chartered by the State of California in 1977, the Museum began formal operations in 1981 and is a state-supported agency and a Smithsonian Affiliate. In addition to presenting exhibitions and public programs, CAAM houses a permanent collection of more than four thousand works of art, artifacts, and historical documents, and a publicly accessible research library containing more than twenty thousand volumes.

#### **Visitor Information**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CAAM is currently closed to the public. Visit [caammuseum.org](http://caammuseum.org) for more information.

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