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**CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM APPOINTS
CAMERON SHAW AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



Photo: Matt Sayles

(Los Angeles, CA) — The California African American Museum (CAAM) announced today that Cameron Shaw has been appointed executive director. She has served the Museum as deputy director and chief curator since September 2019.

“We are delighted that Cameron Shaw has agreed to lead the Museum into the future, continuing CAAM’s remarkable trajectory. She has admirably navigated CAAM’s closure due to COVID-19, all the while strategizing and fundraising for several exciting initiatives to come once Los Angeles museums are allowed to reopen,” said Board President Todd Hawkins. Shaw’s appointment follows the retirement of George O. Davis, the executive director since 2015.

During her tenure at CAAM, Shaw has been overseeing the Museum’s curatorial affairs, department of education and public programs, and marketing/communications. Highlights of her leadership include the successful pivot of the Museum’s public programs from in-person to virtual, necessitated by the pandemic and considerably broadening CAAM’s audience nationwide, and the recruitment of three key staff members: Alexsandra Mitchell, manager of education and public programs; Susan D. Anderson, history curator; and Taylor Renee Aldridge, visual arts curator.

Shaw has garnered major support for the Museum, including an Art Museum Futures Fund Grant from the Mellon Foundation and a Getty Pacific Standard Time 2024 research grant for *World Without End: The George Washington Carver Project*, which she is co-curating with Yael Lipschutz. Other notable accomplishments include the creation of ongoing video productions to experience exhibitions online and provide an archive of recent programmatic offerings, and enhanced website content, including original essays by CAAM staff published on the Museum’s blog, 600State.

Later this year the Museum will be the only West Coast venue for *Sanford Biggers: Codeswitch*, a travelling exhibition co-organized by the Rivers Institute for Contemporary Art & Thought, New Orleans, and the Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, which is the first project in a multi-year collaboration that Shaw has arranged between CAAM and the Rivers Institute. She also plans to invigorate CAAM’s publishing program, beginning with the publication this fall of a catalogue for the current exhibition *Enunciated Life*, as well as a partnership with the Rivers Institute and Siglio Press for a catalogue of the work of artist Troy Michie in advance of a forthcoming exhibition at CAAM.

“I’m honored and excited to be CAAM’s executive director,” says Shaw. “Against the current backdrop of a global pandemic, racial inequality, and the changing needs of museum audiences, it is clear that there continues to be an urgent need for cultural organizations that center, contextualize, and support African American contributions and experiences. CAAM has long been that critical space in Los Angeles, and I look forward to meeting this moment by presenting new scholarship and innovative public experiences through which all visitors can see Black art, history, and culture valued and reflected.”

A native of Los Angeles, prior to her time at CAAM, Shaw was the executive director of New Orleans-based Pelican Bomb, a non-profit contemporary art organization that was a forum for exhibitions, public programs, and arts journalism. Shaw lectures and moderates panels on topics including values-based institution building, translating theory to practice, rethinking organizational sustainability, and creative publishing strategies. She was chosen for the NAMAC National Leadership Institute in 2013 and the Salzburg Global Forum for Young Cultural Innovators in 2016.

Shaw holds a B.A. in History of Art from Yale University, where she worked at the Yale Center for British Art, and early in her career she interned in curatorial departments at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Later she was research manager at David Zwirner gallery in New York.

In addition to her curatorial practice, Shaw is a widely published writer and editor whose work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Art in America*, New Orleans’s *Times-Picayune*, the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, and *BOMB Magazine*, as well as in numerous books and exhibition catalogues on Chris Ofili, Nick Cave, Tameka Norris, and other artists. Her writing awards include a Creative Capital | Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant for Short-Form Writing in 2009 and the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation | Art in America Writing Fellowship in 2015.

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 4,000 works of art, artifacts, and historical documents, and a publicly accessible research library containing more than 20,000 volumes.

Visitor Information

The California African American Museum is presently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit caamuseum.org for current online program information.

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