



CAAM California
African American
Museum

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**CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM APPOINTS
CAMERON SHAW AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND CHIEF CURATOR**



Photo: Matt Sayles

(Los Angeles, CA) — The California African American Museum (CAAM) announced today that curator, writer, and editor Cameron Shaw will join the Museum’s staff as deputy director and chief curator, effective September 12, 2019. A native of Los Angeles, Shaw was most recently the executive director of New Orleans-based Pelican Bomb, a non-profit contemporary art organization that presented a forum for exhibitions, public programs, and arts journalism.

“On behalf of our board of directors and staff, we are delighted to welcome Cameron Shaw to CAAM,” said Executive Director George O. Davis. “Her deep commitments to contemporary art and visual culture, as well as community engagement, will greatly benefit our institution as we continue to

present thoughtful exhibitions and dynamic public programs that examine African American art, history, and culture in the West.”

“Growing up in this city, with multigenerational family roots in South Los Angeles, it’s an honor to join CAAM at this unique moment in its history,” said Shaw. “CAAM presents a powerful platform to build new scholarship and public experiences around the contributions of African Americans to the cultural life of this city, state, country, and the world. More than forty years after its founding, there remains an inarguable need to create inclusive, accessible, and dynamic spaces where all people can see black lives and experiences valued and reflected, and I’m proud to be part of that visionary legacy.”

The co-founder and founding editor of Pelican Bomb, Shaw built a robust and expansive publishing and curatorial program for the organization that attracted national attention and funding support. In her eight-year tenure at Pelican Bomb, she oversaw fundraising, management, and editorial, and she organized numerous exhibitions, public projects, and new commissions. Shaw’s curatorial practice is distinguished by a dedication to expanding the ways individuals and communities interact with contemporary art, imagining it as a lens for approaching important and complex issues in everyday life and centering on such diverse themes as hair and the politics of representation, nationalism and cultural ownership, and climate change and geographical relationships with water.

She has produced exhibitions and large-scale public projects with a unique eye to the

power of cross-sector collaboration including the citywide initiative *Fallen Fruit of New Orleans* (2017–18) with Los Angeles-based duo Fallen Fruit, partnering with local university, community development, and municipal stakeholders; *Queer Tropics* (2017–18), a thematic exhibition that looked to constructed ideas of the tropics to examine the intersections of aesthetics, landscape, and feelings of otherness; and *Mutual Support* (2017), an exhibition that highlighted artists whose practices engage issues of mental health and wellness and that included a publicly accessible pop-up wellness center created in partnership with artists and healing professionals.

Prior to her time in New Orleans, Shaw was research manager at David Zwirner gallery in New York and worked as a freelance writer and editor. Her writing frequently focuses on the history of African American art and image practices since 1960, and has been widely published, including in *The New York Times*, *Art in America*, the *New Orleans 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.

She holds a B.A. in History of Art from Yale University, where she worked at the Yale Center for British Art, and later took on roles in curatorial departments at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. She was awarded 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.

Shaw has lectured and moderated panels on topics including translating theory to practice, rethinking organizational sustainability, creative publishing strategies, and institutional/community relationship building. She was chosen for the NAMAC National Leadership Institute in 2013 and the Salzburg Global Forum for Young Cultural Innovators in 2016. She currently serves on the board of Common Field, a national network of independent visual arts organizations and organizers.

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

Admission to the California African American Museum is free. Visit caammuseum.org for current exhibition and program information or call 213-744-7432 for tours or additional assistance.

Hours: Tuesday–Saturday 10 a.m.–5 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Closed Mondays and national holidays. The California African American Museum is located in Exposition Park at the corner of Figueroa Street and Exposition Boulevard, west of the 110 (Harbor) Freeway. Easy parking is available for \$12 (cash only) at 39th and Figueroa Streets. The Metro Expo line stop Expo Park/USC is a five-minute walk through the Exposition Park Rose Garden to the Museum.

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