

MEDIA CONTACT

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Press Release

Mingei International Museum Welcomes New Director of Exhibitions and Chief Curator

SAN DIEGO – February 7, 2022 – Emily G. Hanna joined Mingei International Museum in Balboa Park as Director of Exhibitions and Chief Curator beginning January 31. She joins the Museum as it continues to celebrate its extraordinary transformation and reopening last September.

She comes to San Diego from the Birmingham Museum of Art in Alabama, where from 2002 she has served as Curator and Department Head, Arts of Africa and the Americas. In 2015 she was named Senior Curator while continuing as Department Head, and in 2020 took on the further role of Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for the museum. In 2017 Emily was given a fellowship by the Center for Curatorial Leadership in partnership with The Columbia Business School. The year prior she participated in Leadership Birmingham, a program to educate leaders in the community about current issues and challenges in the region.

After a two month national search, led by Executive Director Rob Sidner, Hanna was selected by a team that included board, staff and management.

“All of us who met and interviewed Emily were greatly impressed with Emily’s professionalism, management experience, focus on equity and community engagement and friendly, collaborative manner,” explained Executive Director Rob Sidner. “We believe we have found the ideal leader for the central program of the Museum’s next period of growth, development and excellence.”

Hanna’s role will be crucial to Mingei’s future. She will be creating an exhibitions schedule for the next several years; developing pathways for community involvement in Mingei’s collecting practices, exhibition development and interpretive content; become a member of Mingei’s leadership team and help guide all aspects of Museum operations to most effectively deliver its mission to the community.

In accepting the post, Hanna noted, “I love Mingei’s global collections, its mission, and purpose. It resonates deeply with the focus of my own work over the years. I look forward to exploring the collections and getting to know the communities of San Diego.”

“It is a great privilege to do this work - to have a platform from which to celebrate the creativity of people from around the world. There’s a lot of joy in this work. I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity and really look forward to getting started,” she added

Emily received a B.A. in Art History from Oklahoma State University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Art History from the University of Iowa. She has extensive exhibition project management and curatorial experience at the Birmingham Museum of Art; the School of Art and Design Gallery at Georgia State University, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, Georgia; The Spelman College Art Gallery and Museum of Fine Art in Atlanta, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the University of Iowa Museum of Art in Iowa City. She has taught at the university level throughout her career.

ABOUT MINGEI INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM

Located in San Diego's Balboa Park, Mingei International Museum collects, preserves and exhibits folk art, craft and design from all eras and cultures of the world. Within a newly reopened facility that includes an education center, theater, shop, restaurant and plenty of free, accessible public space, the Museum offers inspiring exhibitions and diverse community and educational programs to more than 100,000 visitors a year. As the presenter of [San Diego Design Week](#) and a partner to over 50 local artists and art and cultural organizations, Mingei puts celebrating creativity at the core of its mission through workshops, film festivals, lectures and more. Mingei is a nonprofit institution funded by admission, individuals, and institutional support.

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