

Press Release

Mingei International Museum Welcomes Guusje Sanders as New Curator and Ariana Torres as Assistant Curator

San Diego, CA — August 23, 2023 — Mingei International Museum is pleased to announce the appointment of curatorial positions: **Guusje Sanders** as the new Curator and **Ariana Torres** as Assistant Curator. With an extensive background in curatorial practices and a dedication to promoting a wide range of voices in the art world, Sanders and Torres bring a fresh perspective to the Museum's exhibitions and programs.

"We are thrilled to welcome Guusje Sanders and Ariana Torres to the Mingei International Museum team," said Emily G. Hanna, Director of Exhibitions and Chief Curator. "Their passion for folk art, craft and design, commitment to accessible experiences and extensive curatorial expertise make them an excellent addition to the Museum. We are confident that their experiences and skills will contribute to our ongoing efforts to provide enriching exhibitions."

About Guusje Sanders | Curator

Originally from the Netherlands, Guusje Sanders has been based in the United States since 2006. Over the past decade, Sanders has amassed experience within the northern and southern California art communities, approaching her curatorial work as a platform for inclusivity and accessibility, emphasizing the importance of diverse representation and an expansive idea of what art can be.

"Through my curatorial practice, I strive to elevate the voices of those around me. Recognizing the historical barriers that have hindered inclusivity, I see my role as curator as a catalyst for dialogue and impactful transformation," said Guusje Sanders. "I am thrilled to embrace Mingei's mission to champion folk art, craft and design as a powerful means to connect and celebrate creativity within our communities."

Before joining Mingei, Sanders served as Associate Curator at The Institute of Contemporary Art in San Diego (formerly Lux Art Institute), where she managed the exhibitions department, organizing over 50 exhibitions and residencies, collaborating closely with artists, developing curatorial narratives and implementing community engagement programs. Most recently, while at The Institute of Contemporary Art in San Diego, Sanders curated **Graft**, an exhibition where artist-in-residence Edra Soto explored Puerto Rican vernacular architecture as a way to explore the island's national identity. Sanders has also worked at several galleries in the San Francisco bay area.

Sanders has a strong background in handling all aspects of exhibition management, with experience collaborating with a team of staff, interns and volunteers. She has also demonstrated a strong commitment

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to forging connections between curatorial work and educational initiatives, fostering community outreach and engagement. The event *Soupy Salty Sonic: A Liquid Wanting* exemplifies her cross-disciplinary approach to programming. Together with Marina Zurkow and Anna Rose Hopkins, Sanders organized a guided meditative and immersive storytelling experience at Moonlight Beach, followed by oyster shucking.

Sanders holds a Master of Arts in Exhibition and Museum Studies from the San Francisco Art Institute, and she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Art History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She began her role at Mingei in August.

About Ariana Torres | Assistant Curator

Ariana Torres joins Mingei International Museum with a proven track record in the museum world. With a deep commitment to collections management, exhibitions and education, Torres also has a passion for fostering meaningful connections between art and communities.

“I’m delighted to be back at Mingei and contributing to its strong curatorial team. The Museum’s dedication to celebrating folk art, craft and design through art aligns with my passion for creating connections between art and the community,” said Ariana Torres. “I am excited to collaborate on exhibitions that inspire meaningful conversations and create memorable experiences for all who visit the Museum.”

Torres previously served as the Registrar at the Museum of Photographic Arts where she effectively managed the Museum’s collections, organized shipping logistics for exhibition loans and oversaw the care of its permanent collections. Torres was also forward-thinking in optimizing departmental procedures and actively engaged with donors, lenders, artists and vendors to meet exhibition and permanent collection requirements.

Before joining Mingei full-time, Torres served as the Curatorial Assistant, where she played a crucial role in supporting the development of future exhibitions, writing exhibition texts and developing interpretive materials for the Bloomberg Connects App. Her meticulous approach ensured that visitors could engage deeply with the works on view. Torres also worked alongside the Director of Exhibitions and Chief Curator, compiling object checklists for gallery installations.

Her background also includes roles at the York Art Gallery, where she delivered public gallery talks. More specifically, for the exhibition ***Making A Masterpiece: Bouts and Beyond***, she presented the talk *The Ethical Issues of Money and Art*, discussing works that were originally owned by the Douglas-Pennant family and their generationally accumulated wealth from slavery, before connecting it to contemporary examples regarding the ethical implications of institutions aligning with individuals who accrued their wealth through profiting off injustices.

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Torres' dedication to art history and collections stewardship is evident through her involvement with organizations like the American Alliance of Museums, where she chaired the Collections Stewardship Fellowship Committee. She holds a Master of Arts in History of Art with Distinction from the University of York, UK, where she explored the intersection of identity, commodification and surrealism in material culture. Torres began her new role at Mingei in August.

Download headshots images [HERE](#).

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.

mingei.org

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