

Mead Art Museum Names Lisa Crossman Inaugural Curator of American Art and Arts of the Americas

(Amherst, Mass., March 3, 2020) – The Mead Art Museum at Amherst College has named Lisa Crossman as its inaugural curator of American art and arts of the Americas. This newly created role brings together the Mead’s traditional strengths in American art with its increased focus on developing original exhibitions that interrogate and reshape the art historical canon to include the arts, past and present, of Latin America. Crossman, who comes to the Mead from the Fitchburg Art Museum (FAM), in Fitchburg, Mass., will also generate new opportunities to connect the Museum to the College’s curriculum, as well as inspire new scholarship. Her appointment is effective April 6, 2020.

Crossman is particularly well-suited to fill this new position. As curator at FAM, she organized exhibitions of contemporary art, played an active role in mentoring and education, and partnered with curators across New England on a range of projects. Prior to joining FAM, she worked in Cambridge, Mass., for the Cultural Agents Initiative at Harvard University, and for the online arts and culture magazine *Big Red and Shiny*. Her many publications include exhibition catalogues and essays in the *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* and *Material Culture Review*.

“We are so excited that Lisa is joining our team at the Mead and the Amherst community,” said David E. Little, the John Wieland 1958 Director and Chief Curator at the museum. “Lisa is a scholar and curator with unique leadership skills and an impressive track record of working across disciplines and in collaboration with artists, scholars, and colleagues on exhibitions and publications.

“This role marks a new, more global dimension in the Mead’s curatorial focus,” added Little. “Building upon the Mead’s Morrow collection of Mexican popular arts and American collection, Lisa’s expertise will help develop the Mead’s collection in Latin America, and offer new cultural resources for Amherst’s diverse student body to study.”

The Mead has a renowned collection of American art from the colonial period to today. In addition, the Museum houses the Morrow Collection of Mexican art, which encompasses over 150 works donated by Dwight W. Morrow, a graduate of Amherst College, and his wife, Elizabeth Cutter Morrow. They were among the early collectors of Mexican art while Mr. Morrow served as U.S. ambassador to Mexico in the 1920s.

Crossman received her M.A. and Ph.D. in art history and Latin American studies at Tulane University, where she researched contemporary Argentine artists’ responses to environmental crises. At FAM she curated more than a dozen exhibitions of contemporary art including *Daniela Rivera: Labored Landscapes*, featuring the Chilean-born, Boston-based artist’s paintings and installation work that tell stories of Chilean miners, among other themes; and *Fire and Light*, which was funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, and was the largest solo exhibition in the U.S. to feature internationally renowned artist Otto Piene’s work. As guest

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curator, Crossman organized *Made Masculine* at the University of New Hampshire Museum of Art, which presented works that investigate the artifice of

masculinity. Her past teaching experience includes undergraduate courses in art history and Latin American studies at Tulane, Middlebury College, and Saint Michael's College.

Crossman said, "I am thrilled to join the Amherst College community and to support its work in advancing learning and inclusion. It's a wonderful opportunity to work with the Museum's excellent collection of American art and to expand the Mead's holdings, scholarship, and exhibition of art from throughout the Americas. I am committed to the Mead Art Museum's role on campus as an active space for research, reflection, and dialogue about the visual arts and the diverse range of ideas and materials with which the arts engage."

The Mead Art Museum houses the art collection of Amherst College, spanning 5,000 years and encompassing the creative achievements of many world cultures. An accredited member of the American Alliance of Museums, the Mead is situated in the vibrant Five Colleges academic community of western Massachusetts and serves as a laboratory for interdisciplinary research and innovative teaching involving original works of art. The museum is free and open to the public Tuesday through Sunday and until midnight on school nights during the academic year. For general information, please visit www.amherst.edu/mead, or call (413)542-2335.

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