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CAFAM ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP

MOCA's Suzanne Isken Takes The Reins February 14

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – January 29, 2011 – Amid its double exhibition opening Saturday, the Craft and Folk Art Museum (CAFAM) announced Suzanne Isken, former Education Director at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), will assume the role of director at the museum February 14 following Maryna Hrushetska's departure end of last year.

"Prepare to come to the Craft and Folk Art Museum to be engaged and inspired. In a world that continually clashes over ethnicity and difference, the museum's mission of cultural understanding through art becomes all the more relevant and inspiring. I look forward to taking on this leadership role at CAFAM," said Isken.



Suzanne Isken with CAFAM Chairman of the Board Wally Marks III (left) and her husband Eric (right). Image: Noel Bass

Isken comes to the CAFAM with over 20 years of experience in the world of contemporary art. She brings with her a history of projects that meaningfully bring communities together. "Partnership and collaboration have largely informed my career," said Isken.

While Education Director at MOCA, Isken worked with artist Suzanne Lacy to bring the different aspects of *Stories of Work & Survival* to life. Lacy's project involved bringing together fifteen diverse groups of Los Angeles working women to share their own contemporary stories of survival. It culminated with a potluck dinner attended by over 200 women who shared their meal and their stories of living and working as women in the current culture.

"I'm excited by the breaking of boundaries between different art forms with an emphasis on connecting audiences with artists who use craft, street art, design, architecture and other disciplines to create a message that has to do with being human, taking time, and creating sustainability for our planet. These are all the things embodied in the spirit of craft and folk art," said Isken.

Additionally, Isken has advocated for and helped develop critical arts education programming in the public schools and will continue using the museum as a vital learning platform for all ages.

The board was also pleased at the results of the executive search funded by the James Irvine Foundation. Chairman of the Board Wally Marks III said: "Continuing on our accomplishments realized over the past few years, Suzanne Isken brings a wealth of museum experience and artistic vision to Craft And Folk Art Museum. We are an institution with a history of strong and talented leaders and we are so fortunate to have Suzanne at the helm."

About CAFAM

The Craft and Folk Art Museum has long been part of the city's cultural fabric. The museum was founded in 1965 by the late Edith R. Wyle with her husband Frank S. Wyle. Often called the high priestess of folk art and crafts, Edith R. Wyle opened a bohemian café that served over 50 kinds of omelets and offered an international array of folk art and contemporary crafts. The Egg and The Eye became a popular community gathering place and a trusted source of exotic gifts.

In 1973, it reorganized into a nonprofit institution, offering artist-led workshops and educational programs. Known for taking risks, early shows were held at CAFAM for now well-established artists like Frank Romero, Otto Natzler and Sam Maloof. CAFAM was also the home of Los Angeles' first multi-cultural festival, the International Festival of Masks, until 1998.

Because a shrinking world requires an expanded mind, CAFAM champions cultural understanding by encouraging curiosity about our diverse world through the universal lens of art. Our exhibits and programs serve as a catalyst for the exploration of art and ideas that reflect our ever-changing community.

For current program and exhibition information call 323-937-4230 or visit www.cafam.org

Admission: FREE on the first Wednesday of every month

Regularly: \$7 for adults; \$5 for students and seniors; free for CAFAM members

Hours: Tuesday – Friday, 11am – 5pm; Saturday/Sunday, 12pm – 6 pm; closed Mondays.

Museum Tours: For group tour information, call 323-937-4230.

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