

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Lawndale Announces Departure of Executive Director Stephanie Mitchell

(Houston, TX) – Lawndale announced today that Stephanie Mitchell, the organization’s Executive Director, will be stepping down from her position in the summer of 2021.

“The Board of Directors extends a heartfelt thanks to Stephanie for her accomplishments on behalf of Lawndale,” says Meghan Miller, Board Chair. “Stephanie arrived in 2015 determined to see Lawndale realize several goals, including implementing a new strategic and artistic direction, improving the quality of Lawndale’s exhibitions, Artist Studio Program and facilities, revamping the Board of Directors and strengthening Lawndale’s financial position. Having met these goals, she is planning to return to the Northeast with her family. We will miss Stephanie’s expertise, experience and leadership and wish her the very best as she moves on to new challenges.”

Under Mitchell’s leadership and artistic direction, Lawndale has flourished as a dynamic and vital artistic hub showcasing local, regional and national talent with a curatorial program emphasizing innovative artistic practices and under-represented artists and cultural communities. Over the past several years, Lawndale has served as platform for emerging and established artists such as Olaniyi Akindiya (Akirash), Regina Agu, Antonius Tin Bui, Ryan Hawk, Saúl Hernández-Vargas, Tierney Malone, Lynn Randolph, Gerardo Rosales, Marcelyn McNeil and Virginia Lee Montgomery. In addition, Lawndale has presented thematic exhibitions such as *Between Love & Madness: Mexican Comic Art from the 1970s* and the regional presentation of *Axis Mundo: Queer Networks in Chicano L.A.* and produced performances by artists such as Jandek, Randi Long, Helen Money, Jawwaad Taylor and Jamire Williams. Mitchell has also leveraged the expertise of Lawndale’s Advisory Board to establish long-term collaborations with Nameless Sound, Gulf Coast: A Journal of Literary and Fine Arts, The Unsung Masters Series and Artadia as well as launch several new artistic and community initiatives, including the *SPEAKEASY* music and performance series, *The Sankofa Project* and the Lawndale Lending Library. As a result of these efforts, Lawndale’s audience has not only doubled over the last 5 years but also diversified to better reflect the demographics of the Greater Houston area.

Commenting on her departure, Mitchell states that “It has been a privilege and honor to lead Lawndale. I would like to thank all of the Board and Advisory Board members, patrons and volunteers that have supported both me and Lawndale during my tenure. In particular, I would like to give a special thanks to Lawndale’s exhibited and Artist Studio Program artists and the amazing Lawndale staff for serving as the driving force of Lawndale’s achievements over the past years. I am incredibly proud to have steered the organization through a period of artistic and financial growth and am confident that Lawndale is well-positioned to continue serving artists and the wider Houston community in meaningful and impactful ways. Despite moving back to the Northeast with my family, I hope to remain involved with Lawndale as it continues to grow and do great things.” While Mitchell will exit her role as Executive Director this summer, she will continue to work with Lawndale in an advisory capacity to facilitate a smooth transition in leadership and help implement Lawndale’s fall 2021 exhibitions and 2021/22 Artist Studio Program.

The post for Lawndale's next Executive Director is live and can be found at [www.lawndaleartcenter.org/about/opportunities](http://www.lawndaleartcenter.org/about/opportunities). A committee composed of Lawndale Board and Advisory Board Members will oversee the search for her replacement.

### **ABOUT LAWNDALE**

Lawndale is a multidisciplinary contemporary art center that engages Houston communities with exhibitions and programs that explore the aesthetic, critical, and social issues of our time. For over four decades, Lawndale has been a powerful force in the region's arts ecosystem, nurturing emerging and established artists through exhibitions and the Artist Studio Program and engaging the Houston community through public programs and special events.

Lawndale believes in the role of art and artists to inspire and inform the world around us. By serving as an intimate gathering place to experience art and ideas, Lawndale seeks to foster connections between communities in Houston and beyond. Lawndale presents a diverse range of artistic practices and perspectives through exhibitions and programs, including lectures, symposia, film screenings, readings, and musical performances.

Through exhibition opportunities, the Artist Studio Program, institutional collaborations, and the engagement of an advisory board composed of artists, curators, and scholars, Lawndale seeks within its mission to support all artistic and cultural communities of Houston.

### **ADMISSION & HOURS**

Admission to Lawndale is always free. Due to Covid-related restrictions, Lawndale's galleries are open by appointment Thursdays – Saturdays from 11 AM – 5 PM, with limited walk-ins available.