(Los Angeles, CA)— The Hammer Museum announced today the appointment of Njideka Akunyili Crosby and Rafa Esparza to its Artist Council.

Established in 2006, the Artist Council is a rotating advisory group of 10-15 internationally renowned, Los Angeles-based artists. The group meets regularly with Hammer curators and leadership to engage in extended conversations about specific programmatic issues at the Hammer as well as broad conceptual questions facing contemporary museums today.

“The Artist Council is a crucial guiding voice within the Hammer Museum, and I’m delighted to see Njideka and Rafa join their ranks. We rely on the Artist Council to challenge and enhance the Hammer’s standing as an intellectual and cultural laboratory of ideas. Njideka and Rafa are valuable additions to this esteemed group,” said Hammer Museum Director Ann Philbin.


Rafa Esparza was born in 1981 in Los Angeles. Esparza studied at East Los Angeles College before transferring to the University of California, Los Angeles, where he received his BFA. He currently works in installation, sculpture, drawing, painting, performance, and other mediums and has presented his work at a variety of sites, including traditional fine art contexts and community-based platforms as well as outdoor exhibitions.

public locations that he has independently sought out and organized. His work has been shown at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (2015); Bowtie Project, Los Angeles, with Clockshop (2015); Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, CA (2015); and Vincent Price Art Museum, East Los Angeles (2014). He has performed outside the Twin Towers Correctional Facility, Los Angeles (2015); in Elysian Park, Los Angeles (2014); and underneath the viaduct on Fourth and Lorena Streets, in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles (2014). His work was included in the MexiCali Biennial (2013) at the Vincent Price Art Museum and in Native Strategies 3 at Human Resources, Los Angeles (2013). He participated in the symposium “LA/LA Practice and Place” at the Getty Center, Los Angeles (2015). Esparza was awarded a Rema Hort Mann Foundation Emerging Artist Grant (2015), a California Community Foundation Fellowship for Visual Artists (2014), and an Art Matters Grant (2014). Esparza also participated in the Hammer Museum’s biennial exhibition Made in L.A. (2016) and the Whitney Museum of American Art’s biennial (2017).

Artist Council

Co-Chairs
Liz Glynn
Monica Majoli

Members
Kathryn Andrews
Juan Capistran
Fritz Haeg
Meg Cranston
Tala Madani
Njideka Akunyili Crosby
Rafa Esparza
taisha paggett
Andrea Fraser
Yuval Sharon
Charles Gaines
Kulapat Yantrasast

ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM

The Hammer Museum offers exhibitions and collections that span classic to contemporary art, as well as programs that spark meaningful encounters with art and ideas. Through a wide-ranging, international exhibition program and the biennial, Made in L.A., the Hammer highlights contemporary art since the 1960s, especially the work of emerging and under recognized artists. The exhibitions, permanent collections, and nearly 300 public programs annually—including film screenings, lectures, symposia, readings, music performances, and workshops for families—are all free to the public. The Hammer is a public arts institution of the UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture. The Hammer is a public arts institution of the School of the Arts and Architecture at UCLA.

HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION

Admission to all exhibitions and programs at the Hammer Museum is free, made possible through the generosity of benefactors Erika J. Glazer and Brenda R. Potter. Hours: Tuesday–Friday 11 a.m.–8 p.m., Saturday & Sunday 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Closed Mondays and national holidays. Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Boulevard at Westwood, Los Angeles. Onsite parking $6 (maximum 3 hours) or $6 flat rate after 6 p.m. Visit hammer.ucla.edu for details or call 310-443-7000.