

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hawai‘i Contemporary Announces Katherine Don as Executive Director

(HONOLULU, Oct. 9, 2020) — Hawai‘i Contemporary (formerly the Honolulu Biennial Foundation) announced today that longtime board member Katherine Don, who has been serving as acting executive director, has been named executive director.

Isabella Ellahesh Hughes, Hawai‘i Contemporary board chair, said: “We are thrilled that Katherine Don, who has a plethora of experience and has been a tireless advocate for the arts in Hawai‘i, has accepted our offer to serve as our permanent executive director, after expertly stewarding us through a period of transition and strategic development earlier this year. Katherine brings a distinctive perspective as a kama‘āina with global expertise in the field of contemporary art and nonprofit management, and she has the full and very enthusiastic support of our entire board.”

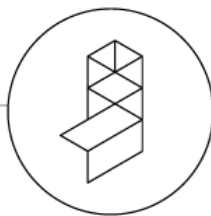
Don, who was born and raised on Maui, graduated from Barnard at Columbia University and majored in both studio art/art history and East Asian Studies. She lived in Asia for nearly 15 years and is an expert of contemporary Asian Art, specifically Ink Art, a new contemporary art category which she established for Sotheby’s auction house in Hong Kong. Don went on to be a curator and head of Arts and Culture Development at Asia Society in Hong Kong, where she oversaw contemporary art exhibitions.

Most recently, Don curated a diverse program, including bringing the first James Turrell installation to a museum in Hong Kong, which debuted at Asia Society. She also launched an environmental awareness arts and education initiative and curated a series titled “20th Century Chinese Women Artists.”

Under Don’s leadership, Hawai‘i Contemporary has moved to a triennial format to present the forthcoming Hawai‘i Triennial in 2022, and has initiated robust public programming for local and global arts audiences.

About Hawai‘i Contemporary

Inspired by the unique histories of Hawai‘i, a gathering place for diverse peoples and ideas, Hawai‘i Contemporary connects communities from across the Hawaiian Islands and regions united by the Pacific



Ocean and beyond. As a collaborative art partner, we cultivate cultural alliances to showcase the Hawai'i Triennial every three years and to celebrate contemporary visual culture. The multi-site public exhibition is complemented by year-round public and education programs, contributing to the local arts ecosystem and affirming our commitment to creating an accessible gateway for contemporary art in Hawai'i nei.

Established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization in 2014, the Honolulu Biennial Foundation debuted the inaugural Honolulu Biennial in 2017 as a dedicated contemporary art platform in Hawai'i. The successful biennials presented in 2017 and 2019 gained international recognition and respectively welcomed over 100,000 guests from Hawai'i and the Pacific region, as well as visitors from around the world. In 2020, the organization announced the transformation of its signature event into a triennial format and was renamed Hawai'i Contemporary. Looking to the future, Hawai'i Contemporary continues to build upon this foundation to create inspirational and sustainable exchanges, connecting Hawai'i and the Pacific with contemporary art.

For more information, please contact: press@hawaiicontemporary.org

NOTE TO THE EDITOR

This press release contains words in 'ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language), one of two official languages of the State of Hawai'i. 'Ōlelo Hawai'i utilizes two diacritical marks: a kahakō (macron) and an 'okina (glottal stop). Please note that an 'okina — and not an apostrophe — is used in the word Hawai'i.

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