

Joan Mitchell Foundation Appoints Solana Chehtman as Director of Artist Programs

New York, NY—August 11, 2022—The Joan Mitchell Foundation announced today that it has appointed Solana Chehtman as its new Director of Artist Programs. Chehtman is a highly regarded curator and cultural producer, who most recently served as the Director of Creative Practice and Social Impact at The Shed. In her new role, Chehtman will create and execute a programmatic vision centering artists as creative leaders and change agents, as well as oversee and further develop the existing programs with national impact, including the recently launched Joan Mitchell Fellowship and the longstanding Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) program, among other initiatives. Chehtman will begin in her new position on September 12, 2022.

“Throughout her career, Solana has demonstrated a deep commitment to equity and an artist-centered approach to programming,” said Christa Blatchford, Joan Mitchell Foundation’s Executive Director. “Her vision is in great alignment with the Foundation’s work to develop initiatives that address the real needs, concerns, and aspirations of today’s artists. We are looking forward to working with Solana to continue to evolve the Joan Mitchell Fellowship as well as to ideate and plan for the next phase of our work through the CALL program, among other projects.”

Originally from Argentina, Chehtman moved to New York in 2012. Over the past decade, she has partnered with a wide range of institutions and organizations across the performing and visual arts to create new opportunities for artists and avenues for public participation in the arts. In her role at The Shed, she conceived and spearheaded a series of innovative programs and closely collaborated with more than 80 NYC-based, multidisciplinary artists in the development of new commissions. Chehtman also led a Disability Arts Integration Council, supporting a full cultural transformation and implementing accessibility measures throughout the organization in partnership with a wide cadre of experts and staff. Among her numerous other achievements, Chehtman programmed initiatives that introduced The Shed to thousands of New Yorkers and developed interpretative programming in conjunction with the exhibitions *Howardena Pindell: Rope/Fire/Water* and *Tomas Saraceno: Particular Matter(s)*.

Prior to joining The Shed, Chehtman was Vice President of Public Engagement at Friends of the High Line, where for five years she devised and implemented programmatic strategies to engage with the public through innovative and participatory artist-led experiences. This includes establishing and producing experimental, site-specific performances in collaboration with artists such as Yara Travieso, Shaun Leonardo, and Janani Balasubramanian, as well as commissioning a place-making memory and advocacy project with neighboring communities in collaboration with socially engaged artists Lizania Cruz, Alicia Grullon, Shannon Finnegan, and Betty Yu. Chehtman has also partnered on projects with Acute Art, Creative Time, the New Museum, and the Tribeca Film Institute, among numerous others. She received a BA in international studies from Universidad Torcuato Di Tella (Buenos Aires, Argentina) and holds an EdM in education policy from Teachers College, Columbia University. A regular speaker on arts, culture, equity, and inclusion, Chehtman is an adjunct Professor at the MA in Arts Administration at Baruch College, City University of New York.

“I am thrilled to join Christa Blatchford and the team to continue strengthening and expanding the Foundation’s multigenerational community of artists and their collaborators across the US,” said Chehtman. “By listening, caring, nourishing, and establishing a shared artistic leadership, we will

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open up new perspectives, reimagine transformational art practices, and build a more equitable creative community and society.”

The Joan Mitchell Foundation is continuing to implement the strategic plan that it developed in 2019. Among the outcomes, the strategic plan led to the creation in 2021 of the Joan Mitchell Fellowship—a five-year, unrestricted granting program awarded to fifteen artists annually, with grant funds paid out over five years alongside dedicated professional development resources and opportunities. In her position with the Foundation, Chehtman will work closely with the New York-based Foundation leadership and staff to continue to develop the program, and the opportunities within it for artists, as well as evaluate its impact over time. Chehtman will likewise be an integral part of the leadership team responsible for stewarding existing programs and ideating new pathways for the Foundation’s support for artists. Chehtman and Toccara A. H. Thomas, the Director of the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans, will work together to ensure the continued alignment of all of the Foundation's programs and its approach with artists. She will also serve as an essential voice in the next phase of the Foundation’s strategic planning work in 2024.

"I am so delighted that Solana is joining the Joan Mitchell Foundation. She is someone who is committed to building bridges between people," said interdisciplinary artist and Joan Mitchell Foundation grant recipient Heather Hart. "Over the years, I've watched her translate the value of an artist's work for the public, enabling access and understanding, while also advocating for the artist and their true vision. She shows up for artists and for the communities in which she works, and I'm so excited for her to bring her vision and commitment to artists to her new role at the Foundation."

About the Joan Mitchell Foundation

The Joan Mitchell Foundation cultivates the study and appreciation of artist Joan Mitchell’s life and work, while fulfilling her wish to provide resources and opportunities for visual artists. As the chief steward of Joan Mitchell’s legacy, the Foundation manages a collection of Mitchell’s artwork and archives containing her personal papers, photographs, sketchbooks, and other historical materials. Fulfilling Mitchell’s mandate to “aid and assist” living artists, over the past 29 years the Foundation has evolved a range of initiatives that have directly supported more than 1,000 visual artists at varying stages of their careers. The Joan Mitchell Fellowship gives annual unrestricted awards of \$60,000 directly to artists, with funds distributed over a five-year period alongside dedicated and flexible professional development. The New Orleans-based Joan Mitchell Center hosts residencies for national and local artists, as well as artist talks, open studio events, and other public programs that encourage dialogue and exchange with the local community. The Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) initiative provides free and essential resources to help artists of all ages organize, document, and manage their artworks and careers. Together, these programs actively engage with working artists as they develop and expand their practices. For more information, visit joanmitchellfoundation.org.

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