

Desert X Announces the Artists Bringing Outdoor Installations to the Coachella Valley

Judy Chicago, Felipe Baeza, and Christopher Myers will be among the participating artists
By Brittany Martin
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UPDATE: MARCH 9, 2021 – Desert X has released the list of artists participating in the 2021 event. Installations will be crafted by Zahrah Alghamdi, Ghada Amer, Felipe Baeza, Judy Chicago, Serge Attukwei Clottey, Nicholas Galanin, Alicja Kwade, Oscar Murillo, Christopher Myers, Eduardo Sarabia, Xaviera Simmons, Kim Stringfellow, and Vivian Suter. More details about each artist’s contribution and a map to finding them will be released on March 12.

Myers’s six-sculpture installation was originally to be funded with public money allocated by the Palm Springs City Council, but the arrangement fell apart over concerns about a controversial exhibition staged by Desert X in Saudi Arabia, as well as other terms of the deal.

Another snag impacted Attukwei Clottey’s work, “Afrogallonism.” The piece is inspired by water shortages in the artists’ native Ghana and was to be installed in and partially funded by the City of Coachella. The city pulled out of the project, saying they feared it could be misinterpreted amid current problems with arsenic contamination in local groundwater in the eastern Coachella Valley. That piece will now be installed outside of the city.

FEBRUARY 12, 2021 – Local museums remain closed due to the pandemic, but art-lovers will soon be able to experience something special—and

pandemic-safe. Desert X is returning to the Coachella Valley, bringing new, large-scale, outdoor art installations to explore.

Desert X pops up only once every other year, drawing the curious out to drive through a series of free, open-air pieces installed in the desert landscape. The 2021 edition will run March 12 to May 16.

Curated by artistic director Neville Wakefield and co-curator César García-Alvarez, the list of this year's participating artists has not yet been revealed. Previous iterations have included works by Doug Aitken, Jenny Holzer, Iván Argote, Pia Camil, and other important names in contemporary art.

A statement from organizers says that “Desert X will include newly commissioned works that collectively pose urgent questions about our pasts while imagining the possibilities of a shared future.”