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Gaëtane Verna Appointed New Executive Director of the Wexner Center for the Arts

August 24, 2022—Columbus, Ohio—The Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University has tapped art historian and arts administrator Gaëtane Verna to be its next Executive Director. Verna will be coming to the Wex in November from Toronto’s The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, where she has been Director and Artistic Director since 2012.

"We are thrilled to welcome Gaëtane Verna to Ohio State and the Wexner Center for the Arts," says Ohio State Executive Vice President and Provost Dr. Melissa L. Gilliam. "With deep experience in elevating emerging and established artists, she believes strongly in the role of contemporary art as a conduit for exploring important issues and engaging communities. As she joins us in Columbus, she will be bolstered by our talented and dedicated Wex staff and our students, faculty, staff and community that engage with the Wex."

Prior to her time at The Power Plant, Verna was Executive Director and Chief Curator of the Musée d'art de Joliette, one of Quebec's largest art museums, from 2006 to 2012. Previously, Verna served from 1999 to 2006 as Curator of the Foreman Art Gallery at Bishop's University, Sherbrooke, while also teaching in the Art History departments of Bishop's University and the Université du Québec à Montréal.

Since 1998, Verna has curated and organized exhibitions by emerging, mid-career, and established Canadian and international artists, including Terry Adkins, John Akomfrah, Vasco Araújo, Miriam Cahn, Alfredo Jaar, Luis Jacob, Kimsooja, Yam Lau, Oswaldo Maciá, Mario Pfeifer, Javier Téllez, Denyse Thomasos, Bill Viola, YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES, Zineb Sedira, and Franz Erhard Walther, among many others. Verna has also edited and contributed essays to numerous books and catalogues.

Verna currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Canada Council for the Arts, TV5 Québec Canada, the Holt/Smithson Foundation and the Sobey Art Foundation. She is the past President of the Board of Directors of the Toronto Arts Council and serves on the Advisory Committees of the Art Gallery of Ontario's Department of Arts of Global Africa and the Diaspora and Mosaic Institute.

In 2017, she was appointed Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Order of Arts and Letters) by the French government to spotlight and recognize her significant contribution to furthering the arts in France and throughout the world.

"Gaëtane comes to us from another premier, non-collecting contemporary institution," notes Wexner Center Foundation Board President Bill Lambert. "She

brings strongly relevant experience to the center, grounded in presenting multiple disciplines, providing a platform for underrepresented as well as established artists, and maintaining a dialogue with the community she serves.”

According to Executive Committee Chair Abigail Wexner, “Gaëtane has the exact combination of skills and qualities that we hoped to find in our search for the next Executive Director. She’s an engaging, curious, and perceptive leader, dedicated to connecting the public with the art of our time. We’re so happy to welcome her to the US with this role.”

“The Wexner Center for the Arts is one of the leading contemporary art institutions in the United States and in the world,” Verna says. “It is a shining beacon for the artists and all communities it welcomes and serves. Through bold inquiry and practice, the Wex embraces its multidisciplinary mission of innovation, education and meaningful engagement and enables us to examine the most pressing and urgent issues of our time. I am both honored and excited to join the staff of the Wex and the board in building on its glorious past and shaping its bright future together.”

About the Wexner Center for the Arts

The Wexner Center for the Arts is The Ohio State University's multidisciplinary, international laboratory for the exploration and advancement of contemporary art.

Through exhibitions, screenings, performances, artist residencies, and education programs, the Wexner Center acts as a forum where established and emerging artists can test ideas and where diverse audiences can participate in cultural experiences that enhance the understanding of the art of our time.