

# Michelle Dezember

Educator, cultural producer, and arts administrator with twenty years of global experience building programs, initiatives, and curricula. Curatorial and programmatic work is grounded in ecology as well as place-based and culturally responsive pedagogies.

## Education

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University of Leicester

**MA, Museum Studies**, with Distinction

Santa Clara University

**BA, Art History; BS, Sociology**, Cum Laude

University of Barcelona

**Postgraduate Certificate, Visual Cultural Studies**

University of Illinois Chicago

**Certificate in Nonprofit Management** (in progress)

## Professional Experience

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**Director of Learning and Engagement**, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (April 2020–present)

**Chief Program Officer**, Aspen Art Museum (May 2018–August 2019)

**Learning Director**, Aspen Art Museum (April 2014–May 2018)

**Deputy Director for Programming and Special Projects**, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art (Doha, Qatar; May 2013–March 2014)

**Interim Museum Director**, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art (Doha, Qatar; March 2012–May 2013)

**Head of Education and Public Programs**, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art (Doha, Qatar; December 2009–May 2013)

**Education Coordinator / Fulbright Scholar**, Museum of the History of Immigration to Catalonia (Barcelona, Spain; Fall 2008–Fall 2009)

**Independent Educator**, Museum of the City of New York; Museum of Modern Art; Queens Museum; The Center for Architecture Foundation; and Brooklyn Museum (Fall 2006–Fall 2008)

**Museum Educator and Assistant to the Curator**, de Saisset Museum (Santa Clara, CA; Summer 2005–Spring 2006)

## Academic Teaching and Lecturing

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**Guest Lecturer, Lindenwood University**, Course: Art History, AI, and Visual Culture Seminar (2025)

**Guest Lecturer, Western State Colorado University**, Course: Marketing, Education, and Audience Building (2018)

**Guest Lecturer, University College of London-Qatar**, Courses: Museum and Gallery Education (2012) and Curating Contemporary Art (2014) (2012–2014)

**Instructor, University of Barcelona**, Course: Art Education: History and Curriculum (2009)

## Publications

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### Edited Books and Journals

Dezember, Michelle, ed. *North St. Louis Creative Field Guide*. St. Louis, MO: Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, 2026.

Dezember, Michelle and Moon, Michelle, eds. *Journal of Museum Education* Volume 48, Issue 2 (2022).

Dezember, Michelle, ed. *Arte en Español: Retratos Familiares* exhibition catalog. Aspen, CO: Aspen Art Museum, 2017.

### Print Articles

Dezember, Michelle, “To Pay Attention Is to Love,” in *North St. Louis Creative Field Guide*, 14–27. St. Louis, MO: Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, 2026.

Dezember, Michelle, Diane M.T. North, Jane M. Farmer, and Mary Alexander. “Revisiting Roundtable Reports after 50 Years.” *Journal of Museum Education* 48, no. 4 (October 2, 2023): 374–81.

Dezember, Michelle. “Radio Resistance,” *Stories of Resistance* exhibition catalog, 69–71. St. Louis, MO: Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, 2021.

- Dezember, Michelle. "Muscular Empathy and Not Knowing in Dara Friedman's Mother Drum," *Esse Arts + Opinions*, Winter (2019): 38–45.
- Dezember, Michelle. "A Creative Adult is a Child Who Survived," *Post Independent* (Glenwood Springs, CO), Feb. 13, 2018.
- Dezember, Michelle. "Air, Water, and Earth: Lessons on Communication from a Museum in the Mountains," *Fwd: Museums Journal*, University of Illinois Chicago (2017): 45–51.
- Dezember, Michelle. "Building a Public Realm: Imagining a Future for Old Doha," *Liverpool Biennial's Stages Journal*, Issue #1 (2014): 13–19.
- Dezember, Michelle. "Scaffolding, Constructivism, and the Anti-icon: Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art," *2A Magazine* (2013)
- Dezember, Michelle. "Artist Encounters: The Potential of Artist-Led Interpretive Programs for Inclusionary Museum Practices" in *Reimagining Museums: Practice in the Arabian Peninsula*. Edinburgh: MuseumsEtc., 2012.
- Boj, Inma and Dezember, Michelle. "El Museo de la Historia de la Inmigración a Cataluña: Creating Spaces of Intercultural Dialogue," *Museologia* (2010).
- Dezember, Michelle. "New Faces: The Diversification of Museum Audiences in the San Jose Metro Area," *Silicon Valley Notebook*, 4 (2006).

### Blogs

- Dezember, Michelle. "The Self-Care Ritual of Retreats," *Center for Future of Museums*, American Alliance of Museums (blog), April 16, 2019, <https://www.aam-us.org/2019/04/16/the-self-care-ritual-of-retreats>.
- Dezember, Michelle. "4 x 4: Self-care and Nature," *Museum Education Roundtable* (blog), September 2018, <https://www.museumedu.org/4-x-4-self-care-nature-mike-murawski>.
- Dezember, Michelle. "We the People: The Radical Possibilities of Hope for Museum Learning," *Art Museum Teaching* (blog), December 5, 2016, <https://artmuseumteaching.com/2016/12/05/hope-museum-learning>.

## Exhibitions and Public Art

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- Make the River Present*, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, March 7–August 10, 2025: Co-curator with Allena Brazier.
- US: *United Sapiens* public art installation by artist Mee Jey, installed at Veterans Community Project. Co-curator with Miriam Ruiz.
- Building Beautiful Community*, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, July 12–August 13, 2023. Co-curator with Miriam Ruiz and Creative Reaction Lab.
- Growing Safe Spaces*, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, March 25–July 24, 2022. Co-curator with Miriam Ruiz and Creative Reaction Lab.
- Radio Resistance*, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, March 12–August 15, 2021. Curator.
- A Sense of Home*, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, June 3–August 15, 2021. Co-curator with Miriam Ruiz and Creative Reaction Lab.
- Artwork for Equity*, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, March 12–May 23, 2021. Co-curator with Miriam Ruiz and Creative Reaction Lab.
- Arte en Español: Retratos Familiares*, Aspen Art Museum, March 1–24, 2018. Curator and catalog editor.
- Transform: Student Art Exhibition*, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, November 17–June 1, 2013. Co-curator with Maral Bedoyan.

## Invited Lectures and Conference Presentations

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- "Museum Community Outreach and Arts Advocacy," Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum at Washington University in St. Louis (2026)
- "Near and Far: Working with Artists to Scale Museums Responsiveness to Urban and Rural Communities," National Art Education Association Conference, Minneapolis (2024)
- "Learning through Publishing: The Journal of Museum Education at 50," American Alliance of Museums Annual Meeting, Denver (2023)
- "Leading from All Levels," National Art Education Association Conference, Seattle (2018)
- "Arte en Español: A Museum–Radio Collaboration," Creative Placemaking Leadership Summit, Denver (2018)

- “Sustain: Time and Reflexivity in Contemporary Art Museums,” Between the Discursive to the Immersive: A Symposium on Research in 21st Century Museums, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark (2015)
- “Building Islands: Artists, Audience, and Institutional Development,” American Alliance of Museums Annual Meeting, Baltimore (2013)
- “Art, Artists, & Cultural Learning: International Perspectives,” Worlds Together Conference, Tate Modern, London, United Kingdom (2012)
- “Artist Encounters: Artist-Led Programs & Inclusionary Museum Practices,” Sharjah Art Foundation March Meeting, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (2012)
- “Teaching Art History in the Arab World in Formal & Informal Settings,” Association for Modern and Contemporary Art of the Arab World, Iran and Turkey Conference, Doha, Qatar (2010)
- “Learning How to Learn Together,” University of Barcelona Conference of Visual Art Education, Barcelona, Spain (2009)
- “The Construction of Culture in a Visual Paradigm: Analyzing Two Barcelona Exhibitions on Immigration,” Forum of Young Scholars of Intercultural Dynamics, Barcelona, Spain (2009)
- “‘The Real Catalunya’: Visual Discourse and Immigration in Catalan Museums,” Fulbright Commission Conference, Madrid, Spain (2009)

## Professional Service and Affiliations

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- Master Gardener trainee (2026-present)
- 4theVille board member (2025-present)
- Sumner High School Advisory board secretary (2021-present): Part of [intervening cohort that averted the closure](#) of the oldest African American high school west of the Mississippi
- *Journal of Museum Education* peer reviewer (2016-present)
- Museum Education Roundtable board member (2017-2023); served as board president from 2022-2023
- Forum for Leadership in Art Museum Education member (2018-present)
- National Art Education Association member (2014-present)

## Awards

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- Institute of Museum and Library Services National Medal (2017)
- Qreation Generation Cultural Management and Leadership Fellow (2014)
- U.S. Department of State Fulbright Scholar (2008)
- U.S. Dept. of State Fulbright Grant Fellow (2008)
- Santa Clara University Art History Department Leadership Award (2006)
- Santa Clara University Art History Prize: “The Art of Refusal: Photography of Lorna Simpson” (2006)
- Santa Clara University Witold Krassowski Sociology Department Award (2006)

## Languages and Other Skills

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- Confident navigating systems including MS Office, Google Suite, CRM, and project management software
- Languages – Spanish: Fluent      Catalan: Intermediate      Arabic: Beginner