

Press Release



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Newark Museum Welcomes New Deputy Director of Education and Audience Engagement

Dr. Silvia Filippini Fantoni Joins the Staff of Top Art Museum

NEWARK, NJ – October 28, 2019 – The Newark Museum, New Jersey’s largest art and education institution that ranks 12th among art museums in the United States, announced today that it has welcomed Silvia Filippini Fantoni, Ph.D. as its new Deputy Director of Education and Audience Engagement. Dr. Fantoni, a veteran of several top museums in the United States and across Europe, will bring her worldwide experience and expertise to Newark to help the museum create innovative and transformative experiences for visitors.

“Silvia joins our Senior Leadership Team during a great moment of transformation for the Museum and the City of Newark. We are excited to have a bold talent with progressive thinking around audience engagement and interactive learning,” said Linda Harrison, Director and CEO of the Newark Museum. “Silvia’s experience with communities and partnerships will be incredibly valuable as we continue our work as an inclusive driven museum.”

As the Deputy Director of Education and Audience Engagement, Dr. Fantoni will assist museum leadership in shaping a new vision for the museum, one that creates an environment of increased accessibility and relevance for the museum as it seeks to attract visitors from around the world. Dr. Fantoni will work closely to ensure the museum fulfills its educational mission and its desire for more interactive and innovative community programming. Lastly, she will create and maintain relationships to educators, educational industry organizations, schools of higher learning and community leaders that will help to shape the museums future needs and interests.

Dr. Fantoni is a museum professional with over 18 years working with museums in the areas of art, education, nature and historic houses. She is a skilled educator and communicator with an ability to cultivate positive working relationships with artists, organizations, donors, and the community. Dr. Fantoni has a proven track record of cultivating audience and visitor growth at her previous institutions, and is regularly recognized for her skills in developing award-winning programs and visitor experiences.

“I am thrilled to be joining the Newark Museum at this exciting time in its history, especially as the organization pushes forward in new and innovative ways under the leadership of visionary Director

and CEO Linda Harrison,” said Fantoni. “Community engagement, especially in the museum industry, is my personal and professional passion and I cannot wait to contribute my skills, ideas and energy at this wonderful institution.”

Dr. Fantoni joins the Newark Museum following more than two years as the Director of Programs and Audience Engagement at the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh, NC. There, she was responsible for the institution’s public programs and education/interpretation function, supervising a staff of 16 employees and 120 docents. As part of her responsibilities, she was a member of the senior leadership team that led collaborative, visitor-focused approaches to programming. She was also tasked with managing campus-wide research and evaluation initiatives, along with making data-driven decisions for the museum. She was active in developing relationships and partnerships with local organizations, artists and the community.

Before her position in North Carolina, Dr. Fantoni served in a similar capacity at the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields in Indianapolis, Indiana for five years. Prior to that position, she held a number of positions across Europe with museums or for organizations serving the museum industry. To that end, she worked as a Senior Producer for Cogapp, a digital content producer in Brighton, UK; a Project Manager for the British Museum in London; a Lecturer at the University Paris I-Sorbonne; and a New Product Development Manager for Antenna Audio in London. During her collegiate education she held internships and graduate student positions at the JP Getty Museum in Los Angeles, the Louvre Museum in Paris, and the Maastricht McLuhan Institute & European Centre for Digital Culture.

Dr. Fantoni received a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts degree, both in history, from the Università degli Studi di Milano (Milan, Italy). She received a second Master of Arts degree and her Ph.D. in Aesthetics and Art Sciences from the Université Paris I-Sorbonne in Paris. She also has continuing education experience at Oxford University, and an expansive history of awards, published writings, and guest lectures.

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Founded in 1909, the Newark Museum is the largest art and education institution in New Jersey and one of the most influential museums in the United States. Its renowned global art collections, supported by significant holdings of science, technology and natural history, rank 12th among North America’s art museums. The Museum is dedicated to artistic excellence, education and community engagement with an overarching commitment to broadening and diversifying arts participation. As it has for over a century, the Museum responds to the evolving needs and interests of the diverse audiences it serves by providing exhibitions, programming and resources designed to improve and enrich people’s lives.

The Museum also encompasses the Victoria Hall of Science, the Alice and Leonard Dreyfuss Planetarium, the MakerSPACE, the Billy Johnson Auditorium, the Alice Ransom Dreyfuss Memorial Garden, an authentic 1784 Schoolhouse, and the Newark Fire Museum.

The Newark Museum, a not-for-profit museum of art and science, receives operating support from the City of Newark, the State of New Jersey, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State (a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts), the New Jersey Cultural Trust, the Prudential Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Victoria Foundation, the PSEG Foundation, the Estate of Phyllis and Sanford Bolton, the Wallace Foundation, and other corporations, foundations, and individuals. Funds for acquisitions and activities other than operations are provided by members and other contributors.