

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Museum of the African Diaspora establishes innovative Cultural Critic-in-Residence initiative and appoints Dr. Artel Great to serve as its first

(San Francisco, CA, January 3, 2023) — The Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) has established a new Cultural Critic-in-Residence position, the first of its kind for a contemporary art museum, and has appointed acclaimed San Francisco filmmaker, author, and scholar Dr. Artel Great to serve as its first starting in January 2023.

“We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Artel Great as our inaugural Cultural Critic-in-Residence,” says Monetta White, Executive Director, MoAD. “MoAD is committed to supporting exceptional scholars and practitioners who are taking deep dives into their areas of expertise. By providing the intellectual and cultural space for residents at the Museum, we make their work accessible to new audiences and expand the reach and definition of contemporary art of the African Diaspora. Dr. Great is an intellectual and creative force whose publicly engaged scholarship on Black cinema and visual culture and Black cultural theory ensures that this new cultural initiative will connect film, scholarship, visual and pop culture in truly exciting and novel ways.”

The new Cultural Critic-in-Residence initiative is modeled after the Museum’s critically-acclaimed Chef-in-Residence program. Residents organize quarterly programs for the public that include conversations with leaders in the field, symposia, and more.

Dr. Great has previously worked with MoAD in this capacity, organizing a fascinating virtual lecture series in early 2022 entitled *Black Cinema and Social Change*. His upcoming two-year residency begins with a new four-part, virtual series on Wednesdays, January 18-February 8, 2023, entitled *SOUL CINEMA: 1970s Black Film and Culture* that will explore the highly contested, compelling, influential, and often misunderstood expansion of Black cinema during the 1970s.

“I’m very much energized about this new partnership with MoAD,” says Dr. Great. “The residency marks a fantastic opportunity to deepen our relationship and our social impact, and not only build on the exciting work we’ve done in the past, but to also increase global engagement and community building by pushing boundaries with innovative cultural programming that contributes to our shared mission to expand the production of knowledge. I’m thrilled to collaborate with the Museum to explore and highlight the many social, political, and aesthetic dimensions of Black culture across a range of modalities, using fresh, critical, and eclectic interpretive strategies.”

Dr. Great is the George and Judy Marcus Endowed Chair in African-American Cinema Studies and Assistant Professor of Critical Studies in the San Francisco State University School of Cinema. An Independent Spirit Award-nominated filmmaker, film scholar, and media commentator, Dr. Great’s research explores the phenomenology of Blackness and the political, aesthetic, and cultural history of

Black cinema and its critical discourses within the American context and across the African Diaspora. Dr. Great is, alongside Dr. Ed Guerrero, co-editor and contributing author of the forthcoming anthology *Black Cinema & Visual Culture: Art and Politics in the 21st Century* (London: Routledge, 2023).

Dr. Great earned his PhD at NYU Tisch School of the Arts, and he is the first Black valedictorian at the UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television, where he graduated *summa cum laude*.

As an artist and filmmaker, Dr. Great's socially-engaged creative praxis expands the expressive possibilities of Black life on-screen by uncovering new narratives that decolonize Black images from historically narrow depictions. His feature films, *Love Like Winter* (2020) and *Love Walks In* (2022), have screened at national and international film festivals and represent the first installments of "The Love Cycle," a film tetralogy that impressionistically declares #BlackLoveMatters.

Dr. Great is also a Fellow at the Cinema Research Institute in Manhattan, where he created Project Catalyst, the first-ever mobile entertainment app that specializes in streaming alternative film and media content created by and for global communities of color. He has held academic positions at NYU, University of North Carolina, and Spelman College. He was recently appointed the inaugural Social Justice Fellow at the University of Oregon (2023), and his work has appeared in popular publications such as the *New York Times*, *CNN*, and *The New Republic*. His films have screened worldwide in major multiplexes, art-house theaters, and museums, as well as on Netflix, Amazon, cable, and broadcast television. He is currently at work on a new book manuscript that critically explores race, resistance, and Black-American satire.

ABOUT MoAD

The Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) is a contemporary art museum whose mission is to celebrate Black cultures, ignite challenging conversations, and inspire learning through the global lens of the African Diaspora. MoAD is one of only a few museums in the United States dedicated to the celebration and interpretation of art, artists, and cultures from the African Diaspora. The Museum presents exhibitions highlighting contemporary art and artists of African descent and engages its audience through education and public programs that interpret and enhance the understanding of Black art. Founded in 2005, the Museum continues to be a unique, cultural arts staple in the San Francisco Bay Area community.

For more information about MoAD, visit The Museum's website at moadsf.org.

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