

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****HIGH MUSEUM OF ART COMMISSIONS NEW PIAZZA INSTALLATION,  
CONTINUING ITS SITE-SPECIFIC SERIES**

*Working with Atlanta organizations and community contributors, designer Tanya Aguiñiga will create an immersive environment honoring celebratory traditions from around the world*

**ATLANTA, Feb. 15, 2023** — This spring, the High Museum of Art will present an immersive environment within a monumental celebratory canopy by designer Tanya Aguiñiga as its eighth site-specific installation on the Woodruff Arts Center’s Carroll Slater Sifly Piazza. Titled “HAPPY JOYLANTA,” the installation will continue the High’s multiyear series of inclusive and inviting commissions to activate the Museum’s outdoor space and encourage community engagement. On view from May 14 through Nov. 26, 2023, “HAPPY JOYLANTA” will also serve as a community-based art project featuring signs, symbols and memories that reflect Atlanta’s diverse populations.

“This installation continues a nearly decade-long commitment to enliven our outdoor space and create places where visitors of all ages can gather and participate. It’s a unique art experience that encourages celebration and inspires play,” said Rand Suffolk, Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr., director of the High. “We look forward to welcoming audiences to enjoy ‘HAPPY JOYLANTA’ and to see for themselves how members of our community have impacted the installation.”

Drawing upon years of Aguiñiga’s collaborative practice, this project explores craft and its multiple connections to culture, tradition, materials, function and community. The installation’s massive canopy will comprise many layers, including custom papel picado (traditional crafts of cut tissue paper with global roots) designed by various people at workshops in Atlanta in collaboration with organizations including the Global Village Project, LaAmistad at Bolton Academy and the Roswell Neighborhood Senior Center, among others. In addition to the papel picado, decorations from celebratory traditions around the world, such as kites, lanterns, floral garland and disco balls, will envelop the interior of the environment and create a spectacular panoply of layered signs and symbols. Aguiñiga will also create objects for the space that probe ideas surrounding cultural intersections and hybrid identities.

To further encourage participation in the project, in December 2022, Aguiñiga asked community members to join the party through a piñata design contest. The High invited anyone living in Georgia to submit a sketched idea for an imaginative piñata that expresses joy and pushes the visual boundaries of celebration. The installation will feature 20 piñatas, based on

designs by several contest winners from the Atlanta region and fabricated by [The Piñata Factory](#) in Smyrna, Georgia.

“Aguiñiga is creating a space for the High that invites wonder and offers a spirit of celebration through partnerships with local communities,” said Monica Obniski, the High’s curator of decorative arts and design. “I am drawn to her intellectual project of advancing the practice of craft, especially as it relates to collaboration, because she believes that sharing one’s knowledge within communities is a valid contribution to the design field, but also to humanity. This project centers optimism and joy, something we all could use more of right now. We invite everyone to join us to make new memories within ‘HAPPY JOYLANTA’ and to experience the wonderful things that can happen when people come together to celebrate life.”

“HAPPY JOYLANTA” builds on the success of the seven previous Piazza commissions: [“Outside the Lines”](#) by Bryony Roberts Studio (2021); [“Murmuration”](#) by New York-based architectural firm SO - IL (2020); Japanese designer Yuri Suzuki’s [“Sonic Playground”](#) (2018); Spanish designer Jaime Hayon’s [“Merry Go Zoo”](#) (2017) and [“Tiovivo”](#) (2016); and 2014-2015’s [“Mi Casa, Your Casa”](#) and [“Los Trompos” \(“The Spinning Tops”\)](#) by Mexican designers Héctor Esrawe and Ignacio Cadena.

### **Community Partners**

Bethlehem at Birdine Neighborhood Senior Center

Global Village Project

LaAmistad at Bolton Academy

LaAmistad at Peachtree Church

Refuge Coffee

Roswell Neighborhood Senior Center

### **About the High’s Piazza Activation Initiative**

The High’s Piazza activation initiative launched in 2014 to explore how engaging with art and design can extend beyond the Museum’s walls. Varied programs, art-making activities and other interactive features enliven these dynamic outdoor installations.

The High commissioned Esrawe and Cadena to design the first two installations for the project, “Mi Casa, Your Casa” and “Los Trompos” (“The Spinning Tops”), followed by Hayon’s “Tiovivo” and “Merry Go Zoo,” Suzuki’s “Sonic Playground,” SO - IL’s “Murmuration” and Bryony Roberts Studios’ “Outside the Lines.” For each of these installations, the High worked with local arts organizations and Woodruff Arts Center partners to present live performances and art-making

activities themed around the structures. The Piazza projects have so far been enjoyed by a total of nearly 870,000 visitors.

The High's Piazza activation initiative is sponsored by a grant from the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation, which is part of the family of foundations that includes the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation. The Lettie Pate Evans Foundation is an independent private foundation that invests primarily in education, arts and culture.

### **About Tanya Aguiñiga**

Born in 1978 in San Diego, California, and raised in Tijuana, Mexico, Aguiñiga is an artist, designer and craftsperson who works with traditional craft materials like natural fibers and collaborates with other artists and activists to create sculptures, installations, performances and community-based art projects. Drawing on her upbringing as a binational citizen, Aguiñiga creates work that speaks of her experience of divided identity and aspires to tell the larger and often invisible stories of the transnational community.

She began her career by creating collaborative installations with the Border Art Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo, an artist collective that addressed political and human rights issues at the U.S.-Mexico border. She co-built and for six years ran a community center in Tijuana, aimed at bringing attention through arts initiatives to injustices that the local community faced. She has continued to maintain a spirit of activism and community collaboration throughout her career. In 2016, in response to the deep polarization about the U.S.-Mexico border, Aguiñiga created AMBOS (Art Made Between Opposite Sides), an ongoing series of projects that provides a platform for binational artists.

She holds a Master of Fine Arts in furniture design from Rhode Island School of Design and a Bachelor of Arts from San Diego State University. She is a United States Artists Target Fellow in the field of crafts and traditional arts, a National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures awardee, a Creative Capital grant awardee and a recipient of an Americans for the Arts Johnson Fellowship for Artists Transforming Communities. She has had major solo exhibitions at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C. (2018), and the Museum of Arts and Design, New York (2018), among others. She lives in Los Angeles, California.

### **Exhibition Organization and Support**

"HAPPY JOYLANTA" is organized by the High Museum of Art, Atlanta. This exhibition is made possible by funding from Premier Exhibition Series Sponsor Delta Airlines, Inc.; Premier Exhibition Series Supporters ACT Foundation, Inc., William N. Banks, Jr., Cousins Foundation, Burton M. Gold, Sarah and Jim Kennedy, Harry Norman Realtors, and wish Foundation; Benefactor Exhibition Series Supporters Robin and Hilton Howell; Ambassador Exhibition Series Supporters Mrs. Fay S. Howell/The Howell Fund, The Fred and Rita Richman Fund, Louise Sams and Jerome Grilhot, Mrs. Harriet H. Warren, and Elizabeth and Chris Willett; Contributing Exhibition Series Supporters Farideh and Al Azadi, Sandra and Dan Baldwin, Mr. Joseph H. Boland, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Robin E. Delmer, Peggy Foreman, Helen C. Griffith, Mr. and Mrs. Baxter Jones, Joel Knox and Joan Marmo, Margot and Danny McCaul, Wade A. Rakes II &

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### **About the High Museum of Art**

Located in the heart of Atlanta, the High Museum of Art connects with audiences from across the Southeast and around the world through its distinguished collection, dynamic schedule of special exhibitions and engaging community-focused programs. Housed within facilities designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects Richard Meier and Renzo Piano, the High features a collection of more than 18,000 works of art, including an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American fine and decorative arts; major holdings of photography and folk and self-taught work, especially that of artists from the American South; burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, including paintings, sculpture, new media and design; a growing collection of African art, with work dating from prehistory through the present; and significant holdings of European paintings and works on paper. The High is dedicated to reflecting the diversity of its communities and offering a variety of exhibitions and educational programs that engage visitors with the world of art, the lives of artists and the creative process. For more information about the High, visit [www.high.org](http://www.high.org).

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### **DIGITAL IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

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