

Press Release

The Brooklyn Museum Announces New Appointments, Including Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access, Chief of Staff and Chief Legal Officer, and Deputy Director for Art

The Brooklyn Museum is pleased to welcome three new senior positions: Keonna Hendrick as Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA); Fabian Milburn as Chief of Staff and Chief Legal Officer; and Sharon Matt Atkins as Deputy Director for Art. These important new roles will strengthen connections among all departments at the Museum and help advance strategic priorities. In particular, the appointment of Keonna Hendrick as the Museum's first Director of DEIA signals an important step in the Museum's ongoing commitment to being a more equitable, inclusive, and welcoming place for its staff and audiences.

"We're so excited to bring Keonna and Fabian into these new positions, as well as see the expansion of Sharon's role within the Museum," said Anne Pasternak, Shelby White and Leon Levy Director, Brooklyn Museum. "The past year has given us an opportunity to reflect on how to increase our social impact—through a refined vision for our collections and exhibitions, educational and public programs, and community engagement. These new leadership positions are a key step in furthering these commitments, and will also allow us to reinforce a collaborative internal environment for Museum staff and ensure dedicated support for our teams."

Keonna Hendrick

As Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access, Keonna Hendrick will work with Museum leadership, Board of Trustees, and staff to oversee implementation of the Museum's DEIA Plan by conceptualizing, developing, and implementing DEIA initiatives across the institution's operations and strategy. As an educator, Hendrick has spent over a decade making museums and arts organizations champions of cultural equity using anti-racist frameworks. Before entering the role of Director of DEIA, she served as School Programs Manager at the Museum, where she led the department through the implementation of programs focusing on culturally responsive engagement and anti-oppressive pedagogy. She was also responsible for implementing new programs that sought equitable distribution of resources to schools with disparate needs across Brooklyn.

Hendrick's dedication to equity-centered approaches to community engagement and institutional practices earned her the 2019 National Museum Education Art Educator Award from the National Art Education Association. She also gained recognition in her field in 2013, when she co-developed Critical Multicultural Reflection Practice, an ongoing process in which educators identify, analyze, and challenge the cultural beliefs, values, and assumptions that color their interactions with learners and the artworks they're teaching about. Hendrick's commitment to providing professional development through culturally equitable and anti-racist lenses is unfaltering. She continues to work with educators in museums and classrooms across the country, and has edited academic volumes devoted to scholarship on anti-racism in museums. She has also

taught university courses on the subject at Pratt Institute; Teacher's College, Columbia University; and School of Visual Arts, all in New York.

Hendrick holds a B.A. from Wake Forest University, North Carolina, and an M.A. from the Ohio State University.

Fabian Milburn

As Chief of Staff and Chief Legal Officer, Fabian Milburn will serve as a critical strategic advisor to the Director and the President & Chief Operating Officer in developing and implementing both creative and operational plans and initiatives across the organization. He comes to the Museum with a strong history of business operations experience. Most recently, he served as the Chief Operating Officer for Zeitgeist Reach, a workforce-development technology company that empowers industry leaders to invest in their workforces by hiring from underserved local communities.

Milburn also brings an extensive portfolio of expertise from the media sector, having served in senior management positions at Oxygen Media, Warner Bros., and Amazon's Audible division. At Oxygen, he successfully coordinated all day-to-day internal business operations and helped integrate the company into the NBC Universal portfolio of cable properties following its acquisition. At Warner Bros., he oversaw the team responsible for business and operations for the studio's marquee franchises, including *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* and *TMZ*. Milburn also served as a member of the senior executive management team for Audible and was responsible for creating the architecture for the division's original content deal-making and production budgeting process. He also served as the lead strategic business advisor for the division's international offices.

Milburn received his undergraduate degree from the Pennsylvania State University, and is a graduate of American University Washington College of Law. He continued his commitment to his undergraduate alma mater, serving two terms as a board member of the Pennsylvania State University College of Liberal Arts Alumni Society and is currently a member of the university's Student Affairs and Undergraduate Education Council. He is also a member of the National Academy of Television of Arts & Sciences.

Sharon Matt Atkins

Atkins has been with the Museum for twelve years, serving in numerous important positions that helped lead and advance the Museum's critically acclaimed exhibition program. In her new role as Deputy Director for Art, Atkins will oversee the Museum's collections and exhibitions, and also create new strategies and initiatives to engage and excite local, national, and international audiences. She will direct the Museum's Art Division, which includes Curatorial; Exhibitions; Registrars and Art Handling; Conservation; Libraries & Archives; Exhibition Design; and Publications, Interpretation, and Editorial Services.

Prior to this position, Atkins served as Director of Curatorial Affairs and as Director of Exhibitions and Strategic Initiatives. She has organized numerous exhibitions while at the Brooklyn Museum, including co-curating *JR: Chronicles* and *Something to Say: Brooklyn Hi-Art! Machine, Deborah Kass, Kameelah Janan Rasheed, and Hank Willis Thomas*. She also organized *Iggy Pop Life Class by Jeremy Deller*, *Stephen Powers: Coney Island Is Still Dreamland (To a Seagull)*; *FAILE: Savage/Sacred Young Minds*; *Swoon: Submerged Motherlands*; and the Brooklyn presentation of *Ai Weiwei: According to What?*.

Atkins received an M.A. and a Ph.D. in art history from Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, after earning a B.A. at Iowa State University. She is currently a

member of the Association of Art Museum Curators Board of Trustees and a co-chair of its membership committee. She is also a graduate of the Getty Leadership Institute's Executive Education Program for Museum Leaders.