CECILIA ALEMANI NAMED CURATOR OF 12TH SITE SANTA FE INTERNATIONAL, OPENING IN 2025

SITE SANTA FE Phillips Executive Director Louis Grachos Leads the Return of the International – the first community-wide contemporary biennial in the United States – for the First Time Since 2018

Santa Fe, NM – January 23, 2024 – SITE SANTA FE announced today that Cecilia Alemani will curate the 12th SITE SANTA FE International, (formerly known as the SITE SANTA FE Biennial) planned to open in summer 2025 and run through early 2026. As the first community-wide biennial of contemporary art in the United States, the International has provided a platform for artists from around the world to respond to the unique geography, history, and cultures of New Mexico for decades. Returning for the first time since 2018, the 12th International will also be the first International mounted by SITE SANTA FE since Louis Grachos returned to the helm of the institution in 2021, which he previously led from 1996 to 2003.

“SITE SANTA FE’s first International since 2018 presents an opportunity for us to reinforce our institution’s ties to the global contemporary art world while reinvigorating the local art scene and creating even deeper roots and relevance within our communities in New Mexico,” said Louis Grachos, Phillips Executive Director of SITE SANTA FE. “As a champion of the voice of the artist, Cecilia Alemani’s curatorial approach fits seamlessly with our artist-centric vision for SITE SANTA FE, and we look forward to the new works, ideas, and dialogues that will emerge from her curatorial vision.”

Throughout her 20-year career Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, has developed an expertise in commissioning and producing ambitious artworks for the public space and unusual sites beyond the gallery walls. The International appointment follows her celebrated work as artistic director of the 59th Venice Biennale, where she curated the exhibition The Milk of Dreams to much acclaim.

Alemani is the next defining voice in a line of 21 notable past International curators who have had a significant impact on the field and contemporary art history. Luminaries such as Francesco Bonami, Dave Hickey, Candice Hopkins, Rosa Martinez, and Robert Storr, in particular, have curated past International exhibitions that greatly influenced numerous artists and curators around the world, as they reframed conversations around the local and the global in contemporary art
and culture. These exhibitions also shaped Alemani’s thinking and exhibition-making as a young curator.

“For decades, the SITE SANTA FE International has systematically shifted paradigms and conversations around globalization and the lure of the local, to quote celebrated New Mexico author, Lucy R. Lippard” said Alemani. “Santa Fe has long impacted artists and writers, serving as a sanctuary, a refuge, and a source for creativity. The region’s rich cultural tapestry is woven through generations and across multiple languages and worldviews, making the International unique among exhibitions of its kind. I admire both its international scope and the sharpness that comes with its focused scale, and I am eager to work in this atmosphere of vibrant creativity that draws artists from around the world while also nurturing a thriving local art scene.”

Since its creation in 1995, the International (formerly known as the SITE SANTA FE Biennial) has served as a model for international contemporary art exhibitions and inspired countless exhibitions of its kind globally. As the anchor of SITE SANTA FE’s programming, it has served as the foundation for robust year-round programming at the institution, which is in keeping with the artist-centric approach of the SITE SANTA FE International, allowing artists to realize work they wouldn’t be able to create elsewhere.

The appointment of Alemani continues the special historical ties of the International to the Venice Biennale. Alemani will be the fourth curator to organize both the International and Venice Biennale exhibitions. The 12th International in 2025 will follow SITE SANTA FE’s role as co-presenter, along with the Portland Art Museum, of the U.S. Pavilion at the 60th Venice Biennale in 2024, with a presentation of Jeffrey Gibson, with Louis Grachos serving as one of three commissioners. During Grachos’ previous tenure at SITE SANTA FE, he also oversaw the 1997 groundbreaking presentation of Robert Colescott as the first Black artist to represent the United States in a single-artist exhibition.

ABOUT SITE SANTA FE
Guided by artists, rooted in New Mexico, SITE SANTA FE celebrates contemporary creative expression. SITE SANTA FE is an internationally recognized destination for art and artists and a community hub for creativity and learning. Founded in 1995 to establish the first international contemporary art biennial in the United States, SITE SANTA FE is a non-collecting art institution committed to supporting new developments in contemporary art, encouraging artistic exploration, and expanding traditional museum experiences through robust year-round programming. Since its
launch, SITE SANTA FE has presented 11 international biennials, more than 130 contemporary art exhibitions, and works by hundreds of emerging and established artists from around the world and right here in New Mexico. SITE SANTA FE also presents a wide range of public and educational programs that include conversations with artists and curators, performances, film screenings, concerts, hands-on workshops, and collaborations with dozens of local schools and community organizations. sitesantafe.org

ABOUT CECILIA ALEMANI
Cecilia Alemani is an Italian curator based in New York City. Since 2011, she has been the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, the public art program presented by the High Line in New York City. From 2020 to 2022, she served as artistic director of the 59th Venice Biennale, where she curated the acclaimed exhibition *The Milk of Dreams*, which was visited by over 800,000 visitors. In September 2023, she curated the exhibition *Tetsuya Ishida: My Anxious Self*, the first American retrospective of Japanese painter Tetsuya Ishida (1973–2005), at Gagosian Gallery in New York. In November 2023, Alemani organized *Making Their Mark*, the first public presentation in New York of the Shah Garg Collection, a major exhibition showcasing the works of more than 80 of the most significant women artists from the last eight decades. In January 2024, she served as the curator of *Anu Põder: Space for My Body*, the first solo exhibition presented outside Estonia of works by Anu Põder at Muzeum Susch. She also served as artistic director of the inaugural edition of Art Basel Cities: Buenos Aires in 2018 and was the curator of the Italian Pavilion at the 57th Venice Biennale in 2017. Over the past twenty years, Alemani has developed an expertise in commissioning and producing ambitious artworks for the public space and unusual sites.

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