

Sonia Solicari to be the new Director of the Geffrye Museum



The Geffrye Museum of the Home announced today that Sonia Solicari, currently Head of the Guildhall Art Gallery, has been appointed Director of the museum. She will take up the post in January 2017.

The announcement follows the news earlier this year that David Dewing will retire as Director at the end of 2016, after 25 years of service at the museum.

Dr Samir Shah, Chair of the Board of Trustees, said "I'm delighted to announce that Sonia will be joining the Geffrye as its Director. She has shown an impressive range of creativity and a commitment to innovation during her roles at the V&A and most recently at the Guildhall Art Gallery, where she spearheaded change and reinvigorated the Gallery and its programmes. Our ambitious vision to become an internationally renowned museum of the home, and our major capital project to achieve this vision, are well under way. We are confident that Sonia has the skills and passion to successfully lead the Geffrye in this next exciting chapter in its 100-year-history."

Sonia Solicari said "As the museum of the home, the Geffrye has a universal appeal. I have been a visitor to the museum for many years, and have been consistently inspired by its wonderful collections and ground-breaking exhibitions. This long acquaintance makes me especially excited to be leading the museum at this transformative moment in its history. Unlocking the Geffrye will create incredible new opportunities for the museum, and I look forward to working with the rest of the staff to inspire current and future generations of visitors."

Minister of State for Digital and Culture, Matt Hancock, said "It is fantastic news that Sonia Solicari is taking up the position of Director of the Geffrye Museum. She brings with her a wealth of experience and creativity from her time at the V&A and the Guildhall Art Gallery and I am sure she will be a great asset to the museum. I would also like to thank David Dewing for his hard work and expert leadership of the Geffrye Museum over the past 25 years and I wish him well for the future."

Notes to editors

1. For further information or to request an interview, please contact Nancy Loader on 020 7749 6026 or press@geffrye-museum.org.uk

2. Sonia Solicari is currently Head of the Guildhall Art Gallery and London's Roman Amphitheatre, where she has worked since 2010. Her focus has been delivering a major capital development of the gallery, alongside leading the exhibitions, events and public engagement programmes. Recent exhibitions include *Victorians Decoded: Art & Telegraphy*; *Unseen City: Photos by Martin Parr* and *No Colour Bar: Black British Art in Action, 1960-1990*. Previously she worked at the Victoria & Albert Museum, as Curator of Ceramics and Glass (2006-2010) and Assistant Curator of Paintings (2002-2006). Ms Solicari studied English Literature at Royal Holloway; Nineteenth Century Studies at King's College and Museum Studies at UCL. Currently she is undertaking a PhD at Birkbeck, University of London, looking at 'The Domestic Threshold in Art and Culture of the Nineteenth Century'.
3. The Geffrye Museum explores the home from 1600 to the present day. Evocative period rooms and gardens illustrate homes and home-life through the centuries, reflecting changes in society, behaviour, style and taste. The museum is set in elegant, 18th-century almshouse buildings surrounded by gardens, in East London. www.geffrye-museum.org.uk
4. The Geffrye has embarked on a major transformative capital scheme, *Unlocking the Geffrye*, to open up the museum and greatly improve visitors' experience, create new spaces for its collections and learning activities, and develop the museum for generations to come. The £15m project is due to complete in 2019.
<http://www.geffrye-museum.org.uk/aboutus/unlocking-the-geffrye/>

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