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**HEARD MUSEUM PRESENTS *JOSEF ALBERS IN MEXICO*, OPENING FEB. 1**

*Josef Albers, known as a seminal figure in color theory and modernism,  
influenced by the art and architecture of Mexico*

**PHOENIX (Jan. 9, 2019)** – The Heard Museum will present *Josef Albers in Mexico*, opening February 1, 2019. The exhibition demonstrates the influence and connectivity between the work of Josef Albers (German, 1888-1976) and the abstracted geometric vocabulary of pre-Columbian art, architecture and material culture. The Heard Museum is the third and final stop of the exhibition which opened in New York in 2017 then traveled to the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice in 2018.

*Josef Albers in Mexico* is organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, and curated by Lauren Hinkson, Associate Curator of Collections at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Drawing from the collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, *Josef Albers in Mexico* presents an opportunity to learn about a little known aspect of the artist’s practice and the influences he absorbed in his travels.

“Through his close attention to ancient architecture, Josef Albers developed new modes of seeing the modern world,” says Lauren Hinkson. “This exhibition of his celebrated paintings, along with lesser-known photographs and collages, reveals the complex and often surprising roles of place, time, and spirituality in Albers’s body of work.”

Included in the exhibition are rarely seen early paintings by Albers, including *Homage to the Square* and *Variant/Adobe* series, works on paper, and a rich selection of photographs and photocollages, many of which have never before been on view. The photographic works reveal a visual conversation Albers created in response to his frequent visits to Mexico to view archaeological sites as early as the 1930s, illustrating the nuanced relationship between the geometry and design elements of pre-Columbian monuments and the artist’s iconic abstract canvases and works on paper. Accompanying the artworks are a series of letters, personal photographs, studies and other ephemera.

Josef Albers was born in Bottrop, Germany in 1888 and was a fixture at the pioneering school of art, architecture, and design, the Bauhaus, until its forced closure by the Nazis. Albers and his wife, Anni Albers (1899–1994), an accomplished artist and textile designer, relocated to the United States in 1933, where he first accepted a position as head of the department of art at Black Mountain College outside of Asheville, North Carolina, a position he held until 1949. He then went on to be the head of the design department at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. Josef and Anni Albers traveled often to Latin America with particular interest in Mexico – visiting the country more than a dozen times from the 1930s to the 1960s. Albers’ fascination with the visual culture of Mexico left an indelible mark on his own artistic production and methodology, with sites like Teotihuacán, Chichén Itza, Monte Albán, and Mitla resonating within his paintings and stimulating new experiments in his photography.

The Heard will also produce a series of public programs co-curated by the Heard Museum's Fine Arts Curator, Erin Joyce. Topics will include explorations of color theory with some of today's leading artists, designers, and architects; the influence of Indigenous art and aesthetics on broader visual art, the role it has on informing artistic production and investigations into formalism and politics.

*Josef Albers in Mexico* opens to the public Friday, February 1, 2019 and runs through Monday, May 27, 2019 at the Heard Museum. For more information please visit [Heard.org](http://Heard.org).

### **About the Heard Museum**

Since its founding in 1929, the Heard Museum, a private non-profit organization, has grown in size and stature to become recognized internationally for the quality of its collections, world-class exhibitions, educational programming and its unmatched festivals. Dedicated to the advancement of American Indian art, the Heard successfully presents the stories of American Indian people from a first-person perspective, as well as exhibitions that showcase the beauty and vitality of traditional and contemporary art.

The Heard Museum is supported, in part, by the generosity of Heard Museum members and donors, the Arizona Commission on the Arts, City of Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture and prominent national and regional foundations and corporations. In association with the Smithsonian, the Heard Museum is part of a select group of museums, cultural, educational and arts organizations that share the Smithsonian's resources with the nation.

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