



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ESMoA TO OPEN EXPERIENCE 72: SCRIPT,
CURATED BY BERNHARD ZUENKELER
Presented in Collaboration with Legacy West Media**

Opening Reception: October 3, 2026 | 5 – 8 PM

On View: October 3, 2026 – March 27, 2027

Lawndale, CA — The Experimentally Structured Museum of Art (ESMoA) is pleased to announce the presentation of Experience 72: SCRIPT, on view from October 3, 2026 through March 27, 2027, presented in collaboration with Legacy West Media. The exhibition examines the letter not as ornament or style, but as a form that carries cultural identity, and asks what happens when that form travels across continents, transforms through generations, or refuses to be decoded at all.

The exhibition brings together artists whose practices span Los Angeles, the United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela. [Jose Reza "Prime"](#) and [David Cavazos "Big Sleeps"](#) are two founding figures of Los Angeles stylized lettering. [Diaa Allam](#) is an Egyptian-born Arabic calligrapher and muralist based in the UAE. [Luchita Hurtado](#) (1920–2020), Venezuelan-born and Los Angeles-based, is represented by works from her *Linear Language* series. [Stephanie Mercado](#), a Los Angeles-based painter and printmaker and ESMoA Artist in Residence, contributes a new commission that brings Mayan hieroglyphs into dialogue with the exhibition's central question about symbol, script, and cultural identity.

At the center of SCRIPT is a single question: what does script become when a letter stops being a letter? Calligraphy treats each letter as a deliberate act, in which the pen lifts, the angle is set, and the stroke follows a known path. Script compresses that process through repetition. Strokes merge, corners round off, and details fall away, until what remains is the trace of a habit rather than the construction of a character. The letter has not vanished. It has been abbreviated down to its minimum, and at that minimum something else becomes possible: the letter stops being a unit of language and starts being something a viewer feels before they can read it. That threshold is where SCRIPT begins. Says curator Dr. Bernhard Zuenkeler, "SCRIPT is a concentrated revelation of the power of symbols, signs, and patterns. It invites visitors on a colorful, playful journey from minimal lines to meaningful emblems, from the cylinder seals of ancient Mesopotamia to contemporary graffiti art. I hope visitors will enjoy this journey, as deep as it is fun, and discover just how concrete abstraction can become."

These artists were not brought together because they share a style. They were brought together because they share a question. Across graffiti walls, Arabic calligraphy, painted abstraction, and Mesoamerican symbol systems, each has pushed the letter to that edge, the place where a letter sheds its linguistic function and becomes image, object, and meaning all at once.

Alongside the artists' works, the exhibition presents Sumerian cylinder seals from circa 2900 to 2750 B.C., among the earliest examples of human beings encoding identity into a surface. They are not displayed as historical curiosities. They are the foundation of SCRIPT. Long before writing systems were standardized, human beings used marks, signs, and symbols to express what language alone could not hold: power, faith, protection, grief, and identity. A symbol does not need to be read to be understood. It needs to be felt.

Throughout its run, Experience 72: SCRIPT will be accompanied by free public programs, artist talks, and participatory activities that invite audiences to explore the relationship between writing, symbol, and cultural identity.

For more information, visit www.esmoa.org or contact ESMoA at info@esmoa.org.

Featured Artists:

David Cavazos "Big Sleeps," Diaa Allam, Jose Reza "Prime," Luchita Hurtado, and Stephanie Mercado

Related Public Programs:

Opening Reception and Artist Talk — Saturday, October 3, 2026, 5 – 8 PM, with the artist talk beginning at 6 PM. RSVP to rsvp@artlab21.org.

Visitor Information

Admission to ESMoA is free.

Hours: Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, 10 am – 5 pm

Address: 14929 Hawthorne Blvd., Lawndale, CA 90260

Educational programs and special events available by appointment. Contact esmoa@artlab21.org.

About ESMoA

The Experimentally Structured Museum of Art (ESMoA) is an innovative art laboratory in Lawndale, California, operated by the artlab21 Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)(3). ESMoA's mission is to ignite creative thinking in the South Bay and greater Los Angeles area through experimental exhibitions, community engagement, and arts education, offered in both English and Spanish. Always free and open to the public, ESMoA is defined as an Experimental Museum rather than a traditional one. It serves as a provocative, agile partner in the community, seeking to recalibrate conventional perceptions of art and creativity.

Visit www.esmoa.org for more information.



PRIME | Form and Color | Mixed Media | 21 x 28 in | 2023



Big Sleeps | Iron Sharpens Iron | Mixed Media | 40 x 60 in | 2024



Luchita Hurtado

Untitled (YOU), c. 1970's

Acrylic on unprimed linen

Painting Size: 66 1/4 x 53 1/2 inches (168.3 x 135.9 cm)