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**PHOTO CAPTION:** Manuel Prieto

**PHOTO CREDIT:** Courtesy of Manuel Prieto

**MANUEL PRIETO  
NAMED DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION OF THE  
WALLIS ANNENBERG CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

**Innovative Leader Formerly Served as Executive Director of  
Los Angeles Music and Art School (LAMusArt),  
a Non-Profit Arts Education Institution in  
East Los Angeles with a 77-Year History**

(Beverly Hills, CA, July 21, 2022) – Manuel “Manny” Prieto, an innovative leader and tireless champion of equitable arts education, has been named Director of Education of the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, announced Executive Director and CEO Rachel Fine. Prieto, a resident of Los Angeles who assumes the post on September 1, 2022, will oversee the strategic planning and operations of The Wallis’ highly regarded GRoW @ The Wallis education and outreach programs, which serve a broad and diverse sector of the community. He will collaborate with Fine and the organization’s artistic staff and Board of Directors to ensure the education department programs and initiatives align with the mission, vision, and core values of The Wallis.

A committed and enthusiastic advocate for the arts, Prieto most recently served as Executive Director of the Los Angeles Music and Art School (LAMusArt), a non-profit arts education institution in East Los Angeles with a 77-year history of making arts education a tangible reality for thousands of underserved youth in the community. In that role, he has worked to recontextualize and combat the often outdated standards of fine and performing arts so that a new, diverse, and more modern cohort of students can experience the enrichment that creativity offers. Prieto succeeds Mark Slavkin, The Wallis’ first Director of Education, who led the department for and retired after seven years, building a successful and admired program emulated by other institutions.

“Manny Prieto is a dedicated arts education pioneer and advocate,” says Fine. “A visionary and community-focused trailblazer, he is dedicated to ensuring arts education and outreach programs remain indispensable in our complicated and evolving world. On behalf of The Wallis’ Board of Directors and staff, we welcome Manny enthusiastically to our senior management team. Under

his strategic guidance, The Wallis will continue to prioritize its education department to serve the Beverly Hills and Los Angeles communities with forward-thinking educational programs that reflect the rich cultural diversity and needs of our great cities.”

“I am tremendously excited to join The Wallis as Director of Education,” says Prieto. “The Wallis is unwavering in its commitment to providing opportunities for audiences of all abilities, ages, and interests so they never stop learning and engaging in the performing arts - a guiding tenet of my life’s work thus far. The arts are where we create community, heal our divides, discover and embrace our visions, voices, and power to be creative agents of change, and foster a safe space to thrive. In my new capacity with The Wallis, I look forward to applying my expertise and belief in the power of the arts to facilitate an environment that encourages the community to think like artists and experience collective success as creative people.”

### **About Manny Prieto**

During Prieto’s eight-year tenure with LAMusArt, he helped make the arts -- and their benefits -- a day-to-day experience for young students in East Los Angeles. He effectively strengthened the organization’s infrastructure by broadening board involvement, expanding program offerings and scholarship opportunities, upgrading working conditions and renovating work spaces, adopting a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy, doubling the organization’s budget to over \$1 million, creating an organization-wide curriculum framework, and implementing community building among staff and faculty. Prieto is proud of the organization's mission and is also proud to reinvest in the East LA community as a means to bring forth its vibrant creative potential. When Prieto took the position of Executive Director, at a mere 25 years old, he had a vision for LAMusArt as a hub for accessible and safe collaboration, expression, and instruction so that students could see viable examples of what the arts can bring to their lives. His vision didn't come without risks - he expanded free programming, pushed students toward challenging repertoire, and invited audience members to explore art forms unfamiliar to them. During his tenure, the community experienced considerable growth and transformation.

Prior to joining LAMusArt, Prieto worked in the education department at Center Theatre Group (CTG) coordinating accessibility programs at the Ahmanson Theatre, Mark Taper Forum and Kirk Douglas Theatre and implemented bilingual curriculum for their education department initiative “The Shop: Theatre In Your Everyday Life.” He has worked as an educator at CTG and P.S. Arts, among other Los Angeles institutions, leading discourse on pedagogical strategy, artistic curricula, and theatrical design. As a designer, Prieto has worked on productions for E! Network, CTG, Pasadena Playhouse, Cornerstone Theatre, El Teatro Campesino, 24<sup>th</sup> Street Theater, and LATC.

Prieto earned a B.F.A. from the University of Southern California in Theater Design and a M.A. in Nonprofit Management from Antioch University. He was co-chair of the Americans for the Arts Emerging Leaders Council, a member of the steering committee of the Latinx Theatre Alliance-LA and a former LACDAC internship program participant and peer mentor. He brings his background and perspective as a student of design and an arts educator to his role as a leader and works for the communities he himself recognizes from childhood - communities with abundant artistic potential and very few resources. He has remained an authentic and steadfast captain through many evolutions and challenges in the arts landscape, never losing sight of a greater sense of purpose.

### **About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts:**

The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is a dynamic cultural hub and community resource where local, national and international artists share their artistry with ever-expanding audiences. The campus, located in the heart of Beverly Hills, CA, is committed to robust and distinctive presentations and education programs curated with both creativity and social impact in mind. Distinguished by its eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its location in the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis has produced and presented more than 350 theater, dance, music, film, cabaret, conversation, and family entertainment programs since its doors opened in October 2013. Hailed as “au courant” (*LaLa Magazine*), The Wallis was lauded by *Culture Vulture*, which proclaims, “If you love expecting the unexpected in the performing arts, you have to love The Wallis.” Its programming has been nominated for 79 Ovation Awards and nine L.A. Drama Critic's Circle Awards. The campus itself, a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot facility, celebrating the classic and the modern, has garnered six architectural awards. Designed by acclaimed architect Zoltan E. Pali (SPF:architects), the restored building features the original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places), which serves as the theater's dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and includes the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater; the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater; an inviting open-air plaza for family, community and other performances; and GRoW @ The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education, where learning opportunities for all ages and backgrounds abound. Together, these elements embrace the city's history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike. The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is led by Chairman of the Board Michael Nemeroff and Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer Rachel Fine.

For more information about The Wallis, please visit: [TheWallis.org](http://TheWallis.org).

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