

MAY 1, 2023

The Music Center Names Robert Gonzalez as New Director of Gloria Molina Grand Park

Outgoing Park Director Julia Diamond Transitions to New Leadership Role for The Music Center as Vice President, TMC Arts

Photos Available

LOS ANGELES (May 1, 2023) -- The Music Center, L.A.'s performing arts center, today announced that longtime Music Center staff member, Robert Gonzalez, has been named as the new director of Gloria Molina Grand Park, which is located in the heart of Downtown L.A.'s cultural and civic center. In his new role, Gonzalez will manage a \$10 million budget, supervise The Music Center's park team, oversee programming, guide the development of new revenue strategies and continue to advance the park's trajectory to serve all who live and visit Los Angeles County. Powered by The Music Center on behalf of the county, the 12-acre urban greenspace recently celebrated its 10th anniversary as Los Angeles' central gathering space and is home to free year-round public arts and culture programming.

"Robert Gonzalez has been a vital contributor for more than a decade collectively to Gloria Molina Grand Park, to The Music Center and to Los Angeles. He has the keen ability to dive deep into complex programs and events that require strategic guidance and to build partnerships, not only with numerous County organizations that support the work of the park, but also with the many community members and stakeholders the park serves," said Rachel S. Moore, president and CEO of The Music Center. "Join me in congratulating Robert and the entire Gloria Molina Grand Park team as they continue the park's legacy as the *park for everyone!*"

Gonzalez began his career at The Music Center in 2007 in the Guest Services Department as a tour guide for The Music Center's Walt Disney Concert Hall and became the quintessential guide for distinguished guests. He transitioned into a supervisory role to help oversee daily tour operations and, thereafter, became an administrative assistant in various departments within The Music Center. In 2012, Gonzalez accepted an offer to work as a council aide and deputy for Los Angeles Councilmember Bernard C. Parks of Council District 8 but returned to The Music Center in 2016 to serve as operations manager of the formerly named Grand Park. In that role, his priority became the safety and security of all Angelenos and visitors who attend the park's year-round free programming. He oversaw the park's maintenance by working closely with vendors, internal Music Center departments and county departments as well as community organizers and organizations who use the park as the premier location to host rallies and exercise their First Amendment rights. In 2022, Gonzalez and then park director Julia Diamond elevated the park's stature by facilitating a roundtable discussion at The Music Center campus with the Central Park Conservancy's Institute for Urban Parks national programs team. This collaboration resulted in a vast network of urban parks lauding Gloria Molina Grand Park as a role model of an urban park, operated by a performing arts center, that rightfully serves its surrounding communities.

Highly regarded among his peers who serve in leadership roles for urban parks nationwide, Gonzalez is currently a fellow in the BIPOC Executive Leadership in the Arts Program, which supports efforts to transform arts and cultural institutions to become more inclusive, accessible and reflective of the communities they serve. He has worked for such organizations as the American Federation of Musicians and Bank of America. He holds an Associate of Arts degree in Cinematic Arts from Los Angeles City College.

"As an Angeleno who grew up in South L.A., I am honored to take the helm of Gloria Molina Grand Park and lead the dedicated park team to a new era filled with unique year-round experiences for all residents and visitors of Los Angeles County," said Gonzalez. "My tenure at The Music Center has given me the vast experience to be a leader of Downtown L.A.'s beautiful green oasis. Nothing makes me prouder than to be an integral part of the park that I hold close to my heart, and I look forward to continuing Gloria Molina Grand Park's positive impact as a central gathering destination where everyone is welcome."

Gonzalez's naming falls on the heels of a planned leadership transition within The Music Center for outgoing Gloria Molina Grand Park Director Julia Diamond, who has moved into a new role as vice president of TMC Arts, The Music

Center's programming division. TMC Arts was created in 2018 to support The Music Center's vision to deepen the cultural lives of all Angelenos by championing the diverse voices and communities of Los Angeles with relevant and accessible programming. Diamond will bring her strong management skills, programming experience and organizational expertise to the rapidly growing programming division as it introduces new initiatives and experiences; she will focus specifically on building new operational systems to support that growth. Both Diamond and Gonzalez will report to Josephine Ramirez, executive vice president of TMC Arts.

Diamond, who joined The Music Center as the founding director of programming for the formerly named Grand Park soon after the park's opening in 2012, more recently served as both interim director and then director of the park from 2017 to the present. In that capacity, she oversaw all aspects of the park's operations, facility management, programming and engagement.

"We are delighted to name Julia Diamond to vice president of TMC Arts. Her demonstrated leadership both as director of the park and as an active member of The Music Center's Leadership Team, along with her keen insight into our organization, position her well for success," said Ramirez. "I am excited about what both Robert and Julia will bring to their new roles as Gloria Molina Grand Park and TMC Arts continue to evolve to meet the needs of our highly diverse county."

During her tenure at the park, Diamond launched the year-round free events and collaborative initiatives that have established Gloria Molina Grand Park as a premier outdoor public gathering and cultural space including multiple music series, contemporary performing and visual art commissions, health and wellness classes, presentations representing L.A.'s diverse cultural and artistic communities and such tentpole experiences as *Grand Park's 4th of July Block Party*, *Grand Park's Downtown Día de los Muertos* and *Grand Park's NYELA*. She produced more than 2,000 public events featuring more than 1,250 community partners and artists, which collectively reached audiences numbering in the millions. Under her leadership, the park became a sought-out venue for lease events, which made it possible for The Music Center to significantly increase its presentations of free, accessible park programs. Furthermore, Diamond helped establish Gloria Molina Grand Park in the U.S. as a national model for urban public space that serves and supports community primarily through arts and culture experiences built in partnership with local organizations and artists.

Prior to joining The Music Center, Diamond worked as an arts producer, serving as managing director of the Los Angeles Dance Project and artistic planning coordinator for LA Opera. Two highlights of her tenure at LA Opera were her role as the principal liaison for the company's landmark production of Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, directed and designed by German painter and theatre artist Achim Freyer and his Berlin-based team; and her service on the Ring Festival L.A. Taskforce, the producing group for LA Opera's citywide *RING Festival LA 2010*. Diamond's career began in stage management in the United States, France and Germany in which she oversaw productions in both theatre and opera. She specialized in contemporary works of theatre and opera, bringing them to international festivals in cities such as Washington D.C., Berlin and Hong Kong.

Diamond currently serves as a member of the board of directors of both California Presenters and the Advisory Committee for the Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative of the Los Angeles County Arts Commission. She formerly served on the board of directors of Dance Resource Center of Greater Los Angeles and as a member of the Ford Theatres Connectors Council and the Arts for LA Programming Advisory Council. She has served as a grants panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs and the Pasadena Arts Council.

Diamond holds a Bachelor of Arts from Georgetown University and a Master of Arts in Arts Administration from Columbia University. She is an alumna of The Southern California Leadership Network's Leadership L.A. program and the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles' Rautenberg New Leaders Project.

For more information about Gloria Molina Grand Park, visit grandparkla.org

For more information about The Music Center, visit musiccenter.org

About The Music Center

The Music Center convenes artists, communities and ideas with the goal of deepening the cultural lives of every resident in Los Angeles County. The \$70 million non-profit performing arts organization has two divisions: TMC Arts and TMC Ops. TMC Arts, The Music Center's programming engine, provides year-round programming inside The Music Center's four theatres, on Jerry Moss Plaza, outside at Gloria Molina Grand Park--a 12-acre adjacent green space--in

schools and other locations all over Los Angeles County and on a digital platform called *The Music Center Offstage*. TMC Arts presents world-class dance with *Gloria Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center*, free and low-cost public concerts and events, as well as live and digital K-12 arts education programs, workshops, performances, interactive experiences and special events. TMC Ops manages the theatres, the Plaza and Gloria Molina Grand Park, which comprise \$2 billion in county assets, on behalf of the County of Los Angeles. The Music Center is also home to four renowned resident companies--Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles Master Chorale, LA Opera and LA Phil. For more information, visit musiccenter.org. Follow The Music Center on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @MusicCenterLA.

About Gloria Molina Grand Park

A vibrant outdoor gathering place, Gloria Molina Grand Park is a beautiful public park for the entire community in Los Angeles County. With expansive green space for gatherings large and small, Gloria Molina Grand Park celebrates the county's cultural vitality and is host to community events, cultural experiences, holiday celebrations and many other activities that engage and attract visitors from all communities. The 12-acre Gloria Molina Grand Park, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2022, stretches from The Music Center on the west to City Hall on the east and is easily accessible by Metro via the B/D (formerly Red/Purple) line to the Civic Center/Grand Park station. The park was named one of American Planning Association's 10 "Great Public Spaces" in the U.S. for 2013. Working closely with the county, The Music Center is responsible for all operations and programming for the park. For more information, visit grandparkla.org. Follow Gloria Molina Grand Park on Instagram, Twitter, Twitch, TikTok, Spotify and Mixcloud (@grandpark_la) as well as YouTube and Facebook (@grandparkLosAngeles).

###

© Music Center. All Rights Reserved.