

Gary Morgan named Michigan State University Museum Director

Contact: Hiram E. Fitzgerald, University Outreach and Engagement: (517) 353-8977, fitzger9@msu.edu; Carla Hills, University Outreach and Engagement: (517) 355-5059, hillsc@msu.edu; Lora Helou, MSU Museum: (517) 432-3357, helou@msu.edu; Kristen Parker, University Relations: (517) 353-8942, Kristen.Parker@ur.msu.edu

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For Immediate Release

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Gary John Morgan has been appointed as Michigan State University Museum director, effective September 1, where he will oversee Michigan's natural history and culture museum and the state's first Smithsonian Institution affiliate.

Morgan, a native of Australia, has more than 25 years of experience in museum management, research and wildlife conservation. He previously served as executive director of the Western Australian Museum in Perth, including the Western Australian Maritime Museum, Fremantle History Museum and other public sites across that state. He was director of collections and research at Te Papa Museum of New Zealand, associate director of the Australian Museum in Sydney, and has worked as a national parks and wildlife manager and wilderness conservation officer. Morgan holds a Ph.D. in zoology from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, and at one time headed the Department of Aquatic Invertebrates at the Western Australia Museum, and directed marine biology programs at the Museum of Victoria.

Morgan has extensive international experience, including recent work as a heritage advisor and project manager for the Kungoni Centre of Culture and Art in Mua, Malawi, Africa, and as a strategic planner for the Sharjah Museums Department in the United Arab Emirates. He is currently wrapping up his work as a senior advisor to some new museum projects in the Arabian Gulf region.

"I have a great respect for what American museums have been achieving in innovative advances on public learning," says Morgan. "Michigan State University Museum can be right at the center of that, with its range of disciplines, its emphasis on scholarship and diverse education programs, and its role within and outside of the university."

Morgan will arrive on campus this fall after concluding an international museum development project. He succeeds C. Kurt Dewhurst, who led the museum for 27 years and is taking on a new role in University Outreach and Engagement as director of



UNIVERSITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

Michigan State University
Kellogg Center, Garden Level
East Lansing, MI
48824-1022

517/353-8977
fax: 517/432-9541

email: outreach@msu.edu
<http://outreach.msu.edu>

arts and cultural initiatives. Dewhurst will maintain curatorial duties in folklife and cultural heritage at the museum, as well as teach in the Museum Studies Program in the College of Arts and Letters. He is a professor of English and a University Outreach and Engagement Campus Senior Fellow. Julie A. Avery, MSU Museum curator of rural life, and a long-time administrator, will serve as acting director from July 1 until September 1.

“Gary has broad, extensive experience with museums in Australia, the Middle East, and Africa, and his interdisciplinary research provides an excellent fit with the diverse interests of our faculty. We look forward to introducing Dr. Morgan to the university community, as well as our Museum collaborators and supporters regionally, nationally, and internationally,” said Hiram E. Fitzgerald, Associate Provost for University Outreach and Engagement.

The MSU Museum, accredited by the American Association of Museums, collects, preserves, studies and interprets cultural artifacts and natural history specimens, with collections numbering more than 1 million in four buildings on the MSU campus. Founded in 1857, the MSU Museum is committed to education, exhibitions, research and the building and stewardship of collections that focus on Michigan and its relationship to the Great Lakes and the world beyond.

The MSU Museum has faculty, curators, and specialists who develop research, exhibitions, and educational programs in partnership with the colleges of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Arts and Letters, Natural Science and Social Science, as well as programming and partnerships with the Residential College in Arts and Humanities, International Studies and Programs, and other units across Michigan State University. The museum is administered through MSU’s Office of the Provost for University Outreach and Engagement.

Learn more at <http://museum.msu.edu>.

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***Note to Media: Dr. Morgan is available to speak to journalists, noting that there is a 12-hour time difference between East Lansing and Western Australia. Please contact Lora Helou at the MSU Museum for Dr. Morgan’s email and phone number.

The Office of the Associate Provost for University Outreach and Engagement fosters MSU’s land grant mission by connecting university knowledge with community knowledge in mutually beneficial ways. UOE provides resources to assist academic departments, centers and institutes, and MSU-Extension on priority issues of concern to society by encouraging, supporting, and collaborating with MSU faculty and academic staff to generate, apply, transmit, and preserve knowledge.