

# Lewis de Soto



**Lewis deSoto**, an artist of Cahuilla ancestry, is internationally recognized for his photographs, installations, sculpture and public art that engage cosmological questions, notions of self, and cultural mythologies. Educated at UC Riverside and Claremont Graduate University, he taught at Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles, Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle, served as the Director of Graduate Studies at California College of the Arts, and is currently a professor of Art at San Francisco State University.

deSoto has been exhibiting his art professionally for over 30 years and his artworks can be found in museum collections around the country, most notably the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. In November 2015, his *Empire* series opened at Cal State University San Bernardino with an accompanying publication, and currently selections of this body of work can be seen at the Palm Springs Art Museum. Last month, deSoto opened a solo show at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, and in July his work will be included in the 2016 SITE Santa Fe Biennial.

Influenced by anthropology, sociology, history, religion, literature and music, deSoto is recognized for his conceptual artwork, as well as his culturally-specific and site-specific installations that transform spaces through light, audio and video. In talking about *Tahquitz*, a 2012 site-specific collaboration with Erin Neff at UCR's Culver Center for the Arts he stated, "I'm a big believer in the fact that culture is always hybridizing and building on existing forms, combining others. The idea that a western form of singing could harmonize with an ancient indigenous song is very interesting to me. We often think of these cultures being at odds, but in fact there are many ways in which these cultures have created new ones." This statement encapsulates a personal philosophy that emerges within a number of deSoto's artworks.

**Please also visit** Lewis deSoto's site-specific installation, *Carlota*, at Joshua Tree National Park's Oasis Visitor Center in 29 Palms.

