



"For sheer impact, my favorite piece at The Neon Museum has to be the Hard Rock Cafe guitar," says Aaron Berger. "Standing at over 80 feet tall, this piece towers over the honeydew."

LIGHTING THE WAY

As the new executive director of The Neon Museum (neonmuseum.org), Aaron Berger is bringing his bright ideas to the Las Vegas community. Listen in.

BY ALLISON MITCHELL

Congratulations on your new role at The Neon Museum. What excites you most about leading the museum into its next era? Las Vegas is like no other city in the world, so our programs should be just as innovative and exciting as the city itself. Right now, I'm interviewing comedians to help guide historic tours of vintage Las Vegas. How great is that? It's also important to remember that our audiences are diverse; we have visitors coming from Summerlin to Spain, and our programs need to appeal to everyone. Whether you want to take a deep dive into Las Vegas' rich history or simply want that one-in-a-million selfie in front of the Stardust sign, there's no place like The Neon Museum!

What do you hope to bring to The Neon Museum during your tenure? An appreciation of our history from different perspectives. I hope our visitors will gain a better understanding of the Black experience, as well as the Latin and the LGBT communities when they visit. There are so many

untold stories in Las Vegas, and I hope we can amplify them. I also hope to launch a fabrication studio where visitors can see neon being made and, in time, offer classes to let people begin to bend and make small signs or large artistic pieces of their own.

In your opinion, what's trending in the art world? Many artists are using their platforms to speak about social justice, and I love it. Museums should be conversation-starters, and I welcome artists who have a specific point of view and want to share it. Whether we agree with it or not, it is our job as the viewer to evaluate how well they communicate.

If I didn't work in the arts, I would... shrivel up and die prematurely. This is truly my dream job. I am fortunate enough to work in a field that provides fun and educational opportunities for people every day. We attract both families and rock stars—and that's pretty darn cool.