

# Michele Lorraine Koons

(303) 370-6457

Denver Museum of Nature & Science  
Department of Anthropology  
2001 Colorado Blvd. Denver, CO 80205

[Michele.Koons@dmns.org](mailto:Michele.Koons@dmns.org)

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## CURRENT POSITIONS

2013-present Curator of Archaeology, Denver Museum of Nature & Science  
2014-present Lecturer, University of Colorado, Denver

## PAST POSITIONS

2014 Adjunct Faculty, University of Denver  
2012- 2013 Post-Doctoral Research Fellow in Anthropology, Denver Museum of Nature & Science

## EDUCATION

2012 Ph.D. Harvard University (Anthropology)  
2006 M.A. University of Denver (Anthropology)  
2001 B.A. University of Pittsburgh (Anthropology)

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Archaeology of Complex Societies, Andean Archaeology, Southwest Archaeology, Desert Archaeology, Landscape Archaeology, Human-Environmental Dynamics, Geophysical Archaeology, Ceramic Analysis and Petrography, Radiocarbon Dating, GIS, Public Archaeology, Museum Studies

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EXPERIENCE

2019-present Pañamarca Landscapes Archaeological Project, Nepeña Valley, Peru (Co-Director)  
2016-present Magic Mountain Community Archaeology Project, Golden, Colorado (Co-Director)  
2014-present Reserve Area Archaeological Project, New Mexico (Co-Director)  
2013 Peru Human Eco-Dynamics Project Sub-Project: Past Land Management Strategies and Environmental Responses in the Chicama Valley, Peru (Co-Director)  
2009-2012 Proyecto Arqueológico Licapa II, Chicama Valley, Peru (Director)  
2010-2011 Chengdu Plain Archaeological Survey, Pixian, China (Survey Supervisor)  
2007-2009 Proyecto Arqueológico San Jose de Moro, Jequetepeque Valley, Peru  
2006-2009 Magdalena de Cao Viejo Archaeological Project, Chicama Valley, Peru  
2007-2009 Harvard Yard Archaeological Project, Cambridge, Massachusetts  
2004-2006 Proyecto Arqueológico Pumapunku Akapana, Tiwanaku, Bolivia  
2002-2003 LTA, Inc. (CRM Company) Laramie, Wyoming, Crew Chief- Multiple Excavation and Survey projects throughout Wyoming, Montana, Nebraska and Idaho  
2000 Museo San Miguel de Azapa- Multiple projects in the Azapa Valley, Chile  
2000 Parker Farm and Rogers Farm Archaeological Project, University of Pittsburgh, Field School, Ithaca, New York

## MUSEUM EXHIBITS

Ongoing Curator, Egyptian Mummies, permanent exhibit at DMNS—Updated in 2017  
2017-2018 Curator, Dead Sea Scrolls, temporary exhibit  
2015-2017 Curator, Mummies: Secrets from the Tombs, temporary exhibit  
2012-2014 Curator, Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed, temporary exhibit

## OTHER MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

2012 Museum of Science- Volunteer Interpreter- Human Body Connection, Boston, MA  
2010-2012 Harvard University Peabody Museum- Research Assistant- Collections and Archives, Cambridge, MA  
2002-2005 Museo de las Americas- Educator, Workshop Developer, Docent, Denver, CO

2001 College of Physicians of Philadelphia, Mütter Museum- Intern, Philadelphia, PA  
2000 Museo Arqueológico de San Miguel de Azapa- Intern, Student, Arica, Chile

## HONORS AND AWARDS

2020 Colorado State Archaeologist's Stephen H. Hart Award for the Magic Mountain Community Archaeology Project  
2019 Josephine H. Miles History Award from History Colorado for the Magic Mountain Community Archaeology Project  
2019 Society for American Archaeology Award for Excellence in Public Education for the Magic Mountain Community Archaeology Project  
2012 Rachel Carson Center and the Global Diversity Foundation Fellowship  
2010 Dumbarton Oaks Short-Term Pre-Doctoral Residency Fellowship  
2009, 2008 (2x) Harvard University Certificate of Distinction in Teaching

## GRANTS

2018 Colorado State Historical Fund Grant for Magic Mountain Community Archaeology Project (\$137K)  
2017 National Endowment for the Humanities Grant to move Archaeology Collection at DMNS (\$300K)  
2017 DMNS Decision Package Granted for Excavation and Analysis for Magic Mountain Archaeological Project, Golden, CO (\$60K)  
2016, 2014 (2x) DMNS KT Challenge Grant (\$10K total)  
2012, 2010 (2x) Harvard University Peabody Museum Hemenway Award (\$14K total)  
2011-2012 Harvard GSAS Dissertation Completion Fellowship  
2010 National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant (\$20K)  
2010 National Geographic Society Committee for Research and Exploration Grant (\$25K)  
2009 David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies Research Grant (\$5K)  
2009 Harvard University Graduate Society Merit Fellowship (\$12K)  
2009 Geological Society of America Graduate Student Research Grant (\$3K)

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### University of Colorado, Denver

2015-present Museum Anthropology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Spring 2015-2018

### University of Denver

2014 Environmental Archaeology: Humans in the Natural World, Winter 2014  
2005-2006 Teaching Assistant (TA) for University of Denver GPR Class  
2005 TA for Field Methods course in Picket Wire Canyon, CO  
2003-2005 TA for Global Perspectives

### Harvard University

2011 Teaching Fellow (TF) for Digging the Glyphs: Adventures in Decipherment  
2009 TF for Harvard Yard Archaeology; The Conquistadors; Anthropology and the Uses of History  
2008 TF for Introduction to Archaeology; Harvard Yard Archaeology Laboratory Class  
2007, 2009 TF for Harvard Archaeological Field School at San Jose de Moro, Chepén, Peru

## RESEARCH POSITIONS

2005-2006 University of Arkansas- Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies (CAST) Technical Assistant- SERDP Contract- Visualization of GPR data from Pueblo Escondido, NM  
2005-2006 University of Pennsylvania- Visiting Scholar- 3D Visualization of GPR data from Tiwanaku, Bolivia

## PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

### Publications in Refereed Edited Volumes and Journals

- 2021 **KOONS, M.** and C. ARBUCKLE MACLEOD, eds. *The Egyptian Mummies and Coffins of the Denver Museum of Nature & Science*. University Press of Colorado
- 2019 VELLA, M.-A., E. ERNENWEIN, J.W. JANUSEK, **M.KOONS**, J. THIESSON, C. SANCHEZ, R. GUERIN, and C. CAMERLYNCK New insights into prehispanic urban organization of Tiwanaku (La Paz, Bolivia): Cross-combined approach of photogrammetry, magnetic surveys and previous archaeological excavations. *Journal of Archaeological Research: Reports* (23) 464-477
- 2016 CARAMANICA, A. and **KOONS, M.** Living on the Edge: Pre-Columbian Habitation of the Desert Periphery of the Chicama Valley, Peru. In *The Archaeology of Human-Environmental Interactions: Strategies for Investigating Anthropogenic Landscapes, Dynamic Environments, and Climate Change in the Human Past* pp. 141-165. Edited by Daniel A. Contreras. Routledge, New York
- 2015 **KOONS, M.** Moche Socio-Political Dynamics and the Role of Licapa II, Chicama Valley, Peru. *Latin American Antiquity* 26(4): 473-492
- 2015 **KOONS, M.** External versus Internal: An Examination of Moche Politics through Similarities and Differences in Ceramic Style. In Proceedings from the Andean Ceramic Characterization Session from the 2014 SAA Annual Meeting in Austin, TX, edited by I. DRUC, pp. 57-82. Blue Mounds, WI: Deep University Press.
- 2015 **KOONS, M.** and S. NASH Preliminary Results of AMS Radiocarbon Dating of Sandals from Tularosa Cave, NM. In Collected Papers from the 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial Mogollon Archaeology Conference, edited by L.C. LUDEMAN, pp. 216-231. Las Cruces, NM: Friends of Mogollon Archaeology.
- 2015 NASH, S. and **M. KOONS** The Reserve Area Archaeological Project. In Collected Papers from the 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial Mogollon Archaeology Conference, edited by L.C. LUDEMAN, pp. 233-248. Las Cruces, NM: Friends of Mogollon Archaeology.
- 2014 **KOONS, M.** and B. ALEX Reevaluating Moche Chronology through Bayesian Methods. *Radiocarbon* 56(3): 1039-1055.
- 2013 **KOONS, M.** Reexamining Tiwanaku's Urban Renewal through Ground-Penetrating Radar and Excavation: The Results of Three Field Seasons. In *Advances in Titicaca Basin Archaeology - 2*, edited by A. VRANICH, pp. 147-165. Los Angeles, CA: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, UCLA
- 2012 QUILTER, J. and **M. KOONS** The Fall of the Moche: A Critique of Claims for the South America's First State. *Latin American Antiquity* 23(2): 127-143
- 2012 QUILTER, J., R. FRANCO, C. GALVEZ, W. DOONAN, C. GAITHER, J. JIMENEZ, H. STARRATT, and **M. KOONS** The well and the Huaca: Ceremony, Chronology and Culture Change at Huaca Cao Viejo, Chicama Valley, Peru. *Andean Past* 10: 101-131
- 2007 ERNENWEIN, E. and **M. KOONS** Subsurface Imaging at Tiwanaku. University of Arkansas, Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies, Research Paper No. 37
- In Press **KOONS, M.** and J. D'ALPIOM GUEDES Quality vs. Quantity: Changes in Ceramic Production and Burial Practices in Neolithic China. In *Renewing the Search for Structure: New Frameworks and Techniques in the Instrumental Analysis of Archaeological Pottery*, edited by A. GREENE and C. HARTLEY. London: Equinox Publishing (January 2020)
- In Review **KOONS, M.**, M. MITCHELL, M. HERNANDEZ-BRAVO, T. HITTE, J. MOSS LOGAN and E. BAXTER. The Magic Mountain Community Archaeology Project. *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage*
- In Review **KOONS, M.** Mountains, Moieties, Water and Time: Testing the Applicability of Highland Andean Concepts to Moche Archaeology.

### Popular Publications

- 2019 **KOONS, M.** "More than Just Pieces" in *Dig into History: The Moche of Peru*. Editor, Rosalie Baker. pp 14-16
- 2018 **KOONS, M.** Dig into Science. *Denver Museum of Nature & Science Catalyst Magazine*.

Summer 2018

- 2017 **KOONS, M** Public “digs” Magic Mountain archaeological project. *Historically Jeffco* 38:8-10
- 2017 **KOONS, M.** and M. MITCHELL Magic Mountain Archaeological Project. *Newsletter of the Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologist* 39(3)1, 5-6
- 2017 **KOONS, M.** and M. MITCHELL Feature Article: Magic Mountain Archaeological Project. *The Calumet*. Newsletter of the Indian Peaks Chapter of the Colorado Archaeological Society. pp 11-14. November, 2017
- 2017 **KOONS, M.** The Mystery of Magic Mountain. *Denver Museum of Nature & Science Catalyst Magazine*. Summer 2017
- 2016 **KOONS, M.** Advanced Technologies Reveal New Storylines. *Denver Museum of Nature & Science Catalyst Magazine*. Winter 2016
- 2015 **KOONS, M.** Tiwanaku Pottery. *Denver Museum of Nature & Science Catalyst Magazine*. Winter 2015
- 2014 GARNEAU, N. and **M. KOONS** The Making of Maya Beer. *Denver Museum of Nature & Science Catalyst Magazine*. August/ September 2014
- 2014 **KOONS, M.** The Collapse of the Maya. *Denver Museum of Nature & Science Catalyst Magazine*. February/ March 2014
- 2014 **KOONS, M.** and S. RICHARDS Veracruz Ball Court Markers. *Denver Museum of Nature & Science Catalyst Magazine*. February/ March 2014
- 2012 **KOONS, M.** The Moche of Ancient Peru. *Denver Museum of Nature & Science Catalyst Magazine*. December 2012/ January 2013

### Conference Papers

- 2019 **KOONS, M.**, H. IKEHARA, L. TREVER and M. PFEIFFER Pañamarca Landscapes: Exploring the Moche Occupation and Beyond in the Lower Nepeña Valley, Peru. Paper presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Colloquium. Denver, CO
- 2019 **KOONS, M.** and M. MITCHELL Magic Mountain Community Archaeology Project. Paper presented at the 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Albuquerque, NM
- 2018 MITCHELL, M., **M. KOONS**, and R. MANDEL A Progress Report on Early Ceramic Period Research at the Magic Mountain Site. Paper presented at the Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists Annual Meeting. Longmont, CO
- 2017 **KOONS, M.** Magic Mountain Revisited. Paper presented at the Colorado Archaeological Society Annual Meeting. Denver, CO
- 2017 **KOONS, M.** and M. MITCHELL Magic Mountain Archaeological Project. Paper presented at the Rocky Mountain Anthropological Conference. Canmore, Alberta, Canada
- 2017 **KOONS, M.** Climate Change and Moche Politics: A View from the Northern Chicama Valley, Peru. Paper presented at the 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Vancouver, Canada
- 2017 **KOONS, M.** and M. MITCHELL Magic Mountain 3.0. Paper presented at the Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists Annual Meeting. Grand Junction, CO
- 2016 **KOONS, M.**, D. HUNTLEY, and S. NASH The Reserve Area Archaeological Project 2015-16. Paper presented at the 19<sup>th</sup> Biennial Mogollon Archaeology Conference (2016). Las Vegas, NV
- 2015 **KOONS, M.** Musings on Moche Architecture and Sacred Landscapes. Paper presented at the 1<sup>st</sup> annual Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Colloquium. Denver, CO
- 2015 **KOONS, M.**, L. TREVER, and B. ALEX Southern Moche Politics Reevaluated: The Reconciliation of Relative (ceramic chronologies) and Absolute (radiocarbon) Dates. Paper presented at the 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. San Francisco, CA
- 2015 NASH, S., and **M. KOONS** The Pine Lawn-Reserve Area Archaeological Project: Results and Prospects. Paper presented at the 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. San Francisco, CA
- 2014 **KOONS, M.** Preliminary Results from AMS Dating of Sandals from Tularosa Cave, New

- Mexico. Paper presented at the 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial Mogollon Archaeology Conference. Las Cruces, NM, October, 2014
- 2014 **KOONS, M.** Internal vs. External: An Examination of Moche Politics through Similarities and Differences in Ceramic Style. Paper presented at the 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Austin, TX
- 2014 CARAMANICA, A. and **M. KOONS** Living on the Edge: Precolumbian Habitation of the Desert Periphery of the Chicama Valley, Peru. Paper presented at the 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Austin, TX
- 2013 **KOONS, M.** Reconceptualizing Moche Geopolitical Organization: The Role of Licapa II in the Chicama Valley, Peru. Paper presented at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Anthropological Association of America. Chicago, IL
- 2011 **KOONS, M.** Moche in the Middle Horizon: Licapa II and the (Late?) Moche Phenomenon. Paper presented for Moche Roundtable on Chronology, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC
- 2011 **KOONS, M.** Examining Moche Sociopolitical Organization in the Chicama Valley, Peru: A View from Licapa II. Paper presented at the 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Sacramento, CA
- 2009 **KOONS, M.** Exploring Harvard's Past: Ground Penetrating Radar and the History of the Use of Harvard Yard. Paper presented at the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Northeastern Section, Geological Society of America Meeting. Portland, ME
- 2009 **KOONS, M.** Ceramic Petrography and Moche Ceramics. Paper presented for VanChiVard Meeting. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA
- 2008 **KOONS, M.** and E. ERNENWEIN Tiwanaku: Geophysical Archaeology at World Heritage Sites. Paper presented at 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Vancouver, Canada
- 2007 ERNENWEIN, E., **M. KOONS** Subsurface imaging at Tiwanaku. Paper presented at Dumbarton Oaks Conference on Tiwanaku. Washington, DC, December, 2007
- 2006 **KOONS M.** and E. ERNENWEIN, K. LOWE Results and Interpretations of the Technological Research at Tiwanaku, Bolivia. Paper presented at 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. San Juan, PR
- 2006 **KOONS, M.** Integrating Ground-Penetrating Radar and Excavations at Tiwanaku, Bolivia. Paper presented at UCLA Cotsen Institute conference on Tiwanaku. Los Angeles, CA
- 2005 **KOONS, M.** Ground Penetrating Radar: Large Scale Spatial Analysis of Tiwanaku's Monumental Core. Paper presented at the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Salt Lake City, UT

### Conference Posters

- 2019 CARLSON, S., **M. KOONS**, S. NASH, D. ALHAMBRA, J. PHEGLEY and M. BECHHOEFER Enhancing Preservation and Access at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science. Poster presented at the 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Albuquerque, NM
- 2019 BAXTER, E., **M. KOONS**, D. HUNTLEY, S. NASH, and O. SEOTEWA Kiva Collaboration: Excavation, Oral History, Augmented Reality and Other Things. Poster presented at the 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Albuquerque, NM
- 2019 BAXTER, E., **M. KOONS**, D. HUNTLEY, and S. NASH Kiva Collaboration: Excavation, Oral History, Augmented Reality and Other Things. Poster presented at the Colorado Council for Professional Archaeologists Annual Meeting. Durango, CO
- 2017 TRAUTWEIN, E., **M. KOONS**, D. HUNTLEY and S. NASH The Reserve Area Archaeological Project. Poster presented at the 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Vancouver, Canada
- 2016 **KOONS, M.**, D. HUNTLEY and S. NASH The Reserve Area Archaeological Project. Poster presented at the 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Orlando, FL
- 2011 STURM, J. and **M. KOONS** Ground Penetrating Radar Investigations at Licapa II, Peru. Poster presented at the 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Sacramento, CA
- 2007 ERNENWEIN E. and **M. KOONS**, J. HERRMANN, D. AYLWARD, D. MCKINNON Geophysics

at Tiwanaku: Results from the 2005-2006 Season. Poster presented at 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. Austin, TX

## **SERVICES**

- 2020-present Program Committee Chair for the 86<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting for the Society for American Archaeology
- 2020-present University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology's Publications Editorial Board Member
- 2019-present Board Member At Large, Colorado Council for Professional Archaeologists
- 2018-present SAA Awards Committee: Excellence in Curation, Collections-based Management, and Collections-based Research Committee
- 2016-present Colorado State Historical Fund, Archaeology and Historic Preservation Committee Member
- 2015-present SAA Committee on Museums, Collections, and Curation Member
- 2015-2018 SAA Public Education Committee Member
- 2014-present Co-founder/ organizer Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Society
- 2014-2015 AAA Annual Meeting Local Committee Member for 2015 Meeting in Denver, CO
- 2014 Co-Organizer of SAA Symposium on Moche Household Archaeology in Austin, TX
- 2011 Director for the Licapa II Public Outreach Lecture Series, Paján, Peru
- 2008-2010 Coordinator for Graduate Student Symposium: Current Research in Anthropology Series, Harvard University
- 2007-2008 Coordinator for Andean Archaeology and Art History Working Group, Harvard University
- 2007-2008 Graduate Student Representative to the Faculty, Harvard University
- 2006 Co-Organizer of SAA Symposium: PAPA's 2005 Research and Results from Tiwanaku, Bolivia
- 2004-2005 Lambda Alpha Anthropology Honors Society- Club Officer: Graduate Liaison, University of Denver

## **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

- Society for American Archaeology
- Register of Professional Archaeologists
- American Anthropological Association
- Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists
- Rocky Mountain Pre-Columbian Association (Founder)
- Institute of Andean Studies Member (invited membership)
- National Geographic Society Explorer

## **LANGUAGES**

- Spanish

## **PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND TRAININGS**

- Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) Scientific Recovery Expert (SRE) training, December 2020
- Leadership Training: 200-hour certified yoga teacher, graduated November 2020
- Institute on Digital Archaeology Method and Practice. East Lansing, MI 2015 and 2016
- DGPS training 2015
- Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science training. Denver, CO, 2015
- Photogrammetry training class- CHI Institute. San Francisco, CA 2014
- UAV Training 2014
- X-Ray Florescence training 2010 and 2011
- Ceramic Petrography class at MIT 2009
- Geophysical Techniques: GPR, Magnetometry, Resistivity, Magnetic Susceptibility, Conductivity

**COMPUTER SKILLS**

ArcGIS, Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop, Photoscan, Surfer, AutoCAD, Filemaker Pro, Microsoft Office