

THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 19, 2024

## MOCA UNVEILS 2025 EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

Season highlights include the much-anticipated **MONUMENTS**, which juxtaposes decommissioned Confederate statues with contemporary artworks; and **MOCA Focus: Takako Yamaguchi**, the artist's first solo museum show in Los Angeles.

Additional highlights include **Diary of Flowers: Artists and their Worlds**, an exhibition exploring how artists construct imaginative and personal networks; **Tracing Performance, Fictions of Display**, showcasing collection works that consider the relationship between objects, theater, and performance; and the U.S. debut of **Wael Shawky's** acclaimed **Drama 1882**.



Red paint splashed on statue, Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Mount Royal Avenue, Baltimore, MD. Baltimore Heritage from Baltimore, MD, USA, [CC0](#), via Wikimedia Commons. Photograph by Eli Pousson, 2017 August 14.

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**Los Angeles, CA**—Offering a dynamic array of perspectives and a wide-ranging program, The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) is pleased to announce its 2025 exhibition schedule. The museum's season invites visitors to engage with artistic visions and artworks that reflect and respond to the stories shaping our times. The program weaves together ambitious collection-based exhibitions and solo presentations by leading contemporary artists, experimental thematic shows, and provocative explorations of history through contemporary art.

At MOCA Grand Avenue, [\*Diary of Flowers: Artists and their Worlds\*](#) (March 2, 2025 – January 4, 2026) showcases over 80 works from the museum's celebrated collection, exploring how artists construct imaginative, intimate, and alternative networks. The third installment of the relaunched MOCA Focus series, [\*MOCA Focus: Takako Yamaguchi\*](#) (June 29, 2025 – March 1, 2026), presents the Los Angeles-based artist's ornate and stylized paintings in her first solo museum show in the city. [\*Fictions of Display\*](#) (June 29, 2025 – March 1, 2026) highlights works from the permanent collection by more than two dozen artists that consider the rich relationships between objects, theater, and performance.

At MOCA Geffen, [\*Wael Shawky: Drama 1882\*](#) (February 20 – March 16, 2025) has its U.S. debut following a widely praised presentation at the 2024 Venice Biennale. The operatic film installation explores historical counter-narratives as part of Wonmi's WAREHOUSE Programs. Fall brings the much-anticipated exhibition [\*MONUMENTS\*](#) (October 23, 2025 – May 24, 2026), co-organized by MOCA and The Brick (formerly LAXART). Juxtaposing decommissioned Confederate monuments with contemporary artworks, *MONUMENTS* invites audiences to reflect on the evolving meanings of these highly charged symbols and their implications in the present day.

Johanna Burton, Maurice Marciano Director of MOCA, stated: "In 2025, we continue building on MOCA's incredible legacy of presenting exhibitions that speak directly to the present moment while drawing from history in deeply resonant ways. This season's exhibitions encourage our audiences to connect with new ideas, reflect on art's role in shaping place, and explore how contemporary art can illuminate the complexities of our world. MOCA is proud to create a platform for artists who engage in and inspire critical thought, dialogue, and imagination."

Clara Kim, MOCA's Chief Curator & Director of Curatorial Affairs, adds: "Our 2025 exhibitions demonstrate the extraordinary range of expressions in contemporary art—from large-scale explorations of artists' personal and social worlds to groundbreaking solo projects and historical reexaminations. Whether addressing the construction of history, personal mythologies, or the politics of representation, these exhibitions challenge and inspire us to rethink and re-imagine our relationship to time, place, and culture."

MOCA concludes its presentation of [\*Josh Kline: Climate Change\*](#) on January 5, 2025 at MOCA Grand Avenue. The critically acclaimed exhibition offers an immersive suite of science-fiction installations that imagine a future sculpted by a ruinous climate crisis and the ordinary people destined to inhabit it. Through May 4, 2025, MOCA presents [\*Ordinary People: Photorealism and the Work of Art since 1968\*](#), a landmark exhibition reexamining the postwar art movement of photorealism and tracing its lineages among a new generation of artists today; and [\*MOCA Focus: Ana Segovia\*](#), the first U.S. solo presentation of the artist's work, featuring a new work commissioned for the exhibition plus two recent bodies of work at MOCA Grand Avenue. [\*Olafur Eliasson: OPEN\*](#), the ambitious site-specific installation by the celebrated Icelandic-Danish artist, presented as part of PST ART: *Art & Science Collide*, remains on view through July 6, 2025 at MOCA Geffen.

Through its 2025 exhibition program, MOCA invites critical reflection, meaningful dialogue, and deeper connections with contemporary art and its impact within culture and society.

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## 2025 SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS



Wael Shawky, *Drama 1882*, 2024 © Wael Shawky. Courtesy of Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Lisson Gallery, Lia Rumma, and Barakat Contemporary

**[Wael Shawky, \*Drama 1882\*](#)**

February 20 – March 16, 2025

WAREHOUSE at The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA

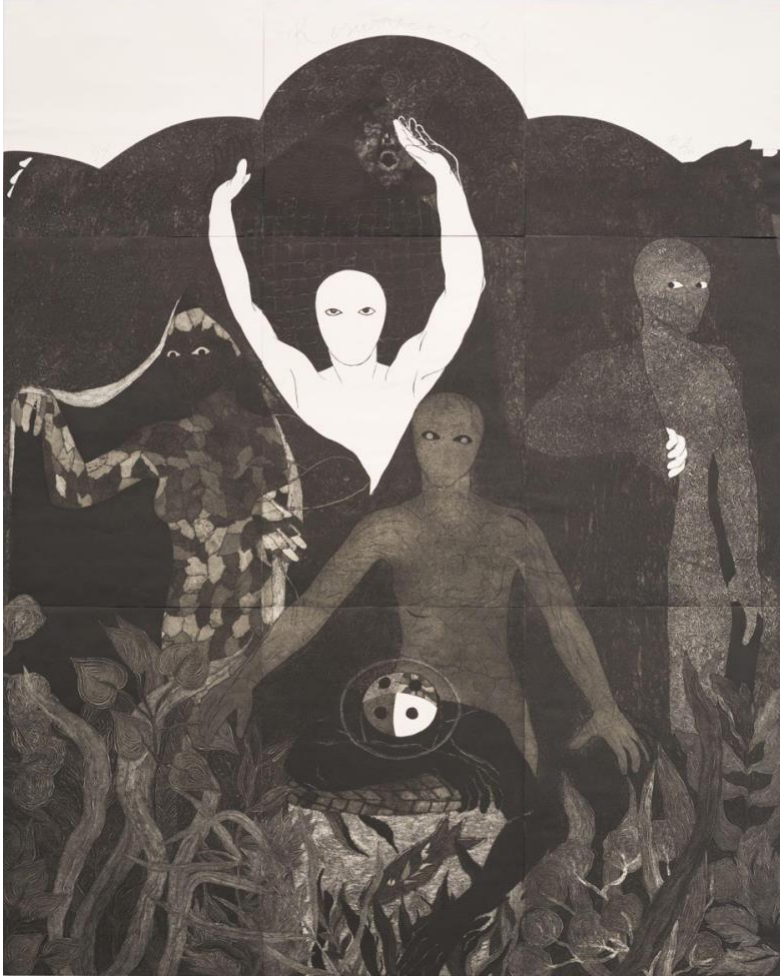
MOCA presents the U.S. premiere of Wael Shawky's (b. 1971 Alexandria, Egypt) widely celebrated film installation *Drama 1882*. Debuted at the Egyptian Pavilion of the 2024 Venice Biennale, this riveting, moving image work takes the form of an eight-part opera, performed for the camera and filmed in a historic theater in Alexandria. *Drama 1882* takes the populist Urabi revolution in Egypt against British imperialism (1879-1882) as its foundation, specifically a cafe brawl between a local donkey owner and a Maltese man that unleashed events that precipitated over seventy years of British colonial rule in Egypt. Seamlessly integrating fact, speculation, and fiction, Shawky proposes alternatives to established records. Sung entirely in classical Arabic by professional performers with sensational costumes and against the backdrop of colorful, expressionist sets, *Drama 1882* is a spectacular restaging of historical events and further explores Shawky's interest in historical counter-narratives, ultimately emphasizing the futility of war while probing the implications of drama itself. According to Shawky, the work "conjures a sense of entertainment, of catastrophe, and our inherent doubt in history."

*Drama 1882* is presented at MOCA as part of Wonmi's WAREHOUSE Programs and is organized by Alex Sloane, Associate Curator with Clara Kim, Chief Curator & Director of Curatorial Affairs.



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Belkis Ayón, *Resurrección (Resurrection)*, 1998, collography on paper, 106 x 85 in. (269.2 x 215.9 cm). The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, gift of the artist, courtesy and © Belkis Ayón Estate. Photo by Zak Kelley

[Diary of Flowers: Artists and their Worlds](#)

March 2, 2025 – January 4, 2026

MOCA Grand Avenue

*Diary of Flowers: Artists and their Worlds* brings together over 80 artworks from MOCA's renowned collection, demonstrating how artists create their own worlds through their art—building networks, circles, and mythologies. Embracing the boundaries between the personal and the social, public and private lives, as well as emotional and psychological states, works in the show privilege sites of creativity and the place of the imagination to conjure new worlds and possibilities. Friendship, love, and intimacy become important starting points for artistic expression. The exhibition features work in all media across different geographies, cultures, and periods, by artists including Belkis Ayón, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Mona Hatoum, Candice Lin, Annette Messager, Wangechi Mutu, Lucas Samaras, Mohammed Sami, Tunga, and Haegue Yang, as well as a gallery dedicated to Nan Goldin.

*Diary of Flowers: Artists and their Worlds* is organized by Clara Kim, Chief Curator & Director of Curatorial Affairs, with Paula Kroll, Curatorial Assistant, and Ariana Rizo, Curatorial Assistant.



Silke Otto-Knapp, *Schattentheater (Chalk circles) [Theater of Shadows (Chalk circles)]*, 2017, watercolor on canvas, 69 x 236 1/4 x 1 in. (175 x 600 x 2.5 cm). The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, Purchase with funds provided by the Acquisition and Collection Committee and Christine Meleo Bernstein and Armyan Bernstein, © Silke Otto-Knapp, Courtesy of the Estate of Silke Otto-Knapp and Regen Projects, Los Angeles. Photo by Brian Forrest

### [Fictions of Display](#)

June 29, 2025 – March 1, 2026

MOCA Grand Avenue

This exhibition highlights works from the MOCA permanent collection that engage with the not always obvious relationship between objects, theater, and performance. *Tracing Performance, Fictions of Display* builds upon Claes Oldenburg's *The Store* (1961-62), a performative project that staged the commercial transaction of selling an artwork in a bodega-like environment, as well as other economies determined by gestures, transactions, and bodies in works by Colette (or her alter ego Justine), Rebecca Horn, Brian Jungen, Mike Kelley, Terence Koh, Beverly Semmes, Hiroshi Sugimoto, and Martine Syms, among others. Several works on view have never been exhibited at MOCA before, including the painting *Monsieur On Sait Qui* (1982), by influential Polish theater director and happening artist Tadeusz Kantor; the five-channel video installation *Big Hunt* (2002) by Catherine Sullivan, who was trained as an actor as well as visual artist, and performance artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña's photograph *The Loneliness of the Immigrant* (1979 - 2011).

The exhibition will also present recent acquisitions, including Silke Otto-Knapp's painting *Schattentheater (Chalk circles) [Theater of Shadows (Chalk circles)]* (2017), a five-panel work based on photographs of the Bauhaus Dessau theater facility designed by Walter Gropius in 1926.

*Tracing Performance, Fictions of Display* is organized by José Luis Blondet, Senior Curator, with Paula Kroll, Curatorial Assistant.

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Takako Yamaguchi, *Procession*, 2024, oil and metal leaf on canvas, 40 × 60 in. (101.6 × 152.4 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Ortuzar, New York. Photo by Gene Ogami.

**[MOCA Focus: Takako Yamaguchi](#)**

June 29, 2025 – March 1, 2026

MOCA Grand Avenue

*MOCA Focus: Takako Yamaguchi* is the third exhibition in the recently relaunched MOCA Focus series, which presents an artist's first solo museum show in Los Angeles and centers on new or discrete bodies of work. Born in Okayama, Japan, in 1952, Yamaguchi moved to the U.S. in the early 1970s and began to appropriate imagery from sources as diverse as Mexican muralism, Renaissance art, Japanese Nihonga, and Art Nouveau in ornate paintings that pose a challenge to rigid notions of ethnic identity and cultural ownership. At age seventy-two, the Los Angeles-based artist is synthesizing the motifs she has developed over the past forty years in a series of archly stylized oil-and-bronze-leaf seascapes featured in this exhibition. Yamaguchi's precise yet luscious paintings incorporate her "Eastern" and "Western"-influenced vocabulary of abstract zigzags, spirals, and braids to denote natural forms like rain, waves, and mountains, representing a culmination of her decades-long provocations of style, taste, and identity.

*MOCA Focus: Takako Yamaguchi* is accompanied by a Nimoy Emerging Artist Publication Series catalogue, marking the artist's first monograph. The exhibition is organized by Anna Katz, Senior Curator, with Emilia Nicholson-Fajardo, Curatorial Assistant.





Hank Willis Thomas, *A Suspension of Hostilities*, 2019, Dodge Charger, 178 x 76 5/8 x 55 in. (452.1 x 194.6 x 139.7 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Pace Gallery © Hank Willis Thomas, courtesy Pace Gallery

## **MONUMENTS**

October 23, 2025 – May 24, 2026

The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA

October 23, 2025 – April 2026

The Brick

Co-organized and co-presented by MOCA and The Brick, *MONUMENTS* marks the recent wave of monument removals as a historic moment. The exhibition reflects on the histories and legacies of post-Civil War America as they continue to resonate today. It brings together a selection of decommissioned Confederate statues with contemporary artworks borrowed and commissioned for the occasion.

Removed from their original outdoor public context and installed within the galleries of MOCA and The Brick, the decommissioned Confederate statues featured in *MONUMENTS* will be shown in their varying conditions, from unmarred to heavily vandalized. The selection of monuments comes from a group of nearly 200 that have been taken down in recent years (many more currently remain standing).

These monuments are juxtaposed with artworks by emerging and established figures in contemporary art, including: Bethany Collins, Karon Davis, Abigail DeVille, Stan Douglas, Leonardo Drew, Torkwase Dyson, Kevin Jerome Everson, Nona Faustine, Jon Henry, Kahlil Robert Irving, Monument Lab, Walter Price, Martin Puryear, Andres Serrano, Hank Willis Thomas, Davóne Tines, and Kara Walker.

The decommissioned monuments in the exhibition illustrate the evolution of the Confederate monument from its roots in a funerary impulse to its rise as a crystalline symbol of a white supremacist ideology, whose obstinacy became increasingly conspicuous against calls for civil rights. They are borrowed from private lenders and institutions such as the Jefferson School

African American Heritage Center and the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia, as well municipalities including the cities of Baltimore, Boston, Montgomery, New Orleans, and Pittsburgh.

*MONUMENTS* will be accompanied by a scholarly publication and a robust slate of public and educational programming.

*MONUMENTS* is co-organized by The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and The Brick, Los Angeles, based on an exhibition concept by The Brick Director Hamza Walker. The exhibition is co-curated by Hamza Walker, artist Kara Walker, and Bennett Simpson, MOCA Senior Curator, with Hannah Burstein, The Brick Curatorial Associate, and Paula Kroll, MOCA Curatorial Assistant.

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## CURRENTLY ON VIEW AND CONTINUING IN 2025



Installation view of Josh Kline: *Climate Change*, June 23, 2024-January 5, 2025. Courtesy of The Museum of Contemporary Art. Photo by Sarah Pooley.

### Josh Kline: *Climate Change*

MOCA Grand Avenue  
through January 5, 2025

Josh Kline's *Climate Change* is both an exhibition and a total work of art—an ambitious, immersive suite of science-fiction installations that imagines a future sculpted by ruinous climate crisis and the ordinary people destined to inhabit it. Begun in 2016 and produced in sections over the last five years, Kline's (b. 1979, Philadelphia; lives and works in New York) eponymous project is brought together for the first time for this exhibition, mobilizing sculpture, moving image work, photography, and ephemeral materials to completely transform the galleries of MOCA Grand Avenue.

*Climate Change* is a visceral, charged work of 21st-century expanded cinema. In this vision, which could be called dystopian but in truth is terrifyingly near, a catastrophic sea-level rise has inundated the world's coasts, unleashing a flood of hundreds of millions traumatized refugees. What happens in a world where the systems built to sustain and extend capitalist



enterprise and global hegemony melt down their own foundations? Kline opens the door to such a future, inviting us to place ourselves within it and consider the rear view.

*Josh Kline: Climate Change* is organized by Rebecca Lowery, former Associate Curator, with Emilia Nicholson-Fajardo, Curatorial Assistant.



Installation view of *Ordinary People: Photorealism and the Work of Art since 1968*, November 23, 2024–May 4, 2025 at MOCA Grand Avenue. Courtesy of The Museum of Contemporary Art. Photo by Jeff McLane.

### **Ordinary People: Photorealism and the Work of Art since 1968**

Through May 4, 2025

MOCA Grand Avenue

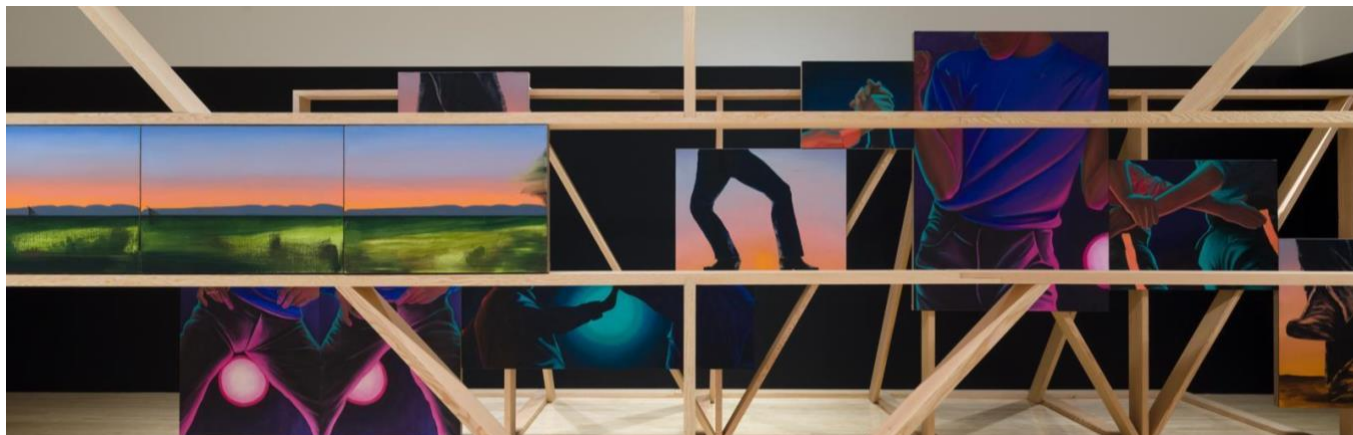
Reexamining the postwar art movement of photorealism and tracing its lineages in art of the present day, *Ordinary People: Photorealism and the Work of Art since 1968* includes more than forty artists (largely though not exclusively North American), spans the 1960s to the present, and features paintings, drawings, and sculptures. This historical, scholarly group exhibition recovers the social art history of photorealism and complicates its meaning as a realism.

While photorealism is often regarded as an end—of figuration, of representation, and even of painting at the close of the 1960s—this timely exhibition recasts photorealism as a beginning, arguing for its continued presence in contemporary art. It features canonical and under-recognized photorealists of the 1960s and '70s (Robert Bechtle, Vija Celmins, Chuck Close, Richard Estes, Audrey Flack, Duane Hanson, Idelle Weber); reconsiders well-known figures within photorealist frameworks (John Ahearn and Rigoberto Torres, Barkley L. Hendricks, Joan Semmel, Amy Sherald); and identifies younger generations of artists' receptions of photorealism (Gina Beavers, Cynthia Daignault, Sayre Gomez, Vincent Valdez, Christine Tien Wang).

*Ordinary People* examines the representational politics of photorealist painting in the context of the recent rise of figurative portraiture, considering its key place in the ongoing remedial project to repopulate the museum with pictures of people and

places historically excluded or disfigured. It further explores photorealism's significance as painting of everyday life, and pulls apart the intrinsic tension between ordinary images and extraordinary artistic methods by focusing on relationships of labor, value, populism, and taste. As well, it takes seriously the myriad ways artists have deployed photorealism to entice viewers with a non-confrontational aesthetic often only to show images of painful historical events and social experiences that might otherwise be regarded as too difficult to look at, or too easy to ignore. Finally, the exhibition asserts the primacy of photorealism to critically think through the 21st-century attention economy's glut of image production.

The exhibition is accompanied by a 256-page catalogue co-published by MOCA and DelMonico Books. *Ordinary People: Photorealism and the Work of Art since 1968* is organized by Anna Katz, Senior Curator, with Paula Kroll, Curatorial Assistant.



Installation view of *MOCA Focus: Ana Segovia*, November 23, 2024–May 4, 2025 at MOCA Grand Avenue. Courtesy of The Museum of Contemporary Art. Photo by Jeff McLane.

### **MOCA Focus: Ana Segovia**

Through May 4, 2025

MOCA Grand Avenue

In his luscious paintings, Ana Segovia (b. 1991, Mexico City, where he lives) twists assumptions of masculinity through a queer lens. Working with an aggressive palette of neon colors, daring compositions, and cinematographic framing and cropping, Segovia undermines the gendered basis of Mexican national identity built around male stereotypes standardized by film.

The artist often develops specific display strategies for his paintings, borrowing from the language of installation, theater, dance, and video art to effectively situate them in the exhibition space. *MOCA Focus: Ana Segovia* features a new painting commissioned for the exhibition plus two recent bodies of work, including *I've Been Meaning to Tell You* (2023), a suite of eight paintings depicting film stills from a non-existent queer film the artist wished to have seen in his formative years. This presentation is the second MOCA Focus exhibition since the relaunch of the series in 2023. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue. Publication support is provided by the Nimoy Fund for Emerging Artists.

*MOCA Focus: Ana Segovia* is organized by José Luis Blondet, Senior Curator, with Emilia Nicholson-Fajardo, Curatorial Assistant, and Anastasia Kahn, former Curatorial Assistant.



Installation view of *Olafur Eliasson: OPEN*, September 15, 2024–July 6, 2025 at The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA. Courtesy of The Museum of Contemporary Art. Photo by Zak Kelley.

### **Olafur Eliasson: OPEN**

Through July 6, 2025

The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA

PST ART: Art & Science Collide

Icelandic-Danish artist Olafur Eliasson (b. 1967, Copenhagen; lives and works in Berlin) presents a new site-specific installation made for The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA. In line with Eliasson's career-long exploration of light and color, geometry, and ecological awareness, the installation playfully engages with material and immaterial qualities of the building. A series of large-scale optical devices designed specifically for the Geffen reflects on the architecture of the Geffen, as well as the atmosphere of Los Angeles. Visitors encounter a dazzling range of patterns, colors, and materials that harness the laws of geometric optics to address feelings of embodiment, perception, and shared experience.

*Olafur Eliasson: Open* is among more than 60 exhibitions and programs presented as part of PST ART: Art & Science Collide, a landmark regional event exploring the intersections of art and science, both past and present. PST ART is presented by Getty.

*Olafur Eliasson: Open* is organized by José Luis Blondet, Senior Curator, and Rebecca Lowery, former Associate Curator, with Emilia Nicholson-Fajardo, Curatorial Assistant, and Anastasia Kahn, former Curatorial Assistant.

### **ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART**

Founded in 1979, MOCA is the defining museum of contemporary art. In a relatively short period of time, MOCA has achieved astonishing growth; a world-class permanent collection of almost 8,000 objects, international in scope and among the finest in the world; hallmark education programs that are widely emulated; award-winning publications that present original scholarship; groundbreaking monographic, touring, and thematic exhibitions of international repute that survey the art of our time; and cutting-edge engagement with modes of new media production. MOCA is a not-for-profit institution that relies on a variety of funding sources for its activities.



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**MUSEUM ADMISSION:** General admission to MOCA is free courtesy of Carolyn Clark Powers. Special exhibitions at MOCA are \$18 for adults; \$10 for students with I.D. and seniors (+65); and free for children under 12 and jurors with I.D. MOCA members always receive free admission to special exhibitions. More Information: For 24-hour information on museum hours, current exhibitions, education programs, and special events, call 213-626-6222 or visit [moca.org](http://moca.org).

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