



# THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MOCA GALA 2026, PRESENTED BY MARIA SEFERIAN, HONORS MOCA LEGENDS EUGENIO LÓPEZ ALONSO, PAUL MCCARTHY, AND KARA WALKER**

*Over 560 Attendees Raised Over \$3M for the Museum at Evening Conceived by Piero Golia featuring Special Installations created in Collaboration with Paul McCarthy and Kara Walker and Dining Experience by Laila Gohar*



Captions, upper left clockwise: Piero Golia, Paul McCarthy, MOCA Board Chair Carolyn Clark Powers, MOCA Board Vice-Chair Eugenio López Alonso, MOCA Interim Director Ann Goldstein, Kara Walker; Special installation by Paul McCarthy and Kara Walker; Cake being served at the Gala's finale; The MOCA Gala Symphony Orchestra

**LOS ANGELES** – On the evening of Saturday, May 30, 2026, The Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) celebrated its 2026 Gala, underwritten and generously supported by Board of Trustees Chair Emeritus **Maria Seferian**, at The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA in Little Tokyo. As part of the museum's **MOCA Legends** format in its second year, the museum honored three figures who have helped cement the museum as a global leader in contemporary art: philanthropist and longtime MOCA Trustee **Eugenio López Alonso** alongside artists **Kara Walker** and **Paul McCarthy**. Over 560 patrons,

artists, and leading cultural and entertainment industry figures from Los Angeles and internationally gathered to celebrate, raising over \$3 million in support of the museum's world-renowned exhibitions program, operations, and programs.

Artist and Board of Trustees member **Tala Madani** introduced pioneering artist **Paul McCarthy** and spoke to his impact and influence on her own practice alongside future generations of artists to come. The Brick's director **Hamza Walker** introduced fellow MONUMENTS co-curator and artist **Kara Walker**, remarking on their collaboration and her unprecedented work *Unmanned Drone*, which recently entered MOCA's permanent collection. Finally, **Carolyn Clark Powers**, Chair of the MOCA Board of Trustees, acknowledged **Eugenio López Alonso's** robust support of the museum across two decades, framing his global approach to philanthropy as one that helps shape and build artists' careers in significant ways.

Upon arrival, guests were welcomed to The Geffen Contemporary through a series of special interventions by celebrated Los Angeles artist **Piero Golia** in collaboration with Edwin Chan, Stephen Galloway, Laila Gohar, Thomas Kotcheff, Chris Kronner, Pietro Scalia, and Benjamin Schwartz. These included live, choreographed orchestral performances by **The MOCA Gala Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Schwartz**, who came together as a collective to perform selections throughout the evening, including **Kotcheff's** *MOCA Brass Fanfare*, composed in three distinct versions for each of the evening's honorees. The cocktail portion of the evening took place in the galleries within an immersive installation Golia conceived for the event featuring elements honoring the work of Paul McCarthy and Kara Walker, supported by MOCA Trustee **Pete Scantland** and **Orange Barrel Media**.

The evening was hosted by dancer and multi-disciplinary creative **Stephen Galloway**, who steered the special event as the museum transformed for the night into a place of discovery, orchestral fanfare, and artistic collaboration through Golia's vision. Guests enjoyed a unique dining experience by chef **Laila Gohar** in collaboration with **Chris Kronner**, who served stuffed cabbage with English pea vinaigrette, wild king salmon, and a seven-foot-tall vanilla cake with chocolate ganache.

"MOCA is a singular, audacious museum with a collection unsurpassed, and bold exhibitions and education programs that have defined our field for almost fifty years," said **Ann Goldstein**, the Interim Maurice Marciano Director of MOCA. "We are so incredibly fortunate to honor three MOCA Legends: two towering, unflinchingly courageous artists of our time, Kara Walker and Paul McCarthy, and visionary philanthropist and longtime MOCA Trustee, Eugenio López Alonso. They are three individuals whose enormous contributions are woven into the course of contemporary art, and MOCA's story at its deepest level."

"My MONUMENTS commission *Unmanned Drone* has been a highlight of my practice—to receive a decommissioned Confederate monument as a found object and to literally cut through the stone and metal of white supremacist idolatry was to face that history as matter," said **Kara Walker**. "It was an honor to be in an exhibition with the esteemed contemporary artists who were in MONUMENTS."

"I really think a lot of artists in LA appreciate MOCA more than any other museum," said **Paul McCarthy**. "The shows that have happened here, I don't think any other museum would have done them. As artists—especially if you're living on the edge—you want the work that comes out to be appreciated, and I think MOCA has done that. Over the years, history has been made."

"I always wanted to be a part of MOCA, and I'm always the happiest when I arrive in LA," said **Eugenio López Alonso**. "MOCA will continue for many, many, years, because the best is yet to come."

The 2026 Gala featured notable attendees and guests from the fields of art, entertainment, film, philanthropy, and fashion. In attendance was MOCA's Interim Maurice Marciano Director **Ann Goldstein**, and notable figures including Paul McCarthy's artwork *Dead Viking* from 1992, **Connie Butler, Trisha Cardoso, China Chow, Michael Chow, Jeffrey Deitch, Ava DuVernay, Lisa Edelstein, Stephen Galloway, Supriya Ganesh, Balthazar & Rosetta Getty, Valentina Rose Golia, Johnson Hartig**, The Broad's Founding Director **Joanne Heyler, Karen Hillenburg, Sharon Johnston, Minka Kelly, Jerry and Terri Kohl, Richard Koshalek, Olivia Marciano, Ari Marcopoulos, Cairo Marcopoulos and Alyssa Marie, Mara McCarthy and Peter Lasell, Damon McCarthy, Karen McCarthy, Jarl Mohn, Heather Podesta, Esthella Provas, Keanu Reeves, Dan Reynolds**, Hammer Director **Zoë Ryan, Paul Schimmel, Graham Steele, Jeremy Strick, Robin Tunney, Síta Valrún, Rufus Wainwright, Hamza Walker, Kulapat Yantrasast, and Sonya Yu**; MOCA Trustees and Life Trustees including Board Chair **Carolyn Clark Powers**, Board President **Julie Wainwright**, Board Vice-Chair **Eugenio López Alonso, Kathi B. Cypres, Clifford J. Einstein, Peter Friedlander, Susan Gersh, Deborah Irmis**, Board Vice-Chair **Karyn Kohl, Barbara Kruger, Tala Madani, Mary Klaus Martin, Rodney McMillian, Nancy Kwon Merrihew, Margaret Morgan, Christina Quarles**, Board Secretary **Steven Rice**, Chair Emeritus **Maria Seferian, Terri Smooke, Jeffrey Soros, Carlo Traglio, Christopher V. Walker, Orna Amir Wolens, and Vida Yaghmai**; MOCA curators **José Luis Blondet, Anna Katz, Clara Kim, Paula Kroll, Emilia Nicholson-Farjado, Bennett Simpson, and Alex Sloane**; and artists **Kathryn Andrews, Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio, Cindy Bernard, Andrea Bowers, Coleman Collins, Kenturah Davis, Roy Dowell, Ali Eyal, Sharif Farrag, Andrea Fraser, Charles Gaines, Laila Gohar, Piero Golia, Alfonso Gonzalez Jr., Alexandra Grant, Yaron Michael Hakim, Lauren Halsey, Richard Hawkins, Margaret Honda, Elliott Hundley, Alex Israel, Zhu Jia, Larry Johnson, Glenn Kaino, Mary Kelly, Toba Khedoori, John Knight, Suzanne Lacy, Kelly Lamb, William Leavitt, Sharon Lockhart, T. Kelly Mason, Paul McCarthy, Nathaniel Mellors, Rebecca Morris, Catherine Opie, Eamon Ore-Giron, Anita Pace, Hilary Pecis, Renee Petropoulos, Lari Pittman, Stephen Prina, Andy Robert, Sterling Ruby, Allen Ruppertsberg, Robert Russell, Analia Saban, Melanie Schiff, Max Hooper Schneider, Andrew Schoultz, Jim Shaw, Gary Simmons, Alex Slade, Frances Stark, Diana Thater, Nadya Tolokonnikova, Kara Walker, Mary Weatherford, Pae White, Roger White, Christopher Williams, Jordan Wolfson and Jwan Yosef** among others.

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## **ABOUT EUGENIO LÓPEZ ALONSO**

A preeminent collector of contemporary art, Los Angeles and Mexico City-based Eugenio López Alonso has been promoting the understanding, development and production of contemporary artistic practices for over 30 years. In 2001, he formalized his work as an art promoter with the creation of the Jumex Contemporary Art Foundation in Mexico City, for which he serves as president. The foundation was established to foster the production and discussion of contemporary art, diffusing information about it while finding innovative ways to promote art and culture. The Museo Jumex—the foundation's main platform—opened in November 2013 as an institution devoted to contemporary art, whose aim was not only to serve a broad and diverse public, but also to become a laboratory for experimentation and innovation in the arts.

His work as a philanthropist is recognized for the constant support he has given to various museums across the country for the organization of educational activities, publications related to the visual arts, and the scholarships that the foundation awards annually to curators and artists for postgraduate studies abroad.

He is also an active member of the board of trustees of other institutions in Mexico, such as the Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporáneo. In the United States, in addition to his longtime service as a trustee of MOCA, López Alonso is a member of the Board of Trustees of the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York and Serpentine Galleries in London. Due to his profound commitment to Latin American contemporary art, he generously established the Jumex Fund for Contemporary Latin American Art at MOCA.

### **ABOUT PAUL MCCARTHY**

Los Angeles-based artist Paul McCarthy is one of the most influential and groundbreaking contemporary American artists of his generation. Born in 1945 in Salt Lake City, Utah, McCarthy's career has unfolded as a sustained and fearless interrogation of American culture. Taking early inspiration from the experimental performances of Joseph Beuys and Allan Kaprow, he used his own body as a medium, staging provocative works that challenged cultural norms with surgical precision. His landmark video performances of the 1970s—established the terms of an artistic project that would only grow more ambitious, more expansive, and more prescient over the decades that followed.

During the 1990s, McCarthy extended his practice into large-scale installations and stand-alone sculptural figures. *Garden* (1991), the artist's career-defining installation, was first unveiled in the show *Helter Skelter: L.A. Art in the 1990s* at The Geffen Contemporary. McCarthy has maintained a deep and enduring relationship with MOCA, culminating in a major solo exhibition there in 2000—the first American museum survey of McCarthy's work which brought together more than 100 works from over thirty years of the artist's career. MOCA's ongoing commitment to his work speaks to his singular importance within the history of the institution and the city that shaped him. MOCA's permanent collection holds eleven works spanning the full arc of McCarthy's practice, from early drawings and performance documents to the major installation *Tokyo Santa, Santa's Trees* (1996/1999), gifted to the museum in 2001 by Eugenio López in honor of Paul Schimmel.

McCarthy earned a BFA in painting from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1969, and an MFA in multimedia, film, and art from the University of Southern California in 1973. For eighteen years he taught performance, video, installation, and art history in the pioneering New Genres Department at UCLA, shaping future generations of West Coast artists. His work is held in the permanent collections of many of the world's foremost museums, and he has presented solo exhibitions at institutions including Tate Modern, London; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Haus der Kunst, Munich; the Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent; Park Avenue Armory, New York; and the Monnaie de Paris, among many others. His practice has encompassed celebrated collaborations with Mike Kelley, Jason Rhoades, and his son Damon McCarthy, as well as sustained performance projects with the artist/actor Lilith Stangenberg.

### **ABOUT KARA WALKER**

New York-based artist Kara Walker is best known for her candid investigation of race, gender, power, and national mythologies via her signature cut-paper silhouettes. Born in Stockton, California in 1969, Kara Walker was raised in Atlanta, Georgia from the age of 13. She studied at the Atlanta College of Art (BFA, 1991) and the Rhode Island School of Design (MFA, 1994). She is the recipient of many awards, notably the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Achievement Award in 1997 and the United States Artists, Eileen Harris Norton Fellowship in 2008. Walker is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters (elected 2012) and American Philosophical Society (elected 2018) and was named an Honorary Royal Academician by the Royal Academy of Arts, London in 2019.

Walker was one of the participating artists and co-curators of the exhibition MONUMENTS, presented

concurrently at The Brick and The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA from October 23, 2025, through May 3, 2026. MONUMENTS explored the reverberating legacies of post-Civil War America through a presentation of decommissioned monuments and contemporary works. For her new work featured at The Brick, Walker dissected and transformed the decommissioned equestrian bronze of General “Stonewall” Jackson which formerly stood in Charlottesville, Virginia, into *Unmanned Drone* (2025)—a chimerical vision of Confederate violence.

Walker’s work is in prominent museums and public collections throughout the United States and Europe, including the Kunstmuseum Basel; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Tate Gallery, London; and the Museo Nazionale delle Arti del XXI secolo (MAXXI), Rome. MOCA’s permanent collection holds four works by Walker spanning three decades of her practice, from early cut-paper silhouette works and works on paper to *Unmanned Drone*, which was acquired by MOCA in 2026.

### **ABOUT PIERO GOLIA**

Italian-born, Los Angeles-based artist Piero Golia is a sculptor of situations. His works—which at times take physical form, often at an architectural scale, and at others are immaterial—are statements aimed at expanding the possibilities of art. Golia’s practice resists easy categorization, stretching far beyond the production of discrete objects into a restless, expansive mode of art-making that encompasses architecture, immaterial gestures, monumental intervention, and the social fabric of lived experience. Where traditional art might offer a painting to hang or a sculpture to admire, Golia constructs entire worlds — a salon hidden behind Hollywood Boulevard, a giant light bulb on a hotel rooftop that signals his presence in the city, a thirty-six-ton concrete cube laced with gold and handed over to the public to mine at the Venice Biennale. His works operate at wildly different scales and registers, from the intimate to the monumental, from the fleeting to the seemingly immovable, yet they share a common ambition: to dissolve the boundary between art and life, between object and experience, between artist and audience.

Originally trained in chemical engineering at the Università Federico II in Naples, Golia shifted his focus to the art world in the late 1990s. He moved to Los Angeles in 2002, where the city’s contradictions, lore, and cultural expanse became central tenets of his practice. He’s presented solo exhibitions at museums including Villa Medici–Académie de France à Rome; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas; Kunsthaus Baselland, MuttENZ/Basel; and Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita.

### **ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART (MOCA)**

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 collection of nearly 8,000 objects, international in scope with deep holdings in Los Angeles art; 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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