

The Story of California. The Story of You.

Oakland Museum of California



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OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA 2017–2018 EXHIBITIONS & PROJECTS

UPCOMING

[Question Bridge: Black Males](#)

September 29, 2017–February 25, 2018

Hailed as one of the Bay Area's Top Exhibitions in 2012 by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Question Bridge: Black Males* returns to the Oakland Museum of California this fall. Immerse yourself in intimate videos—woven together and arranged to simulate face-to-face conversations between participants—among a diverse group of 150 Black men across the United States. Hear these men answer each other's questions with exceptional honesty and vulnerability, and share stories, beliefs, and values in a personal portrayal of their lives. Encompassing themes of family, love, interracial relationships, community, education, and wisdom, *Question Bridge: Black Males* presents nuanced portraits of past, present, and future of Black men in American society. Listen, watch, learn, and start your own conversations with this profoundly moving installation.

In 2012, the Oakland Museum of California presented *Question Bridge: Black Males*, an innovative and widely exhibited video installation from artists Chris Johnson and Hank Willis Thomas in collaboration with Bayeté Ross Smith and Kamal Sinclair. Joining the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and the Brooklyn Museum, OMCA is proud to acquire this groundbreaking and poignant work for its collection.

[Nature's Gift: Humans, Friends & The Unknown](#)

October 7, 2017–January 21, 2018

This fall, OMCA invites you to explore *Nature's Gift: Humans, Friends & The Unknown*, a dazzling immersive experience that takes you through the rainbow into another world. A one-of-a-kind and interactive environment by FriendsWithYou—the LA-based, fine art collaborative featuring Samuel Borkson and Arturo Sandoval III—this large-scale, light-filled installation sparks joy and positivity, and sets the stage for friendship, magic, and social connection. Featuring the world premiere of a new commissioned installation titled *Nature's Gift*, this enchanting and whimsical experience for all ages invites you into a magical, multi-sensory world where the line between imagination and reality are blurred. *There is a \$4 charge for this special exhibition in addition to regular Museum admission.*

[Metamorphosis & Migration: Days of the Dead](#)

October 18, 2017–January 14, 2018

This year, OMCA's biennial Days of the Dead exhibition is inspired by the lifecycle of the Monarch Butterfly. Known for its mass migration each winter, this butterfly's journey spans several generations, all of whom follow the same routes their ancestors took. In Mexico, the returning Monarchs also symbolize the returning souls of loved ones who have passed away.

In *Metamorphosis & Migration: Days of the Dead*, explore *ofrendas* and artworks inspired by the Monarch's migration and themes of tradition and transformation. View rarely-seen butterfly specimens from OMCA's collection alongside newly commissioned artworks. Artist Hung Liu honors her mother's passing through a series of heartfelt paintings. Favianna Rodriguez ponders migration and immigration in a new way using her "Migration is Beautiful" butterfly imagery. Chris Treggiari and Peter Foucault honor colleague Alex Ghassan, who lost his life in the tragic Ghost Ship fire. And, traditional Days of the Dead altars by Bea Carrillo Hocker and Rafael Jesús González, as well as installations by Oakland International High School and Thornhill Elementary School, energize this communal space for reflection and empowerment in these turbulent times.

Take Root: Oakland Grows Food

December 16, 2017–January 13, 2019

Unearth Oakland's multi-layered world of food in *Take Root: Oakland Grows Food*, an exhibition exploring the ecological and cultural factors of how and why food is grown in Oakland. Enjoy this hands-on exhibition with the entire family to understand what factors determine where, how, why, and what is grown throughout the city. Hear personal stories from farmers and growers within the community, see compelling illustrations and maps, and meet the diverse flavors of Oakland. Learn what motivations Oaklanders have for growing food—including access to healthy and delicious ingredients, environmental and social justice values, or simply the joy of tending a garden. Visitors will be invited to share personal stories, explore interactive activities, and gain a deeper understanding of Oakland's agriculture.

RESPECT: Hip-Hop Style & Wisdom

March 24–August 12, 2018

Hip-hop is one of the widest reaching cultural and social movements of the last 50 years. Discover the unexpected story of how hip-hop changed the world, starting from its roots on the streets, before rap, DJing, street art, breakdancing, and street fashion launched into mainstream popular culture. Learn about the West Coast's and San Francisco Bay Area's influences on this global phenomenon. Hear first-person accounts from artists and experts about how, beyond big business, hip-hop continues to provide a platform for creative expression, activism, youth development, and education. *There is a \$4 charge for this special exhibition in addition to regular Museum admission.*

J.B. Blunk: Nature, Art & Everyday Life

April 21–August 26, 2018

Discover northern California's best kept secret in design and craft: J.B. Blunk (1926–2002), a mid-century artist whose connection to nature governed his daily life. Inspired by Japanese philosophies of nature and art's inseparability, and influenced by rural utopian communities, Blunk's muse and often his source of materials was the beautiful natural environment of Inverness, California. Blunk's home property was his ultimate work of art, filled with his handcrafted furniture, ceramics, sculptures, and other functional objects used by his family. His remarkable craftsmanship also took the form of large-scale public works of art, including *The Planet*, a redwood sculpture commissioned by the Oakland Museum of California in 1969. *J.B. Blunk: Nature, Art & Everyday Life* brings together a comprehensive survey of the artist's works. See northern California's landscape anew through Blunk's eyes, and get inspired to find the beauty of nature and art in your own daily life.

ON VIEW

Over the Top: Math Bass and the Imperial Court SF

April 1–July 23, 2017

Familiar symbols, flipped and “queered” to create new shared meaning, are at the heart of this exhibition that pairs new work by a contemporary California artist with the creative practice of a local organization. In paintings, sculpture, and video, perception-bending Los Angeles-based artist Math Bass emphasizes that symbols change meaning according to context and orientation, and that the body and its costumes are meaningful symbols whether they are actually present or only suggested. For *Over the Top: Math Bass and the Imperial Court SF*, Bass’ compelling work is presented alongside crowns, scepters, portraits, and banners bearing the insignia of the Empresses and Emperors who have served the Imperial Court of San Francisco. These monarchs, elected annually, spearhead charitable fundraising efforts for the alternative society, whose core supporters are drag queens and other members of the LGBTQ community. Over the course of their 51-year history, the Imperial Court has created its own traditions in order to form family and new possibilities for survival. The “Over the Top” symbols activated in this exhibition will highlight acts of fantastic creative invention. Visitors will draw new connections and be both delighted and inspired in learning about practices that are playful, political, and subversive at the same time.

Of Dogs and Other People: The Art of Roy De Forest

April 29–August 20, 2017

Roy De Forest's vibrant works present playful visions that take us on a trip into alternative realities. In Spring 2017, the Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) will present *Of Dogs and Other People: The Art of Roy De Forest*, an exhibition designed to simulate an adventurous exploration of the artist's dream-like and sometimes humorous works. Large, colorful paintings and sculptures spanning De Forest's career will provide visitors the opportunity to navigate their own journeys by exploring vistas and portals into imaginative worlds. Listening stations throughout the exhibition will let visitors drift deeper into individual works, led by an array of exhibition-related character guides ranging from dog trainers to art historians and ship captains. A hands-on space will provide a social experience and allow visitors to manipulate and engage with textured, tactile materials and shapes inspired by De Forest's artwork. There is a \$4 charge for this special exhibition in addition to regular Museum admission.

Dorothea Lange: Politics of Seeing

May 13–August 13, 2017

Through the lens of her camera, Dorothea Lange documented 20th century life with riveting, intimate photographs that showed the major issues of the times. The emotional impact of her works continues to resonate with millions and illustrates the power of photography as a form of social activism. From documenting the plight of Dust Bowl migrants during the Great Depression to magnifying the grim conditions of incarcerated Japanese Americans during World War II, Lange’s photographs demonstrate how empathy and compassion, focused through art, can trigger political action. *Dorothea Lange: Politics of Seeing* presents approximately 100 photographs to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the artist’s gift of her personal archive to the Oakland Museum of California. Drawing upon vintage prints, unedited proof sheets, personal memorabilia, and historic objects, this exhibition takes a unique approach to a beloved American photographer by examining how her artistry and advocacy swayed minds and prompted significant change in this nation’s history. There is a \$4 charge for this special exhibition in addition to regular Museum admission.

Bees: Tiny Insect, Big Impact
Through October 22, 2017

This exhibition in OMCA's Gallery of California Natural Sciences takes a look at the wildly diverse and intricate world of one of the most important creatures to human agriculture and the natural environment. Through family-friendly experiences, hands-on activities, and media, *Bees: Tiny Insect, Big Impact* touches on topics of honeybees and Bay Area beekeeping, the diversity of California native bee species, citizen science projects, and the similarities between bees and humans. Visitors will discover real bee specimens under a microscope, crawl through a human-sized beehive, and try on a beekeeper suit. In an immersive gallery environment, visitors can explore the causes of bee population decline, learn about the significance of bees to California's economy and ecosystems, and discover how simple but powerful actions by Californians can help bees to survive in a changing world.

ABOUT THE OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA

The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) brings together collections of art, history, and natural science under one roof to tell the extraordinary stories of California and its people. OMCA's groundbreaking exhibits tell the many stories that comprise California with many voices, often drawing on first-person accounts by people who have shaped California's cultural heritage. Visitors are invited to actively participate in the Museum as they learn about the natural, artistic, and social forces that affect the state and investigate their own role in both its history and its future. With more than 1.9 million objects, OMCA is a leading cultural institution of the Bay Area and a resource for the research and understanding of California's dynamic cultural and environmental heritage.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) is at 1000 Oak Street, at 10th Street, in Oakland. Museum admission is \$15.95 general; \$10.95 seniors and students with valid ID, \$6.95 youth ages 9 to 17, and free for Members and children 8 and under. There is a \$4 charge in addition to general admission pricing for special exhibitions. OMCA offers onsite underground parking and is conveniently located one block from the Lake Merritt BART station, on the corner of 10th Street and Oak Street. The accessibility ramp is located at the 1000 Oak Street main entrance to the Museum. museumca.org
