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## OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA ANNOUNCES NINE RECENT ACQUISITIONS TO ITS PERMANENT COLLECTION

*New Acquisitions From Seven Nationally-Recognized Artists Represent OMCA's Commitment to Amplifying Undertold Stories of California*

(OAKLAND, CA) December 17, 2020—Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) today announces nine new acquisitions to its permanent collection, including artworks by **nationally-recognized artists Sadie Barnette, Kirk Crippens, Colette Denton, Kota Ezawa, Rosie Lee Tompkins, Rashaad Newsome, and Arbie Williams.**

As part of the Museum's **focus on telling untold stories of the people who have shaped our lives here in California**, these works reflect OMCA's collecting framework, centering **stories that are timely and relevant and that have historically been left out of museum collections.** As a multidisciplinary museum of art, history, and natural science, OMCA's collection of over 1.9 million objects aims to reflect the diversity of California's environments and people in terms of race and ethnicity, culture, regional differences, age, gender, class, ability, national origin, and other aspects of identity.

"As part of our long-term collecting plan, we are working continuously to **acquire new works that represent the diversity of stories from our community.** Our goal is for our visitors and communities to **see themselves and their stories reflected** in the works we present, whether in a special exhibition or in one of our galleries," said Peggy Monahan, Director of Content Development. "We're so excited to have the opportunity to collect these new artworks from a range of artists whose works are timely, powerful, and deeply personal."

Details regarding each of the artists and collected works are included below.

### **Sadie Barnette**

Oakland-born artist Sadie Barnette's three works acquired by OMCA are centered around her father, Rodney, and his personal experience as a former Black Panther Party member. Using emblems from her childhood like glitter, pink spray paint, and rhinestones, Barnette juxtaposes

historical documents and photographs of her father as a form of resistance. *Untitled (People's World)*, *Untitled (Dad, 1966 and 1968)*, and *Untitled (Dad in Postal Uniform with Family)* were taken as a triptych that weaves together a Black historical archive with connections to historical moments, politics, and Barnette's childhood, as well as the continuous policing of and violence against Black people today. Her work was a central focus of OMCA's groundbreaking 2016 exhibition *All Power to the People: Black Panthers at 50*.

### **Kirk Crippens**

When the 2008 mortgage crisis hit, photographer Kirk Crippens documented some of the hardest hit communities in California, including the Central Valley. Crippens's portfolio of photographs titled *Foreclosure, USA* are reflective of this significant moment in recent history, showcasing portraits of loss, sadness, and the human impact of the economic system, many themes that still resonate with today's impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. A welcome addition to OMCA's photography collection, Crippens's work will present opportunities for visitors to reflect and engage in conversations about moments of crisis.

### **Colette Denton**

Colette Denton created the garment *Dress* as a symbol of alternative fashion of the 1960s and 70s. Representative of the groundbreaking art of that era, Denton created garments early in her career as a self-taught jeweler and textile artist associated with the California Art-to-Wear Movement. Once on view, the garment can be seen in the Museum's Radical Acts section in its Gallery of California Art, alongside posters and artwork from the era.

### **Kota Ezawa**

Oakland-based artist Kota Ezawa created a two-minute animation titled *National Anthem* in response to former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick's kneeling as a form of peaceful protest during the national anthem. The multimedia work is reminiscent of John Carlos and Tommie Smith's Black Power salute at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics, which also brought attention to police violence against Black people. *National Anthem* will soon be a part of the Museum's Gallery of California Art.

### **Rosie Lee Tompkins**

OMCA will acquire the work *Chair with embroidery and applique* by Rosie Lee Tompkins (1936–2006), also known as Effie Mae Howard. A deeply spiritual person, Tompkins approached her craft as a form of healing, embroidering her textiles with bible verses, the birth dates of her family, her given name, and other personal details. This chair will eventually be put on display in the Craft Bay of the Gallery of California Art.

### **Rashaad Newsome**

Rashaad Newsome's work *Parenting While Black* was created at his home in Oakland during the COVID-19 pandemic this year. While sheltering in place, the work reflects the experience of being in isolation and observing the ongoing and increasingly visible violence against Black

people, and the crippling anxiety that a parent must feel losing a child in this way. Newsome's multidisciplinary approach draws from Black and queer cultural histories to create contemporary narratives, centering on intersectionality. *Parenting While Black* will appear in OMCA's upcoming 2021 exhibition *Mothership: Voyage Into Afrofuturism*.

### **Arbie Williams**

Nationally-celebrated "britches" quiltmaker Arbie Williams (1916–2003) incorporated salvaged pants into her textiles. *Mamaloo*, now a part of OMCA's collection, was made from a pair of discarded jeans found on 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Oakland. *Mamaloo* will also appear in the exhibition *Mothership: Voyage into Afrofuturism*.

### **ABOUT THE OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA**

The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) tells the many stories that comprise California, creating the space and context for greater connection, trust, and understanding between people. Through its inclusive exhibitions, public programs, educational initiatives, and cultural events, OMCA brings Californians together and inspires greater understanding about what our state's art, history, and natural surroundings teach us about ourselves and each other. With more than 1.9 million objects, OMCA brings together its multidisciplinary collections of art, history, and natural science with the first-person accounts and often untold narratives of California, all within its 110,000 square feet of gallery space and seven-acre campus. The Museum is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year as a leading cultural institution of the Bay Area and a resource for the research and understanding of California's dynamic cultural and environmental heritage for visitors from the region, the state, and around the world.

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