

Oakland Museum of California

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OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA ANNOUNCES NEW EXHIBITION EXPLORING THE IMPACTS OF THE TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD AND WESTERN EXPANSION THROUGH ANDREW J. RUSSELL’S POWERFUL PHOTOGRAPHS

On the 150th Anniversary of the Railroad’s Completion, *Pushing West: The Photography of Andrew J. Russell* Will Present the Complex and Emotional Outcome of One of the Most Controversial Moments in American History

Exhibition on view May 4–September 1, 2019 in OMCA’s Gallery of California Art

(OAKLAND, CA) March 7, 2019— This spring, the **Oakland Museum of California (OMCA)** will present [***Pushing West: The Photography of Andrew J. Russell***](#), a new exhibition in OMCA’s Gallery of California Art showcasing Russell’s epic photography of the Transcontinental Railroad and its central role in western expansion. Coinciding with the **150th anniversary of the Railroad’s completion** in May 1869, Russell’s photography reveals the tensions between the celebration of **economic and technological advancements** and the Railroad’s **significant impact on western lands and Native peoples**.

Though commissioned by the Union Pacific Railroad to document the railroad and its successful development, Russell often captured a **complex picture of western expansion**: his photographs documented **majestic landscapes and the natural environment**, the **displacement of Native peoples**, and **technological history** (both engineering and photographic). In a feat of **technical achievement**, Russell’s remarkable usage of the **collodion photographic process** enabled him to capture images of visual and emotional impact in remote locations.

“Andrew J. Russell remains one of the **most influential landscape photographers** who brought the American West to a mass audience in the 19th century, and whose work continues to **shape our perceptions** of this important period. Drawn from one of **OMCA’s core collections of nearly 650 original collodion negatives and 60 vintage prints**, the exhibition will include Russell’s iconic images alongside rare vintage prints and modern prints from original collodion negatives to tell a **multi-faceted story of this pivotal moment in history**,” said Drew Johnson, Curator of Photography and Visual Culture.

In this intimate exhibition, visitors will view **rare vintage and digital prints, powerful landscape and 3D images**, and **original collodion negatives**, as well as memorabilia, ephemera, and a video demonstrating the collodion process. Visitors will learn about Russell's legacy as **one of the most important photographers of the 19th century** in this inspiring presentation of one of the most **historic and controversial moments in American history**.

Pushing West: The Photography of Andrew J. Russell will be on view in OMCA's Gallery of California Art May 4 through September 1, 2019.

Pushing West: The Photography of Andrew J. Russell is supported in part by the Oakland Museum Women's Board, the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation, and The Candelaria Fund.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS & PROJECTS

Queer California: Untold Stories

Great Hall

April 13–August 11, 2019

In Spring 2019, the Oakland Museum of California will present a major exhibition exploring California's LGBTQ+ history and culture. Going beyond mainstream narratives, *Queer California: Untold Stories* will deepen and expand our understanding of this history through a multifaceted exhibition. Visitors will experience powerful examples of social activism through contemporary artwork and historical materials and view rarely-seen artifacts, archival documents, photographs, costumes, and ephemera such as zines, stickers, and flyers. The exhibition aligns important milestones in LGBTQ+ culture with lesser-known stories, focusing on a diversity of queer identities, civil rights, and resistance to oppression.

Visitors themselves can share the events and places in California that have impacted their personal experiences, thereby creating a participatory in-gallery display that maps queer sites and reflects the range of the state's queer history and expression. *Queer California* presents a future of possibility; through themes of memory, mourning, anger, desire, and hope, this exhibition draws on histories of struggle for self-determination to help us imagine a more inclusive future. There is a \$4 charge for this special exhibition in addition to regular Museum admission.

No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man

Great Hall

October 12, 2019–February 16, 2020

With spectacular artwork and large-scale installations from one of the most widely-celebrated cultural events in the world, *No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man* takes over OMCA in Fall of 2019. Each year the weeklong Burning Man event attracts over 70,000 people to Nevada's Black Rock Desert. Participants create and build Black Rock City, a temporary metropolis where experimental art installations—some ritually burned to the ground—are the centerpiece for innovators, makers, and a burgeoning artistic community. The exhibition illuminates the values of Burning Man through its guiding Ten Principles: Radical Inclusion, Gifting, Decommodification, Radical Self-reliance, Radical Self-expression, Communal Effort, Civic Responsibility, Leaving No Trace, Participation, and Immediacy. The exhibition features many works by Bay Area artists including jewelry, costumes, "mutant" vehicles, sculptures, photography, and paintings. A companion exhibition within the gallery, *City of Dust: The Evolution of Burning Man*, organized by the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno, traces Burning Man's origins from its countercultural roots in the San Francisco Bay Area to the world-famous desert gathering it is today.

This immersive and multi-sensory experience will extend beyond the gallery walls into the Museum's public spaces—including an OMCA-commissioned 40-foot-tall outdoor temple by internationally-acclaimed sculptor David Best.

No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man is organized by the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery, *No Spectators* will make its final stop at OMCA after traveling to the Cincinnati Art Museum.

The museums especially thank colleagues from Burning Man Project, a nonprofit public benefit corporation, for their close collaboration and assistance throughout the preparation of this exhibition and tour.

Lead support for the exhibition was provided by Intel and Bently Foundation. Support for the exhibition's tour is provided by the C. F. Foundation, Atlanta, Georgia and the William R. Kenan Jr. Endowment Fund.

ON VIEW

Cruisin' the Fossil Coastline

***Gallery of California Art
Through March 17, 2019***

Drop back in time to see the natural environment of California in a new way. Discover the connections between art and science through fantastically colorful renderings by artist Ray Troll and the research of paleontologist Kirk Johnson, who made an incredible journey to map the ancient world with a fresh perspective. Together, the fossil-loving scientist and his artist friend paint a vivid picture of the land and creatures that once roamed the West Coast thousands of years ago. Learn how fossils teach us about how California's landscape, plants, and animals have evolved over millions of years. With the addition of sculpture, maps, a giant sloth—or *Paramylodon harlani*—and other fossils and bones from the collections of OMCA and the California Academy of Sciences, and a fun hands-on activity, this exhibition will thrill fossil fans and curious culture-seekers alike. The exhibition is organized by the Anchorage Museum.

Black Power

On view now in the Gallery of California History

Uncover the history of the Black Power movements in California with a compelling addition to the Gallery of California History. In response to the widely-popular 2016 exhibition *All Power to the People: Black Panthers at 50*, this new installation will illustrate the creative ways black anti-racist activists in California supported their communities and challenged the U.S. government. Focusing on the example of the Black Panther Party, *Black Power* will bring to light the tensions between a culturally and socially progressive California and examples of economic racism and oppression in the state. This moment in California history will be represented through historic photographs, provocative objects, iconic posters, paintings and interactive prompts that encourage visitors to take action out in the world. Learn more about the Bay Area role in this national story, and the impacts this history continues to have today.

Mildred Howard's TAP: Investigation of Memory

***Gallery of California Art
Through September 1, 2019***

Discover Mildred Howard's *TAP: Investigation of Memory*, a powerful multimedia installation that examines themes of identity, church culture, gentrification, dance, activism, and more. Born to activist parents, Howard's family lineage and community inform much of her work. Part of OMCA's Collection, this major artwork incorporates an antique shoe-shine stand from Oakland's historic California Hotel, once a cultural center for the Black community, as the altar-like

centerpiece, alongside white shoes and metal shoe taps arranged in a pattern covering the gallery floor. Symbolizing memories from her past and tap dance's influence on her life, learn how Howard's work has helped shape the narrative of activism in the Bay Area and continues to inspire artists today.

Take Root: Oakland Grows Food
Gallery of California Natural Sciences
Through November 2019

Unearth Oakland's multi-layered world of food in *Take Root: Oakland Grows Food*, an exhibition exploring aspects of growing food 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.

Question Bridge: Black Males
On view now in the Gallery of California Art

Hailed as one of the Bay Area's Top Exhibitions by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Question Bridge: Black Males* returns to the Oakland Museum of California's Gallery of California Art. Immerse yourself in intimate videos—woven together and arranged to simulate face-to-face conversations between participants—among a diverse group of over 160 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.

A recent acquisition to the Oakland Museum of California's permanent collection, *Question Bridge* is 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.

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 multi-disciplinary 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 will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2019 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.

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. Beginning April 3, Museum admission will be adjusted to \$16 general; \$11 seniors and students with valid ID, \$7 youth ages 9 to 17, free for children 8 and under and Museum Members, and there will be a \$5 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

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