

Oakland Museum of California

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OAKLAND MUSEUM OF CALIFORNIA ANNOUNCES NEW GALLERY INSTALLATION SHOWCASING DOROTHEA LANGE'S ICONIC PHOTOGRAPHS DOCUMENTING MAJOR SOCIAL ISSUES OF THE 20TH CENTURY

In Response to OMCA's Popular 2017 Exhibition *Dorothea Lange: Politics of Seeing*, An Expanded Presentation in OMCA's Gallery of California Art Illustrates the Power of Lange's Photography as Political and Social Activism

Dorothea Lange: Photography as Activism On View Beginning January 24, 2020

(OAKLAND, CA) January 24, 2020—The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) announces the opening of *Dorothea Lange: Photography as Activism*, an expanded section in the Museum's Gallery of California Art dedicated to world-renowned documentary photographer Dorothea Lange. Drawn from Lange's personal archive, which was **gifted to OMCA over 50 years ago**, and in response to OMCA's widely-popular, internationally-traveled 2017 exhibition *Dorothea Lange: Politics of Seeing*, a number of newly added photographs **illustrate the power of Lange's photography as a form of social activism**.

As the **owner of Lange's personal archive**—a gift from the artist that includes 40,000 negatives, 6,000 vintage prints, field notes, and personal memorabilia—OMCA has the unique opportunity to display Lange's most **iconic and career-defining photographs**. Organized by Curator of Photography & Visual Culture Drew Johnson, the installation more than doubled its former size in the Gallery of California Art, from 18 photographs to **47 photographs**, including both well-recognized and rarely seen vintage prints, as well as archival pigment prints made from Lange's original negatives in OMCA's collection.

Through the lens of her camera, Lange documented American life with riveting photographs that illuminated major social issues of the 20th century. This installation highlights Lange's socially conscious photographic work, focusing on her powerful documentation of the **Great Depression** from **Dust Bowl migrants** to **tenant farmers in the Deep South**, the **injustice of**

imprisoned Japanese Americans during World War II, **wartime shipyard workers** on the Homefront, and **urban criminal justice** during **Postwar California**.

Two interactive spaces allow visitors to explore photographic techniques that make an image more persuasive, such as **cropping, juxtaposition, and sequencing**. Visitors have the opportunity to experiment with these techniques using Lange’s images, mimicking her own artistic methods. Direct quotes from Lange and her subjects also shed light on the context and intentions behind the images on view.

“OMCA is fortunate to have Lange’s extraordinary personal archive in its collection,” said curator Drew Johnson. “Following the success of our 2017 major exhibition *Dorothea Lange: Politics of Seeing*, which **examined Lange’s works through a social justice lens**, we are thrilled to have a new, expanded home in our Core Art gallery dedicated to her enduring legacy. Lange was a **pioneer of documentary photography** in service of political activism, and her work will continue to **inspire new generations of artists and activists**.”

Dorothea Lange: Photography as Activism is now on view in OMCA’s Gallery of California Art.

UPCOMING

You Are Here: California Stories on the Map

Gallery of California Natural Science

February 14, 2020–February 14, 2022

We all use maps in our everyday lives—to navigate public transportation, find places to eat, and visualize big data like weather patterns or political opinions. But have you ever considered the deeper stories maps tell us? In *You Are Here: California Stories on the Map*, you’ll discover there’s more to maps than meets the eye. Showcasing a diverse range of maps from Oakland, the Bay Area, and California—from environmental surroundings and health conditions to community perspectives and creative artworks—experience how maps can be a powerful tool to share unique points of view and imagine a better future. Explore new perspectives of familiar places through maps made by the community, and mark your own stories on the community map inside the exhibition.

Hella Feminist: An Exhibition

Great Hall

April 25–August 23, 2020

Feminism. It’s a loaded word; as empowering to some as it is challenging for others. This Spring, we take on this complex and timely topic with *Hella Feminist: An Exhibition*, celebrating the lesser-known stories of feminism here in Oakland and the Bay Area.

Spurred by the #metoo movement and recent wave of progressive political activism, feminism today has become increasingly about how race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual identity are

interrelated, creating a movement that is more inclusive and more powerful than those that came before.

Organized around three core themes—mind, body, and spirit—the exhibition features fascinating historical artifacts, provocative contemporary artwork, and interactive elements. Showcasing everyday acts of resistance as well as historical flashpoints, *Hella Feminist* invites you to experience the concept of feminism in all its struggle, triumph, and hope; to re-think your relationship to the word and the ideas it represents; and to consider how all of us can take action to shape a more just future.

Edith Heath: A Life in Clay

Great Hall

June 27, 2020–January 3, 2021

Trailblazer. Rebel. Revolutionary. Discover the story of Edith Heath, founder and designer of Heath Ceramics. Heath transformed the ceramics industry, creating dinnerware from California clay for “Sunday best” and everyday use. Driven by the power of good design, and a commitment to her craft, Heath’s vision continues to live on through her stoneware and tile over 70 years later. Durable, not delicate, simple, yet stylish, Heath Ceramics is an icon of American design.

ON VIEW

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.

¡El Movimiento Vivo! Chicano Roots of El Día de los Muertos

Gallery of California Art

October 16, 2019 – February 16, 2020

Celebrate the 25th anniversary of OMCA's beloved El Día de los Muertos celebration with an exhibition inspired by the Chicano activists who introduced Día de los Muertos traditions to the United States in the 1970s. *¡El Movimiento Vivo! Chicano Roots of El Día de los Muertos* will honor and explore the lesser-known origins of Day of the Dead, and the ways these traditions continue to inspire social and political change today.

Visitors will encounter altars, artworks, and interactive elements that show how Chicano activists used Day of the Dead traditions to foster pride in their indigenous heritage and unify their communities. Experience a Oaxacan style *ofrenda* and hear first-hand stories of the Chicanos who went to Oaxaca to gather Day of the Dead traditions from elders. Honor members of the first Chicano generation and their enduring legacy through a series of colorful *ofrendas* created by contemporary artists, interactive features, and intergenerational conversations captured on film. Other elements—from historical objects, a mural, and a sculpture that sparked the first Day of the Dead celebrations at OMCA—will immerse viewers in the evolving identities, traditions, and artistic expressions of the Chicano community, both then and now.

Black Power

Gallery of California History

Ongoing

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.

Question Bridge: Black Males

Gallery of California Art

Ongoing

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 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.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) is at 1000 Oak Street, at 10th Street, in Oakland. Museum admission is \$16 general; \$11 seniors and students with valid ID, \$7 youth ages 9 to 17, and free for Members and children 8 and under. There is 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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