THE CIVIC POWER OF MUSEUMS

IMPACT REPORT
JULY 1, 2025–JUNE 30, 2026

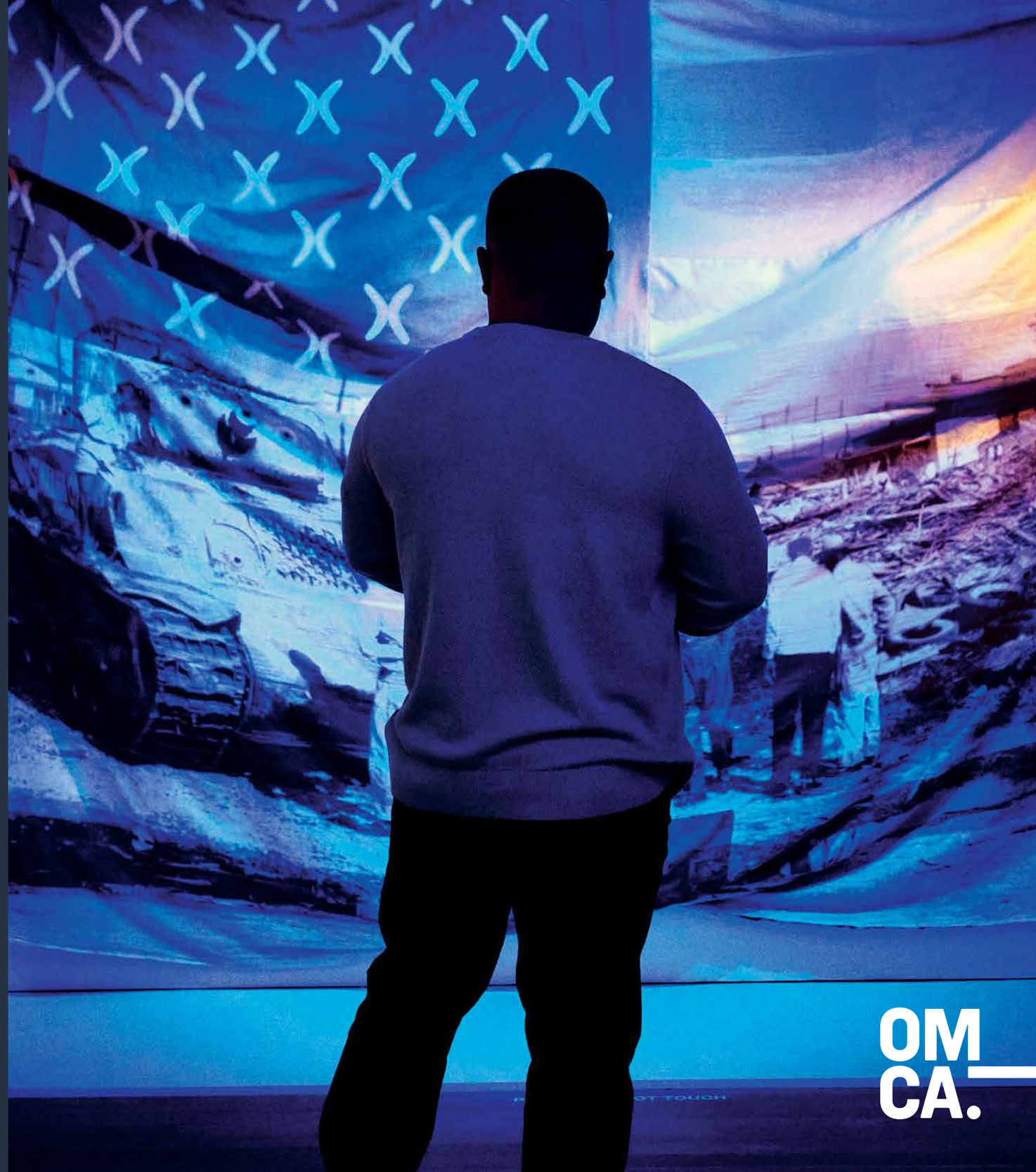




PHOTO: Kamiko Fujii

PHOTO: Christine Cueto



PHOTO: Kiki King

Dear OMCA Community,

We believe museums have a civic role to play in our communities, and that role feels particularly urgent at a moment when museums and the histories they hold are increasingly the subject of public debate. Recent attacks on the Smithsonian Museums underscore the importance of who gets to tell our national stories and whose histories are centered.

For our community, this means asking who has had the opportunity to thrive here, who has been displaced, and what kind of California we want to build together. At OMCA, we are committed to preserving and sharing the diverse, multifaceted histories of our communities, and creating space for these stories to be learned and felt by all.

Civic dialogue was essential in our recent exhibition, *Black Spaces: Reclaim & Remain*. Developed in collaboration with East Bay residents, this exhibition traced the rise of Black communities such as West Oakland and Russell City, and their subsequent displacement. **As one visitor to the exhibition shared, "My family lived through this history, and I never thought these stories would be told in a museum. I'm a third-generation Black Oaklander trying to build for a fourth."**

OMCA's civic power also extends across our campus. If you have dropped by on a summer Friday night, attended a Spotlight Sunday, or joined an exhibition opening celebration, you know that we bring people together. Whether it is dancing to a mariachi band at Día de los Muertos or sharing a moment of reflection on Native land stewardship in *Good Fire,* the Oakland Museum of California creates opportunities for people to learn, connect, and become inspired to take action.

We also know that civic participation begins with access. That's why we expanded our services to schoolchildren by making field trips free for the Oakland Unified School District and tripling subsidized transportation, helping ensure that more young people can experience the Museum.

We seek to fulfill our civic responsibility by not only helping preserve history, but also by helping our diverse communities create it. As we look toward the future, OMCA remains committed to being a place where the many stories, experiences, and aspirations of California can come together—a place where we can reckon honestly with our past, celebrate the communities shaping our present, and imagine the California we want to build together.

In the coming pages, you will find how we are working within our galleries and gardens, with collaborators and staff, to imagine and work toward a California for all. Thank you for making this possible.

Lori Fogarty

Lori Fogarty
Director and CEO

MUSEUMS MOVE CULTURE:

CULTURE MOVES JUSTICE

At a time when democratic values are being challenged, and history and truth are contested, we are committed to serving the public as both a **civic and civil institution**. We do this by helping build stronger connections between people. When people feel connected, they are more likely to care about one another and work together to strengthen society and democracy.

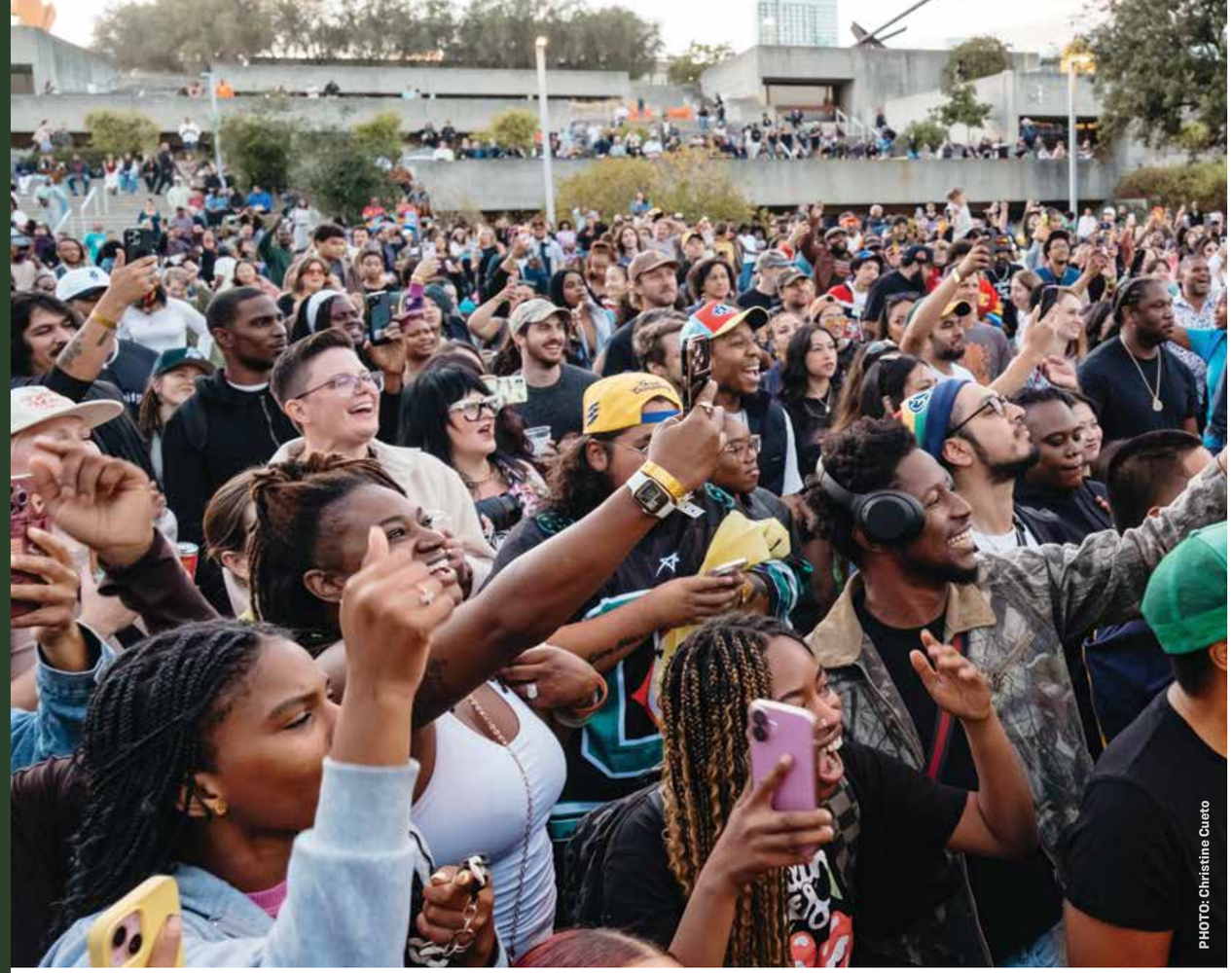


PHOTO: Christine Cueto

HOW WE ENGAGE WITH THE PUBLIC

We **create exhibitions** that share complex histories and stories of memory, identity, and empowerment. Last year this included *Black Spaces: Reclaim and Remain*, and *Good Fire: Tending Native Lands*. These exhibitions center community voices and include design elements to spark dialogue among our visitors.

We **create spaces where people from different backgrounds can come together and connect**—not just with people like themselves, but across differences. Our programs and events are designed to build these connections. This includes our *Friday Nights at OMCA* and annual festivals such as Día de los Muertos, Lunar New Year, and Juneteenth, which together reach over 100,000 people each year.

We work to make the museum accessible by **reducing financial, transportation, and physical barriers.** For example, this past school year, we removed fees for school programs for Oakland Unified School District students and increased transportation support, helping us reach about 25,000 students. More than half of our 200,000 visitors each year attend for free or at a discounted rate.

We **measure our impact and learn from it.** Our evaluation team surveys visitors about who they are, how satisfied they are, and whether they feel a sense of connection. More than half of our visitors last year were people of color, and about half (excluding school groups) were under age 45.

We **also partner with other organizations** to work toward shared goals. In Oakland, we helped form the Oakland Arts and Culture Collaborative, a group of more than 40 arts leaders working together to secure long-term funding for Alameda County's creative community.

HOW WE OPERATE INTERNALLY

We recognize and work in partnership with the Oakland Museum of California Workers United to **build a fair and respectful relationship through our labor agreement**. Our management stance is pro-Union.

We **pay staff fairly** so we can attract and keep strong employees. Our lowest-paid staff earns more than $30 per hour, and salaries are designed to be fair within the organization and competitive with the broader job market.

We make **financial decisions that reflect our mission and values.** This includes how we raise and spend money. We've updated our investment approach to align with our values and chosen an investment advisor to support that. We have also decided not to accept federal funding while current executive orders against diversity, equity, and inclusion are in place.

We work to ensure our **staff and Board reflect the communities we serve**. More than half of our staff and 75% of our Board members are people of color. We benchmark our internal staff demographics to Alameda County, where approximately 60% of residents identify as people of color. This helps us better understand and serve our community.

We **hold ourselves accountable in our relationships with community members, partner organizations, and Indigenous communities**. We work with Native advisors and local tribal leaders to guide how we represent Native cultures. This includes paying the Shuumi Land Tax to the Sogorea Te' Land Trust and ensuring Native voices are included in relevant programming. We also return sacred cultural items when appropriate, as part of supporting living Native communities and promoting healing.

At this moment in the U.S. and in the museum field, we believe museums must act with courage and stay true to their values. Museums are public institutions, and we have a responsibility to lead as well as serve.

Museums can and do move culture, and culture can help us move toward a future where everyone has access to the essential stories and expressions of human history and experience.

This statement was written by Lori Fogarty, Director and CEO, in 2025, and served as inspiration for two op-eds published that year under her name, in the San Francisco Chronicle and The Art Newspaper.

EXHIBITIONS:
A MORE COMPLETE STORY OF CALIFORNIA

TOTAL VISITORS	185,680



PHOTO: Kiki King

BLACK SPACES: RECLAIM & REMAIN

This exhibition centered on the histories of local East Bay communities, Russell City and West Oakland, highlighting the resilience and cultural contributions of Black residents in the face of systemic displacement. Through photographs, personal keepsakes, firsthand accounts, as well as new work by local artist Adrian Burrell, architect June Grant, and the Archive for Urban Futures with Moms 4 Housing, the exhibition showcased the vibrancy of 20th-century Black communities and culture, from lively jazz venues to Black-owned businesses, while also confronting the legacies of systemic displacement and imagining future spaces to speculate how Black communities can thrive today and tomorrow in the East Bay, without the threat of dispossession.


PHOTO: Paola Rojas

RADICAL ACTS

OMCA had a new opportunity this year to integrate student voices into the galleries. Staff collaborated with art students from Skyline High School to curate and reinstall the Radical Acts poster wall in the Gallery of California Art. Students chose a social justice poster from the 1960s-70s from OMCA's collection that spoke to them, and created their own political posters that relate to issues their communities are facing today, allowing them to connect past activist struggles to today's.


PHOTO: Kiki King

GOOD FIRE: TENDING NATIVE LANDS

Created in close collaboration with Northern Californian Native fire practitioners from multiple tribes, this interdisciplinary exhibition examined the past, present, and future of fire in California through the lens of indigenous fire practices. For centuries, indigenous cultures have practiced intentional controlled burns, rejuvenating California ecosystems in numerous ways. With interactive natural science installations and artworks by Native Californian artists, *Good Fire* highlighted connections between the exclusion of Native peoples from their homelands and environmental decline. It also emphasized the historical and contemporary activism of Native Californians to retain their ability to steward the land through responsible fire use.


PHOTO: Kiki King


PHOTO: Christine Cueto

MILDRED HOWARD: POETICS OF MEMORY

OMCA proudly presented the first major museum exhibition of East Bay artist Mildred Howard, known for her mixed media assemblages and sculptural installations that explore themes of belonging, migration, displacement, and the social construct of race. Spanning the five decades of Howard's practice, this exhibition showcased the breadth of her evocative work to date, including her early collage work and large-scale immersive installations, as well as archival materials from her studio. This exhibition exemplifies how art can be a way to grapple with the past and present and reflect on memory, identity, and place.


PHOTO: Christine Cueto







PHOTOS: Christine Cueto

EMPOWERING COMMUNITY

FRIDAY NIGHTS

Friday Nights @OMCA with Off the Grid is OMCA's free community gathering. Every Friday from April to October, we welcome thousands of families to our garden for free live performances, DJ sets, and hands-on activities such as salsa dancing lessons and drag storytime. With late-night access to OMCA galleries and food trucks featuring cuisines from around the world, our campus is overflowing with joy and energy on Friday nights. This event has been lauded in *The SF Chronicle, The Oaklandside*, and other local presses.

ATTENDED 52,641

31ST ANNUAL DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

Every October, our campus comes alive with community *ofrendas*, a *mercado* featuring artisan crafts from local vendors, and live performances for Día de Los Muertos. This year's *ofrenda*, created by the Día de los Muertos Committee, was centered on the symbol of the Tree of Life, and was dedicated specifically to departed educators, community activists, artists, and museum volunteers of the East Bay, whose time and talents have nourished our communities. For over three decades, this event provides a space of sacred gathering to remember and be in community.

ATTENDED 1,527

THURSDATES

In the winter, we revamped our late-night offerings with the renamed *ThursDates*, a more adult-focused community event on Thursday evenings from January through March. This weekly program provides connections through table games in Town Fare, and live figure drawing and intimate performances in the galleries.

ATTENDED 2,451

25TH ANNUAL LUNAR NEW YEAR

This year, OMCA celebrated a quarter-century of Lunar New Year programming rooted in Oakland's Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. We ushered in the year of the Fire Horse with a traditional lion dance performance, followed by live music and other cultural performances from pan-Asian groups across the Bay Area, including local multi-genre musical artist seiji oda, who incorporates NorCal rap and Japanese city pop. The celebration was punctuated by family-friendly activities like puppet-making, storytelling, and great locally prepared food.

ATTENDED 3,163



PHOTO: Christine Cueto



PHOTO: Kiki King



PHOTO: Christine Cueto

JUNETEENTH! AT THE MUSEUM

Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, when enslaved Black people in Galveston, Texas, were informed of their freedom—more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation. At this year's Juneteenth! at the Museum celebration, visitors experienced musical performances and DJ sets reflecting the ongoing innovation of Black music and culture. Guests enjoyed Pan-African and Black diasporic cuisine from Bay Area chefs and food vendors, alongside interactive workshops for all ages.

ATTENDED 3,674



PHOTO: Christine Cueto

THE MUSEUM FOR FUTURE LEADERS

STUDENTS AND ADULTS SERVED	26,972
FROM TITLE 1 SCHOOLS	58%

FREE FIELD TRIPS FOR OUSD

2025–2026 was the first school year that OMCA offered free field trips to all Oakland Unified School District schools, and more than tripled transportation scholarships. These offerings have enabled more students and educators to visit OMCA, a large reason we exceeded our attendance projections by over 2,000 guests for school participation this last school year. This program has been made possible through generous funding from the Daryl Lillie Fund for Oakland Students.

TEACHER FELLOWSHIP

OMCA selected eight 3rd and 4th grade teachers from East Bay schools for the 2026 cohort of Teacher Fellows. In a weeklong summer intensive program exploring OMCA collections and the Gallery of California Natural Sciences, teachers created curricula with a focus on Native California stewardship for healthy habitats and communities. This year, teachers will implement their curriculum and bring their classes to visit OMCA, giving students an opportunity to connect science standards to their lived experiences and learn Native Californian practices.

HISTORIC GIVING

GIFT OF CERAMICS AND $1M ENDOWMENT FROM BRIAN AND EDITH HEATH FOUNDATION

OMCA received a landmark gift from The Brian and Edith Heath Foundation of more than 100 objects by pioneering ceramicist Edith Heath (1911–2005). A trailblazing artist and entrepreneur, Heath revolutionized modern ceramics through distinctive clay bodies, nature-inspired glazes, and forms designed for everyday use. OMCA has collected and exhibited Heath's ceramics since the 1970s, and previously hosted the artist's first major survey, *Edith Heath: A Life in Clay* in 2021 and 2022. The gift included a $1 million endowment to support the long-term care of the Museum's collection of craft and decorative artworks.

67TH ANNUAL WHITE ELEPHANT SALE

The White Elephant Sale, presented by the Oakland Museum Women's Board, is the largest annual fundraising event for OMCA. 2026 was another record-breaking year for the sale, raising $3.3 million. A portion of the proceeds will go to OMCA's exhibitions, programs, collections, and general operations. To learn more about supporting OMCA by donating gently used items to the White Elephant Sale, please visit **whitelephantsale.org**



PHOTO: Installation view, ***Edith Heath: A Life in Clay***, January 23 - October 30, 2022, Oakland Museum of California. Photo by Christine Cueto, courtesy Oakland Museum of California.



PHOTO: Christine Cueto

NEW ART ACQUISITIONS



Saif Azzuz, *that time will come*, 2024.
Purchased with Deaccession Funds. Courtesy of Anthony Meier Fine Arts, Mill Valley.



Renée Leann Castro-Ring, *Rinihmu Pulte'irekne*, 2026.
Acquisition funded with gifts by exchange. Courtesy of the Artist.



Willard Van Dyke, *Mushrooms*, circa 1934.
Gift of Murray Van Dyke and Justen Van Dyke.



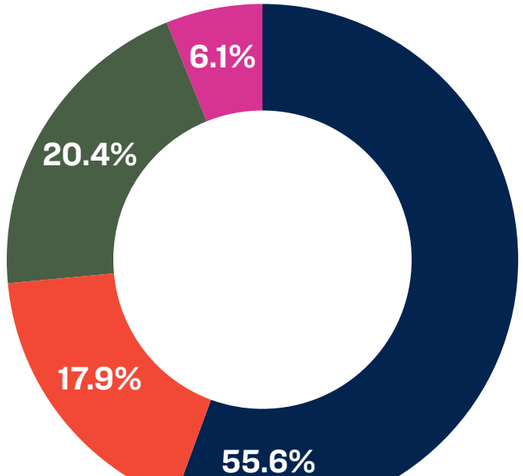


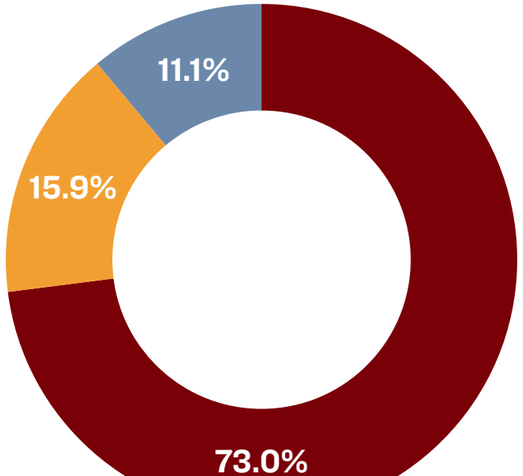




CLOCKWISE: Joan Brown, *Hummingbird Brooch, Monkey Brooch, Pyramid Pendant with "V" collar, Jaguar Earrings,* 1986.
Gift of Lenore Weseley in memory of Alvin and Jonathan Weseley.

FINANCIALS





OPERATING REVENUE

Fundraising	**$11,178,581**
Individuals	$6,846,658
Grants and Sponsorships	$1,409,496
Women's Board	$2,105,507
Membership	$816,919
City of Oakland Public Funding	**$3,608,060**
City of Oakland Grant Agreement	$3,000,000
Measure C Hotel Tax Fund Allocation	$608,060
Operating Funding from Endowment Donations	**$4,093,452**
Earned Revenue	**$1,229,676**
Ticketed Gallery Admissions	$611,674
Other Visitor-Driven Revenues	$485,292
Other Earned Revenue Sources	$132,710
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	**$20,109,769**

OPERATING EXPENSES

Program Services	**$14,837,264**
Exhibitions, Collections, and Curation	$10,429,954
Public and School Programs	$2,997,661
General and Administrative	**$3,243,172**
Fundraising	**$2,252,656**
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	**$20,333,092**
Deficit From Operations	**($223,323)**
Non-Operating Revenues (Net)*	**$5,163,782**
Consolidated Unrestricted Surplus	**$4,940,460**

* Financial overview includes non-operating revenues that come primarily through investments.

Financial overview is based on unaudited financials. OMCA posts audited financials at **museumca.org/about-us**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

JULY 1, 2025–JUNE 30, 2026

Michael Armstrong
Eileen Ash
Abbey Banks
Warren Breslau
Shanti Brien
Amy Chou
Sonya Clark-Herrera
Jose Corona
Vincent Davis
M. Quinn Delaney
Chloe Fagan-Tucker
Dorine Holsey Streeter
Darren Isom
Chris Johnson
Christina Kothari
Aneesh Krishna
Sabrina Landreth
Gabe Martinez
Percy McGee
Karina Moreno
Jack Morris
Jenna Nicholas
Trevor Parham
Peter Pervere
Morgan Simon
Vivian Tan
Sydney Thomas
Rahsaan Thompson
Anarghya Vardhana
Julayne Virgil
Dena Watson-Lamprey
Linda Wendel
Judy Wilkinson
Brock Williams
David Yin

JULY 1, 2026–JUNE 30, 2027

Michael Armstrong
Eileen Ash
Warren Breslau
Shanti Brien
Amy Chou
Sonya Clark-Herrera
Jose Corona
Vincent Davis
M. Quinn Delaney
Chloe Fagan-Tucker
Dorine Holsey Streeter
Darren Isom
Chris Johnson
Christina Kothari
Aneesh Krishna
Sabrina Landreth
Bobby C. Martin, Jr.
Anita I. Martinez
Gabe Martinez
Percy McGee
Karina Moreno
Jenna Nicholas
John Palmer
Peter Pervere
Morgan Simon
Vivian Tan
Sydney Thomas
Anarghya Vardhana
Julayne Virgil
Dena Watson-Lamprey
Judy Wilkinson
Brock Williams
David Yin



PHOTO: Christine Cioto

OMCA.

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Oakland, CA 94607
museumca.org



FRONT PHOTO: Kiki King
THIS PHOTO: Christine Cuero