

**SFMOMA Launches Initiatives to Increase Art Access
and Enhance Community Welcome This Winter**

**Museum Offers Free Admission to Second Floor Exhibitions,
Including SECA Art Award Exhibition Opening December 17**

**New Indoor and Outdoor Installations Unveiled,
Including Recently Acquired Immersive Installation by Artist Wu Tsang
Featured in the Current Venice Biennale**



SAN FRANCISCO, CA (November 10, 2022)—The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) announced today a series of initiatives developed to increase access to its art installations and provide its community with new amenities. From December 17, 2022 through May 29, 2023, coinciding with the presentation of the **2022 SECA Art Award Exhibition** dedicated to Bay Area artists, SFMOMA will offer free admission for all to the museum’s Floor 2 galleries. This provides audiences with the opportunity to engage with the work of the five 2022 SECA Art Award winners—Binta Ayofemi, Maria Guzmán Capron, Cathy Lu, Marcel Pardo Ariza and Gregory Rick—as well as with a wide selection of major works

from the museum’s collection on view throughout Floor 2, including works by acclaimed artists Ruth Asawa, David Huffman, Henri Matisse, Ana Mendieta, Robert Rauschenberg, Mark Rothko, Wayne Thiebaud and Mickalene Thomas. With this decision, the museum recognizes some of the ongoing challenges wrought by the pandemic and encourages the public to experience its over 62,000 square feet of free-to-see space installed with inspiring works by both local and international artists.

This winter, SFMOMA will unveil artist Wu Tsang’s immersive video and sound installation ***Of Whales*** (2022) in the museum’s Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Atrium, another space that is free to the public. Acquired by the museum this fall and currently included in the 59th Venice Biennale, the installation is part of Tsang’s multidisciplinary project inspired by Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*. Imagined from the perspective of the whale and incorporating psychedelic extended reality (XR-generated) oceanscapes, *Of Whales* interweaves a surreal exploration of Melville’s world with a postcolonial and environmental reading of the novel.

Also starting this winter, new art-driven presentations will be visible on the exterior of the museum. Bay Area-based illustrator Jocelyn Tsaih has been invited to re-imagine the visual experience of SFMOMA’s Third Street and Howard Street entrances, enlivening the museum’s doorways with vibrant, whimsical imagery. The Howard Street corridor (between Howard and Natoma Streets) will also be installed with large-scale works infused with inspirational messages created by the late, beloved, San Francisco artist Susan O’Malley. Additionally, Oakland-based risograph printing and

publishing house, Floss Editions (run by Meg Fransee and Aaron Gonzalez), will install playful new graphics at Steps Coffee on the museum’s Floor 2.

Lastly, SFMOMA will celebrate the public opening of a new ground floor restaurant this winter, offering visitors a lively communal environment, brasserie menu and newly created bar. The new restaurant will include indoor and outdoor seating to establish connections with both the neighborhood and the activities inside the museum. To mark the debut of *Of Whales*, SFMOMA will develop a specialty cocktail with Tsang that will be available at the restaurant bar.

“The interwoven initiatives launching this winter are guided by our desire to enhance the sense of welcome and hospitality at the museum,” said Christopher Bedford, Helen and Charles Schwab Director of SFMOMA. “As we all continue to emerge from the pandemic and subsequent recovery, SFMOMA is committed to fostering community connection and engagement within our walls and in our neighborhood. By increasing access to extraordinary works of art, by bringing art experiences out onto the street and by providing amenities like casual dining, we are working to reinvigorate our neighborhood and make the museum an active and inviting hub for the community. These principles will continue to drive our work into the future.”

More About the 2022 SECA Art Award Exhibition

Since 1967, the Society for the Encouragement of Contemporary Art (SECA) has recognized SECA Art Award recipients with an exhibition at SFMOMA and inclusion in an accompanying publication. Each artist featured in the upcoming exhibition will have a dedicated gallery to present new works, inviting audiences to immerse themselves in each artist’s practice. Information about the 2022 SECA Art Award recipients follows:

- **Binta Ayofemi** retunes the museum through material interventions and activations culminating in an immersive installation within the Floor 2 Learning Lounge that illuminates the influence of Black abstraction. The project expands her work with urban spaces to highlight Black and Indigenous presence and legacies of Black joy.
- Constructed from a vibrant patchwork of hand-sewn textiles and applied paint, **Maria A. Guzmán Capron**’s three-dimensional giantess descends from the ceiling and invites us into her dreamscape, where a series of powerful and vulnerable figures exist in a perpetual state of transformation.
- Inspired by Nüwa, a Chinese creation goddess, **Cathy Lu**’s installation cascades from the ceiling in garlands of long-nailed hands and corner-store fruits, all deftly shaped from clay. The work extends Lu’s interest in manipulating Chinese cultural references to deconstruct assumptions about Asian American identity.
- **Marcel Pardo Ariza** will honor Bay Area trans leaders in photographic portraits that appropriate Catholic altarpieces featuring saints. Exploring the relationship between kinship and queerness, the vibrant images hang on walls saturated with color and jeweled patterns.
- **Gregory Rick**’s large-scale paintings depict complex scenes of racial conflict and community with vibrant, layered imagery. Figures battle, protest and commune across canvases exploring the 1992 LA Riots, Black incarceration in the U.S. and other endemic cultural issues that remain fiercely relevant.

The *2022 SECA Art Award Exhibition* is curated by Andrea Nitsche-Krupp, SFMOMA’s assistant curator of media arts, and Jovanna Venegas, SFMOMA’s assistant curator of contemporary art. Nitsche-Krupp and Venegas will edit the publication, which includes essays on the five 2022 SECA Art Award winners.

More Free-to-See Art on Floor 2 Starting December 17

Newly free-to-see galleries this winter include *Open Ended: Painting and Sculpture, 1900 to Now*, a perennial favorite featuring beloved works from SFMOMA's permanent collection. Also currently on view is *Joan Brown + Friends*, a companion show to SFMOMA's major Joan Brown retrospective. Featuring an interconnected network of artists working in the Bay Area from around the 1950s to the 1980s, the works included in the presentation reflect many of the currents and conversations driving the enigmatic practices of Bay Area artists during this period.

In addition to the newly free-to-see Floor 2 galleries, SFMOMA already offers nearly 45,000 square feet of free, art-filled public space. This currently includes access to Diego Rivera's *Pan American Unity* mural in the Roberts Family Gallery, Julie Mehretu's diptych *HOWL, eon (I, II)*, the Koret Education Center's featured community residency with Acción Latina and Steps Coffee, SFMOMA's new café located right off the Roman Steps in Schwab Hall. Steps Coffee serves illy coffee, tea, desserts and features a community bookshelf, puzzle table and charging stations.

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

151 Third Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art is one of the largest museums of modern and contemporary art in the United States and a thriving cultural center for the Bay Area. Our remarkable collection of painting, sculpture, photography, architecture, design and media arts is housed in a LEED Gold-certified building designed by the global architects Snøhetta and Mario Botta. In addition to our seven gallery floors, SFMOMA offers 45,000 square feet of free, art-filled public space open to all.

Visit [sfmoma.org](https://www.sfmoma.org) or call 415.357.4000 for more information.

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