

## SFMOMA Unveils Schedule of Dynamic Exhibitions This Summer and Fall

### Experience the Art of Pacita Abad, Wolfgang Tillmans, Fernando Palma Rodríguez and Others

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** (March 28, 2023, updated July 21, 2023) – The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) announces an outstanding slate of exhibitions opening this summer and fall, with survey exhibitions of works by Wolfgang Tillmans and Pacita Abad, an installation of robotic sculptures by Fernando Palma Rodríguez, and other presentations of modern and contemporary art. These exhibitions spotlight artists from California, across the U.S. and abroad, charting connections between local and global audiences.

Inspired by Yoko Ono's *Mend Piece*, ***What Matters: A Proposition in Eight Rooms*** gathers contemporary artworks that show how artists may respond to the prompt of "what matters?"—whether through choice of artistic materials or their considerations of timely issues and relationships.

In ***Sitting on Chrome***, rafa esparza, Guadalupe Rosales and Mario Ayala explore the embodied experience and social dimensions of lowrider cruising. Drawing on SFMOMA's permanent collection, ***Sea Change: Photographs from the Collection*** considers how photography registers change, bearing witness to cultural, political and environmental shifts across time. In ***Marshall Brown Projects: Dequindre Civic Academy***, an installation of architectural drawings, models and collages reimagines the future of a neglected Detroit city block. For his *New Work* exhibition, **Fernando Palma Rodríguez** constructs an installation of sculptures that enact a Mesoamerican creation story.

Two artists' museum survey exhibitions arrive at SFMOMA this fall: the first showcasing the boldly colorful textiles, paintings and sculptures of **Pacita Abad**; the other taking an in-depth look at the celebrated work in photography, video and multimedia arts of **Wolfgang Tillmans**.

"The presentations scheduled for our summer and fall seasons offer an exciting mix of local and global perspectives, reflecting our broader mission to provide a platform for our vibrant local community of artists while also engaging with dialogues from across the world," said Christopher Bedford, Helen and Charles Schwab Director of SFMOMA. "Our approach to the forthcoming program has been guided by the vision to open as many doors to as many

people as possible at SFMOMA. We look forward to welcoming visitors to experience the diverse spectrum of art on view."



***What Matters: A Proposition in Eight Rooms***

Opening July 22, 2023

Floor 4

*What Matters: A Proposition in Eight Rooms* features thought-provoking contemporary works from the museum’s collection that offer individual artistic responses to questions about life and art. Presented as a series of episodes with rotating artworks, the first episode includes works by Matthew Barney, Rosa Barba, João Maria Gusmão + Pedro Paiva, Walter Hood, Byron Kim, Tatsuo Miyajima, Yoko Ono, Ebony G. Patterson, Lorna Simpson and Naama Tsabar.

These works propose an engagement with both the physical and the ephemeral, considering the tangible matter of artistic media as well as symbolic actions and urgent subject matters. Presented across eight rooms, *What Matters* addresses materials, conditions of space and architecture and, most importantly, human relationships. The first episode’s spiritual center is Yoko Ono’s *MEND PIECE, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art version (1966/2021)*, where visitors will be invited to sit together at a table and discover their own means of repairing broken ceramic cups and saucers. In this participatory work, the communal act of mending furthers efforts to, in Ono’s words, “mend the earth.”

In the second episode of *What Matters*, opening in 2024, works by contemporary artists Abraham Cruzvillegas, Sky Hopinka, Deana Lawson and Guadalupe Maravilla will continue the exploration of collective healing, impermanence and intentionality.

Image: Yoko Ono, *Mend Piece* (Galerie Lelong, New York City version), 1966/2015 (installation view from *Yoko Ono: THE RIVERBED* at Galerie Lelong, New York 2015-2016); Artwork © Yoko Ono; photo: Kris Graves

Presenting support for *What Matters: A Proposition in Eight Rooms* is provided by The Norah and Norman Stone Fund for Exhibitions of Contemporary Art.



***Sitting on Chrome: Mario Ayala, rafa esparza, and Guadalupe Rosales***

August 5, 2023–February 19, 2024

Floor 2

From their pinstriped, stylized exteriors to their lush, upholstered interiors, lowrider cars express individual and collective identities and can transform public spaces into sites of celebration. Artists rafa esparza, Guadalupe Rosales and Mario Ayala have each engaged different aspects of lowrider aesthetics and practices in their work, reflecting on their own early experiences cruising in Los Angeles. The customized cars are achieved over time and through the collaboration of drivers, their families and communities for the sake of joy and visual pleasure. For *Sitting on Chrome*, the three artists are working together for the first time to conceive an exhibition that explores the embodied experience and social dimensions of lowrider cruising. Following a newly commissioned mural by all three artists, four galleries feature paintings, sculptures, photographs, archival materials and a sound installation—some which have never been publicly displayed. Each of these immersive spaces engages the senses to evoke the experience of cruising while examining themes including memory and

self-authored histories, queer experiences, issues of policing and the relationship between humans and machines. esparza, Rosales and Ayala celebrate and unsettle the lowrider while highlighting the communities that have established this cultural practice to create spaces for creativity, resistance and community visibility.

Image: rafa esparza, *Corpo RanfLA: Terra Cruiser*, 2022; courtesy the artist; photo: Fabian Guerrero

Generous support of *Sitting on Chrome: Mario Ayala, rafa esparza, and Guadalupe Rosales* is provided by Chara Schreyer and Gordon Freund, and Sonya Yu.

Exhibition production generously supported by Kvadrat.



***Sea Change: Photographs from the Collection***

September 2, 2023–February 19, 2024

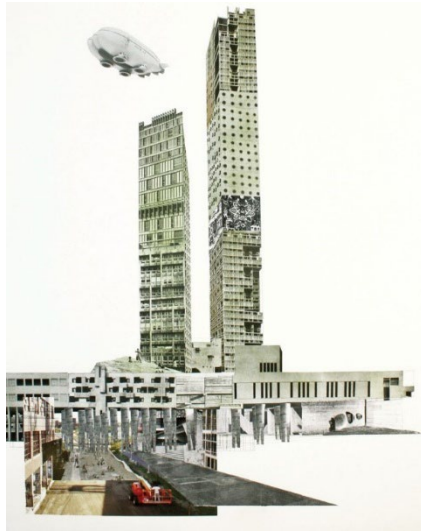
Floor 3

*Sea Change: Photographs from the Collection* explores how photography registers change, bearing witness to cultural, political and environmental shifts across time. Presented as a suite of eight transhistorical thematic and monographic galleries, the exhibition approaches the topic of change from various angles. Placing historical and contemporary works in conversation, this permanent collection exhibition will offer a survey of the history of photography that spotlights recent museum acquisitions and works by underrecognized artists.

*Sea Change* features works by more than 50 artists, including Takashi Arai, Jonathan Calm, Tina Barney, Guanyu Xu and Zoe Strauss, as well as single galleries devoted to the works of

Ilse Bing and beloved Bay Area photographer Reagan Louie. Reflecting SFMOMA's mission to connect its audience to the art of our time, the exhibition reveals how artists have used photography to examine moments of change both past and present.

Image: Richard Misrach, *Desert Fire #1*, 1983, printed 2016; collection SFMOMA, gift of the artist; © Richard Misrach, courtesy Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco



***Marshall Brown Projects: Dequindre Civic Academy***

August 12, 2023–May 27, 2024

Floor 3

*Marshall Brown Projects: Dequindre Civic Academy* reimagines the future of a Detroit city block in an installation of architectural drawings, models and collages. Approaching urban design through a conceptual, multidisciplinary lens, Marshall Brown considers the possibilities of architecture to revitalize areas that have had historically limited access to resources, due to systemic inequality, depopulation and infrastructural decline. *Dequindre Civic Academy* highlights Brown's innovative approach to solution-oriented urban design, where architecture facilitates and stimulates a progressive vision for civic life. The city-within-a-city is a proposal for a self-contained system that caters to all the needs of its multicultural, multigenerational inhabitants, spanning housing, education, commerce and leisure.

*Dequindre Civic Academy* was originally commissioned for *The Architectural Imagination*, an exhibition of speculative architectural projects at the U.S. Pavilion in the 2016 Venice Architecture Biennale.

Image: Marshall Brown, *Towards a Coordinate Unit from the Dequindre Civic Academy*, 2016; San Francisco Museum of Art, Accessions Committee Fund purchase; © Marshall Brown



***New Work: Fernando Palma Rodríguez***

September 21, 2023–January 28, 2024

Floor 4

Fernando Palma Rodríguez brings SFMOMA’s *New Work* gallery to life this fall with an installation that recalls a Mesoamerican creation story enacted by a series of newly made mechatronic sculptures that blend mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and computer science. In the story, four gods representing the cardinal directions preserve order and give structure to our understanding of reality, and the sculptures enact this narrative as characters in a play. Using materials such as ladders, chairs, electronic sensors, soil, and other domestic and natural objects, the exhibition is intended to instill in the public a heightened sense of urgency driven by climate change and a desire for sustainability.

Palma Rodríguez’s installation, *Chicuace ilhuitl (6-sky)*, aims to connect the ongoing struggle around land and water rights in his home community of Milpa Alta, an agricultural region of Nahua origin that supplies much of Mexico City with its clean water, to a broader conversation around environmental crises. Each robotic character is activated by electronic hardware that taps into distant meteorological phenomena, reflecting the artist’s desire to give nature a “voice,” and to engage the viewer in a conversation with issues of environmental concern.

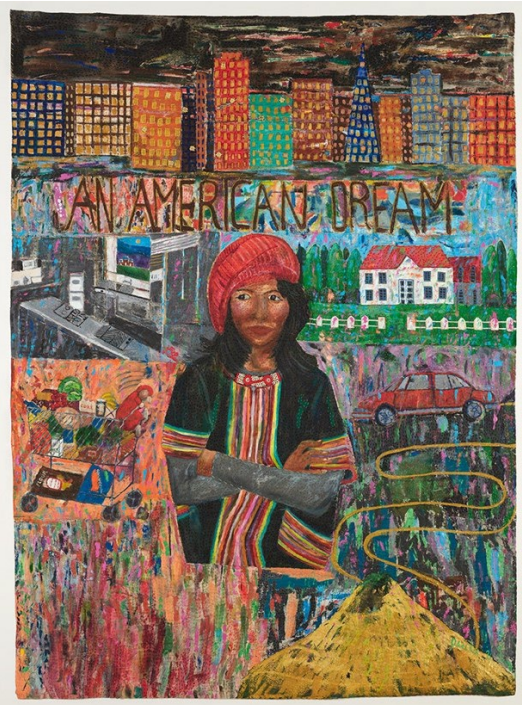
Since 1987, SFMOMA’s *New Work* series has provided a platform for artists to experiment with a new idea or body of work. The series focuses on the innovative ideas and visions of living artists and has played a key role in shaping the breadth and character of the museum’s collection and programming. Through *New Work*, SFMOMA has organized early exhibitions



with artists such as Matthew Barney, Marilyn Minter, Kara Walker and Christopher Wool, all of whom received their first solo museum shows through the series.

Image: Fernando Palma Rodríguez, *Xi mo matlazacan ce cehce*, 2006 (installation view, Gaga, Los Angeles, 2018); courtesy the artist and Gaga, Mexico City and Los Angeles

Generous support for *New Work: Fernando Palma Rodríguez* is provided by Alka and Ravin Agrawal, Adriane Iann and Christian Stolz, and Robin Wright and Ian Reeves.



**Pacita Abad**

October 21, 2023–January 28, 2024

Floor 4

The first retrospective of Pacita Abad brings together the most significant presentation of her exuberant and multifaceted work ever shown in the U.S. The exhibition includes approximately 60 works, showcasing her experiments in different mediums, including painting, sculpture, textiles and works on paper. The exhibition is anchored by Abad’s large-scale “trapuntos”—grandly scaled, painted canvases that she stitched and stuffed in a process akin to quilting. Throughout her 32-year career, the artist centered the triumphs and adversities of people on the periphery of power, as seen in her series *Social Realist*, *Immigrant Experience* and *Masks and Spirits*. Abad’s bold, colorful works are deeply personal expressions of her lived experience, and the exhibition celebrates the multifaceted work of

an artist whose vibrant visual, material and conceptual concerns are as urgent today as they were three decades ago.

Though she became a U.S. citizen in 1994, Abad lived for several years in a number of countries around the world, including Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea, the Dominican Republic, Kenya, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Sudan and Yemen. Through her travels, she interacted with myriad artistic communities, incorporating a diversity of cultural traditions—from Korean ink brush painting to Indonesian batik—into her expansive practice. Abad’s global, peripatetic existence is reflected in the portability of her works and in her use of textiles, a medium often associated with female labor and historically marginalized as craft.

*Pacita Abad* is organized by the Walker Art Center, and curated by Victoria Sung, Phyllis C. Wattis Senior Curator at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive and former Associate Curator, Visual Arts, Walker Art Center, with Matthew Villar Miranda, curatorial fellow, Visual Arts.

Image: Pacita Abad, *If My Friends Could See Me Now*, 1991. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, purchase, by exchange, through a gift of Peggy Guggenheim. Courtesy Pacita Abad Art Estate and Tina Kim Gallery. Photo: Charles Roussel.



***Wolfgang Tillmans: To look without fear***

November 11, 2023–March 3, 2024

Floor 7



The most comprehensive museum survey to date of the celebrated work of Wolfgang Tillmans comes to SFMOMA this November. With unique groupings of the artist's iconic photographs, video work and multimedia installations displayed according to a loose chronology, this exhibition highlights Tillmans's inventive and sensitive approach to artmaking. Organized by the Museum of Modern Art in New York, SFMOMA's presentation of this survey is the artist's solo debut in San Francisco.

Charting the development of Tillmans's production beginning in the 1980s, *To look without fear* offers viewers an in-depth look at the artist's career through the present. From early experiments with a photocopier to acclaimed works in portraiture, ecstatic images of New York City and Berlin nightlife, and abstractions done without the use of a camera, the broad range of the artist's subject matter reveals his steadfast commitment to engage unflinchingly with the world through his art.

*To look without fear* highlights Tillmans's unusual approach to photographic presentation, which he developed early in his career. Affixing his work to gallery walls at various levels with tape, binder clips, steel pins and only the occasional picture frame, Tillmans's site-specific installations collect his work in dynamic constellations of imagery that eschew the conventions of art display.

*Wolfgang Tillmans: To look without fear* is organized by Roxana Marcoci, The David Dechman Senior Curator and Acting Chief Curator, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, with Caitlin Ryan, Curatorial Assistant, and Phil Taylor, former Curatorial Assistant, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Image: Wolfgang Tillmans, *Lutz & Alex sitting in the trees*, 1992; courtesy the artist, David Zwirner, New York / Hong Kong, Galerie Buchholz, Berlin / Cologne, Maureen Paley, London

Generous support for *Wolfgang Tillmans: To Look Without Fear* is provided by Sakurako and William Fisher.

**San Francisco Museum of Modern Art**

151 Third Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Adult general admission to SFMOMA is \$25; admission for seniors 65 years and older is \$22; and admission for visitors ages 19 through 24 is \$19. General admission and special exhibitions for all visitors aged 18 and younger are free.

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 now offers more than 62,000 square feet of free art-filled public space open to all.

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

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