

## SFMOMA ANNOUNCES MAJOR EXHIBITION EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF SPORTS ON CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

*Get in the Game* Features Roughly 200 Objects, Including Significant  
Works of Art, Innovative Design, and Interactive Experiences

On View at SFMOMA October 19, 2024–February 18, 2025



**SAN FRANCISCO, CA (February 1, 2024)**— Sports serve as a major driver for artistic and technological innovation, community building and debates about social and cultural priorities and norms. From October 19, 2024–February 18, 2025, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) will present *Get in the Game*—its largest exhibition organized to date—exploring the powerful role of sports in contemporary culture. The forthcoming exhibition will examine how sports permeate culture, bring people together in shared experience and offer a critical lens through which to consider ongoing conversations about gender, race, national identity and the human body, as well as the will and desire to compete and succeed. Unfolding across multiple floors and approximately 15,000 square feet, the presentation will feature roughly 200 objects in different mediums. On view will be paintings, sculptures and mixed media works by some of today’s most important artists, as well as design breakthroughs in gear and apparel, and participatory installations that visitors can play. Together, the works in the exhibition will capture the potency of sports in shaping the

aesthetics, inspirations and memorable experiences of our daily lives.

*Get in the Game* is curated by Christopher Bedford, Helen and Charles Schwab Director of SFMOMA; Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher, Helen Hilton Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design SFMOMA; Seph Rodney, independent curator and writer; and Katy Siegel, Research Director, Special Program Initiatives, SFMOMA. To bring the visual and emotional exuberance of sports into the museum context and encourage audience engagement, the exhibition will be designed by local design firm fuseproject, led by Yves Béhar. A publication will also accompany *Get in the Game*, featuring commissioned illustrations by artist AJ Dungo, and texts by a range of scholars, journalists, artists and athletes, as well as the exhibition curators.

“Creating exhibitions that are responsive to the happenings in our daily life and position art in dialogue with subjects of relevance, meaning and interest to a broad community is core to SFMOMA’s vision,” said Christopher Bedford, SFMOMA’s Helen and Charles Schwab Director. “*Get in the Game* perfectly encapsulates this drive, exploring the confluence of culture and sports and the many ways in which they influence each other. The exhibition creates space for dynamic conversations about identity, physicality, passion, ambition, resilience, and so much more. We welcome the public to experience this unique opportunity to look anew at the inspiring ways that sports, art, design and culture intersect.”

*Get in the Game* will be expansive in its representation of sports, with art works and design objects that reference popular team sports such as football, baseball, basketball and soccer; Olympic and solo competition, including swimming, gymnastics and figure skating; as well as skateboarding, martial arts and video gaming. An equally diverse range of artists will address sports in major works by Emma Amos, Mario Ayala, Ernie Barnes, Kevin Beasley, Karla Diaz, Nicole Eisenman, Derek Fordjour, Jeffrey Gibson, Savannah Leaf, Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Catherine Opie, Gabriel Orozco, Paul Pfeiffer, Cheryl Pope, Robert Pruitt, Ben Sakoguchi, William Scott, Joan Semmel, Gary Simmons and Hank Willis Thomas, among many others. Contemporary art will be joined by fashion, athletic uniforms and gear, technology-infused objects such as football helmets and motocross steering wheels and representations of the spaces where sports are played. In addition, SFMOMA will commission new installations by cartoonist Gene Luen Yang and artist and educator Jenifer K. Wofford as part of the museum’s *Bay Area Walls* series, which invites local artists to create site-responsive wall projects.

The exhibition will be organized around key themes relating to winning and losing; the experiences of fans; the inherent boundary-pushing nature of sports; the social and cultural contexts in which sports exist; and the mental and physical focus and duress of individual athletes. Object installations will be further punctuated with video and photography of major events in sports history, grounding the featured works in collective moments and offering

new insights into the role of sports in social change. Participatory installations will invite visitors into active play and foster direct connections to the exhibition. Woven throughout *Get in the Game* will be opportunities to examine significant social, political and cultural dialogues through the lens of the sports experience.

## **CATALOGUE**

An accompanying graphic-novel-style publication creates an engaging visual world that brings together an array of voices and perspectives on themes central to *Get in the Game*. It includes nine artist/athlete dialogues; a reprinted poem by Natalie Diaz; a foreword by activist, advocate and two-time FIFA World Cup gold medalist Megan Rapinoe; and the following essays: Jay Caspian Kang on youth sports, Frank A. Guridy on stadia and their role in American society, Sara Hendren on goalball and the history of adaptive sports, Theresa Runstedtler on race and mental health in sports, Bruce Schoenfeld on the data analysis revolution in baseball and Seph Rodney on the competitive drive. The book features text-paired illustrations as well as representations of iconic moments in sports history and related activism by artist and surfer AJ Dungo.

## **ORGANIZATION**

*Get in the Game* is organized by SFMOMA and curated by Christopher Bedford, Helen and Charles Schwab Director of SFMOMA; Jennifer Dunlop Fletcher, Helen Hilton Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design SFMOMA; Seph Rodney, independent curator and writer; and Katy Siegel, Research Director, Special Program Initiatives, SFMOMA.

## **SUPPORT**

Lead support for *Get in the Game* is provided by Bank of America.

Major support is provided by Mary Jo and Dick Kovacevich.

Significant support is provided by Mary Jane Elmore, Nancy and Alan Schatzberg, and anonymous.

Meaningful support is provided by Maryellen and Frank Herringer.

## **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 now offers over 45,000 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.

Follow us on Twitter for updates and announcements: @SFMOMA\_Press

**Media Contacts**

Clara Hatcher Baruth, [chatcher@sfmoma.org](mailto:chatcher@sfmoma.org), 415.357.4177

Alina Sumajin, [alina@paveconsult.com](mailto:alina@paveconsult.com), 646.369.2050

**Image Credits:**

Hank Willis Thomas, *Guernica*, 2016; courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York; © Hank Willis Thomas; photo: courtesy of the artist