

USC Pacific Asia Museum

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

USC PACIFIC ASIA MUSEUM ANNOUNCES A NEW PLAN OF ACTION TO DECONSTRUCT ORIENTALISM THROUGH COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT, NEW EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMMING

September 22, 2020 (Pasadena, CA) - USC Pacific Asia Museum (USC PAM) announced today a new plan of action to decolonize its collections and challenge notions of the Orient in its exhibitions and programming. As an integral part of the University of Southern California, this plan will advance USC PAM's mission: "to create inspiring encounters with the art, history and culture of Pacific Asia that promotes intercultural understanding in the service of elevating our shared sense of humanity." In recognition of the role arts institutions must play to advance change, USC PAM acknowledges the following:

The Orient is a problematic historical framework used to collapse the diverse identities of peoples and cultures across Asia and the Pacific Islands into socially and culturally constructed others. If we are to grapple with the legacies of colonialism that exist within our museum, the Orient has to be a focus. As the leading university art museum dedicated to the arts and cultures of Asia and the Pacific Islands (API), USC PAM is aware that historically museums played a key role in constructing Orientalism and we must play an equally key role in deconstructing it.

USC PAM is proud to announce a robust suite of calendared exhibitions, programs and initiatives that illuminate how we will execute on this plan over the course of the next year.

Fall 2020 - Fall 2021 Calendar

Collection Management

New Era, New PAM - *The Making of...*

The work of decolonizing our collection by deconstructing the Orientalist lens is taking shape now. We are enlisting researchers, scholars, critics, community members, and artists into our process to help us ask of our collection: how do we restore the voices, identities and stories rendered invisible by Orientalism?

Transparent Access: USC PAM will deeply engage the public with the life of this work, providing transparent access. We will post our problematic findings across our website, and social media weekly. And every month our public programs will convene our staff, our docents, researchers, scholars, critics, community members, and artists with the public to have critical conversations about our findings, their meanings and how we fold both into our practices.

Exhibitions

We Are Here: Contemporary Art and Asian Voices in L.A.

Through Spring 2021

Available for viewing both online and in person, this exhibition features seven female artists of diverse Asian heritages. *We Are Here* challenges visitors to rethink boundaries of "Asian art," and addresses the rising generation of Asian voices bringing plural perspectives to the experience of living and belonging in Los Angeles. Each of the exhibiting artists compels viewers to contemplate one's sense of place and self. Their artworks spark important conversations about the creation of art, memory, and meaning in social and cultural spaces. Interwoven in this exhibition are narratives that celebrate L.A. while speaking to the complex nature of transnational life in the twenty-first century.

Movements: Battles and Solidarity by Tran, T. Kim-Trang

Late Spring 2021

Movements: Battles and Solidarity is a large-scale three-channel video installation on handmade screens that will be presented at USC PAM in July 2020. The triptych looks at significant events in the years 1972-74 regarding fashion, race, and class, particularly the Civil Rights movement in high fashion, labor unrest in the garment industry during the 70s, and the

Vietnam War. The work explores shared political and physical “movements” made manifest on the catwalk and in the march.

Debunking the Model Minority Myth

October 13, 2020 (Online Exhibition)

This online exhibition is assembled by the University of Southern California’s Asian Pacific American Student Services, a student member organization on campus. It will collect stories from it’s members highlighting personal accounts of how each API student works to debunk the “Model Minority” myth associated with Asian Americans.

Love, Lust, Caution: Centennial Celebration of the Cross-Cultural Legacies of Eileen Chang

November 2020 (Online Exhibition)

This online exhibition spearheaded by USC Roski School of Art Professor Jenny Lin, PhD, in partnership with USC PAM and The Hong Kong Museum of Art, sheds light on the importance of seeking out nuance, especially in relationship to intersectionality and cultural exchange. Eileen Chang’s, 张爱玲 (Ailing Zhang, 1920-1995) work is considered to be among the best Chinese literature of the period. This year marks her centennial birthday. The exhibition explores her transnational movements and cross-cultural writings which forged a legacy of Asian American literary and artistic exchanges that continue to flourish today.

Divine Immersion: The Experiential Art of Nick Dong

Summer 2021

In recognition of the COVID-19 pandemic and the massive loss of life and systematic degradation of Asian American belonging, artist Nick Dong leverages the power of experiential art grounded in Buddhist spirituality as a vehicle to nurture healing and engender connection to oneself and others.

Crossroads: Exploring the Silk Road

Summer 2021

Join us in exploring the historic Silk Road in this newly renovated, interactive permanent gallery. Presented as a journey through Dunhuang, an ancient oasis connecting peoples and cultures, along the southern Silk Road route, this gallery engages an intergenerational audience through play and discovery. The sights and sounds of the ancient city come to life through stories and music, dress up, tactile objects, an interactive discovery map, and highlights from the museum’s collection. With enhanced accessibility and innovative design features, *Crossroads* aims to inspire curiosity, build empathy and catalyze connection by immersing visitors in the stories of intercultural exchange along the Silk Road.

INTERVENTION: Perspectives for a New PAM

Fall 2021

In 2021, the USC Pacific Asia Museum will celebrate our 50th anniversary with an exhibition that amplifies the voices of invited Asian American artists and scholars who will create artworks, essays, public lectures and performances that engage USC PAM's collection and history. With this effort, USC PAM begins a new chapter of community engagement. Bringing contemporary art into conversation with historical work and lifting up community narratives, this exhibition aims to generate transformative dialog about developing new methodologies to better engage the past to discover meaning in the present. In creating this exhibition, we remind the public that museums function as a place to propel our thinking about who we are to one another and why representation matters.

Intervention provides a unique opportunity for members of a community to voice what they see as relevant; to ask questions about what historic collections can say about the present; and to forge a new exhibition model that engages communities of color in the development process, rather than speaking at them. This exhibition serves as an opportunity for institutional critique together with a celebration of all that USC PAM has achieved over the years. USC PAM was the first in North America to mount an exhibition on contemporary Chinese art and the first to assemble an exhibition of Aboriginal art in the United States. This exhibition expands USC PAM's groundbreaking legacy.

Programs

Saturday, October 3, 2020, 5:00 PM

Performace@PAM: ALLOS: *The Story of Carlos Bulosan*

The USC Pacific Asia Museum is thrilled to host Artists at Play for an evening performance of ALLOS: The Story of Carlos Bulosan written by Giovanni Ortega and directed by Fran de Leon.

Carlos Bulosan was a Filipino American poet, novelist and union organizer who fought for the rights of migrant workers. Based on his semi-autobiographical book, *America is in the Heart*, the play follows Bulosan's journey from the Philippines to the farmlands in California, and celebrates the voice he finds along the way. Through his powerful writing and penchant for union organizing, Bulosan pursues both labor justice and the American Dream.

The play is suitable for middle-school aged children and older, and will be presented live on Zoom with a cast of dynamic actors taking on the various personas throughout Bulosan's life.

The stories and experiences of the Filipinx American community are seldom explored, despite being the largest Asian Pacific American ethnic group in Los Angeles. Presented during Filipinx American History Month, ALLOS: The Story of Carlos Bulosan provides an opportunity to learn

more about the diverse communities around us, and to use the performing arts as a tool to teach about American history.

Saturday, October 17, 2020, 2:30 PM

Conversation@PAM: Inside the Pink Donut Box: Stories of Cambodian Immigration

Join artist Phung Huynh and LA's "Donut Princess" Mayly Tao in a conversation moderated by curator and historian Dr. Erin M. Curtis as they explore the history of Cambodian immigrants in Los Angeles, refugee trauma, and legacies of building community and identity. Focusing on Cambodian-run donut shops in LA, they will also consider the changing role of these spaces as the city confronts gentrification, housing insecurity, police violence, and a global pandemic.

Thursday, November 19, 2020, 5:00 PM

Stronger Together: Black Liberation and Asian Solidarity

The USC Pacific Asia Museum, the Chinese American Museum, and the Japanese American National Museum present *Stronger Together: Black Liberation and Asian Solidarity*.

Join a discussion on this historic moment in the movement for Black lives, and the importance of cross-movement solidarity and coalitional consciousness. Our panelists will reflect on the history of Black-Asian solidarity and what we can learn from the past in order to live in a liberated future. The panel will also offer thoughts on how we move forward following the much anticipated November 3rd presidential election results.

Panelists include Melina Abdullah, Co-founder of Black Lives Matter Los Angeles and Professor of Pan-African Studies, Warren T. Furtani, Co-founder of the Manzanar Committee and former California State Assemblymember. This conversation will be moderated by Sandra So Hee Chi Kim, Founder and Co-Executive Director of Asian American Justice + Innovation Lab.

Saturday, December 5, 2020 2:30 PM

Conversation@PAM: Southeast Asian Refugee Narratives

Join Pulitzer Prize-Winning novelist and USC Professor Viet Thanh Nguyen and L.A. artists Ann Le and Phung Huynh as they discuss the lasting impact of war trauma and outsider trauma on subsequent generations of Asian Americans whose families came to the United States as refugees. Conversation moderated by Vietnamese-American filmmaker Quyên Nguyen-Le.

Thursday, February 25, 2020, 4:30 PM

Conversation@PAM: Belonging - Accessibility & Advocacy in the Museum

What does it mean to be accessible? Who are museums, exhibitions and programs currently designed for? How do we reach a full spectrum of community members with the resources we have? What opportunities are we missing by generalizing our efforts? How might a focus on

diversity open doors to transformative experiences and sustainable programming across the museum and gallery space?

Join activist Alice Wong, author of highly acclaimed *Disability Visibility* and curator and historian Amanda Cachia in an engaging dialogue centered on transforming accessibility and advocacy in the museum and creative arts field.

Friday, April 23, 2021, 7:30 PM

Mapping L.A.: Asian American Migration Experiences

A stunning, immersive event will coalesce and illustrate the diverse migration histories of L.A.'s Asian and Pacific Islander communities over the last 150 years, highlighting API contributions to our dynamic, multicultural metropolis.

Under the direction of digital artists and USC alumni Crystal Jow, Brenda Chen, and Ana Carolina Estarita-Guerrero, USC animation students will create a projection-mapping experience exploring the fascinating histories of diverse neighborhoods including Chinatown, Little Tokyo, Koreatown, Filipinotown, Thai Town and many others. Their animations projected onto the façade of the USC Pacific Asia Museum, will invite participants on a journey across Los Angeles County to explore migration bubbles and bursts from the latter half of the nineteenth century to the present, setting the stage for an exchange of personal stories and ideas.

Education

As the USC Pacific Asia Museum provides one of the only points of accessibility to the art, history and culture of Asia and the Pacific, community outreach is paramount. To deeply engage its neighboring communities with the museum, USC PAM offers programs like its “Teen Ambassadors Program”, “Educator Night”, and provides a K-12 curriculum for the LA Unified and Pasadena Unified School Districts. Recently the Education department moved all its school tour programming online:

Distance Learning Program

With applications now open and first sessions beginning October 14, 2020, the Distance Learning Program is designed to bring the museum's collection to students learning at home, allowing them to explore the diversity of Asian and Pacific cultures and develop critical thinking and analysis skills through close looking and making art. The Distance Learning Program enlists the power of art to foster intercultural and interracial solidarity in tandem with art instruction to inspire our next generation of activists, explorers, designers, and scholars. USC PAM is proud to offer this free educational resource to our Pasadena and Los Angeles County school communities.

Shop@PAM Museum Store

When the Shop@PAM opened in 2018 the museum re-examined its priorities, challenged existing norms, and took action to bolster the work of local artisans. To further align the Shop@PAM experience with the values expressed, the retail team transformed the retail experience for a new era. Visitors can now view a new virtual Shop@PAM supporting a community of local artisans while learning about the importance of fair trade in a global economy. The Shop@PAM experience expands awareness about how war, poverty, and trafficking affects the materials available to and capacity for artisans to sustain themselves.

Our new Shop@PAM e-store launched September 24, 2020 and can be visited here:
<http://www.uscbookstore.com/usc-pam>

ABOUT USC PACIFIC ASIA MUSEUM

An integral part of the University of Southern California, the USC Pacific Asia Museum creates inspiring encounters with the art, history and culture of Pacific Asia to promote intercultural understanding in the service of elevating our shared sense of humanity. Established in 1971, the museum is one of few U.S. institutions dedicated to the arts and culture of Asia and the Pacific Islands serving the city of Los Angeles and the Greater Southern California region. The museum's historic building has served as a center for art, culture and learning in Pasadena since its construction in 1924 by pioneering collector and entrepreneur Grace Nicholson (1877-1948) as her residence and galleries. In its brief history, the museum has organized and presented a number of groundbreaking exhibitions, including the first North American exhibitions of contemporary Chinese art and the first exhibition of Aboriginal art in the United States. Exhibitions originated by the museum have traveled across the country and internationally. A leader in its academic work and committed to scholarship, USC PAM has produced more than 50 exhibition catalogues.

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