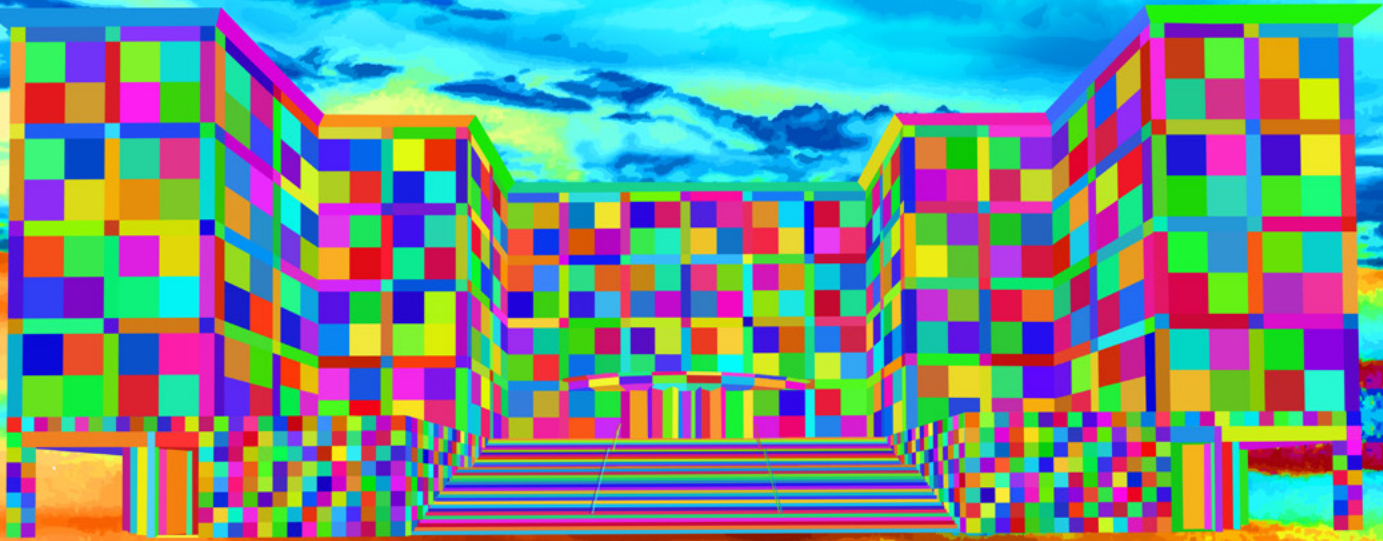


MICA

Museum of
Contemporary Art
Chicago

Members' Magazine
Fall 2017



CULINARY DELIGHTS



Michael Rakowitz’s vegetarian Mhasha, 2013.

One of the themes in the exhibition *Michael Rakowitz: Backstroke of the West*, on view through March 4, 2018, is the role food culture plays in forming communities, for example through the passing down of family recipes over generations or the cultivation of prized regional produce. For this special issue, Michael shared with us a recipe for vegetarian Mhasha, along with warm wishes for the MCA and the Chicago community.

May this recipe be a harbinger of sweet things to come for the next 50 years. Happy Birthday MCA. —M. R.

INGREDIENTS

- o 1 bag spinach leaves (*selek*)
- o 2 large onions
- o 2 medium beetroot, peeled and cut in half
- o 2 small courgette (zucchini), cut into 4 pieces
- o ½ red pepper
- o ½ yellow pepper
- o 1 cup celery leaves
- o 1 cup celery stalks
- o 1 cup spinach stalks
- o ¼ cup mint
- o 1 ¼ cup glass rice
- o 1 tsp salt, 1 tsp lemon, 2 tsp sugar, 1 tbsp tomato puree, and 1 tbsp oil for the rice and vegetable mix

FLAVORING

- o ½ tsp black pepper
- o Juice of 1 lemon
- o 4–6 tbsp of sugar
- o 3 tbsp of tomato puree
- o 1 tbsp of oil

METHOD, PREPARE DISH AS FOLLOWS:

- o Peel the onions and put them in boiling water for 20 minutes. Allow to cool and separate the layers one by one. Put aside the remaining pieces of onions.
- o Remove the stalk from the spinach and put the spinach in boiling water for 2 minutes. Drain. Cut up enough stalks to fill one cup.
- o Wash the peppers and cut into quarters.
- o Cut each courgette into 4 pieces and scoop out the insides and put aside (leave a base for each piece).
- o Scoop out the inside of the beetroot halves and put aside.
- o Blend together the onions, spinach stalks, scooped-out beets and courgette with the celery leaves, celery stalks, spinach stalks, and mint.
- o Wash the rice thoroughly and mix with the blended vegetables.
- o Mix together 1 tsp lemon, 2 tsp sugar, 1 tsp salt, 1 tbsp tomato puree, and 1 tbsp of oil and add to the rice and vegetable mix.
- o Using a large, shallow pot, heat up 1 tbsp of oil on a low flame.
- o Fill the vegetables with the rice and vegetable mix and arrange them in the pot in one layer. Do not put vegetables on top of one another.
- o Mix together the ingredients for the flavoring: black pepper, 3 tbsp tomato puree, juice of 1 lemon, 4–6 tbsp sugar, and ¼ cup of water.
- o Spoon this liquid on top of each vegetable.
- o Add one cup of water and bring to the boil.
- o When it starts boiling, reduce heat to low for 20 minutes. If the rice is not cooked, add more water and cook for another 20 minutes.
- o Cook for another 30 minutes in the oven until the liquid has dried.



FALL 2017

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Museum Hours	
Mon	Closed
Tue and Fri	10 am–9 pm
Wed, Thu, Sat, and Sun	10 am–5 pm

Admission is free for anyone 18 and under and for Illinois residents every Tuesday.

Information	312-280-2660
Box Office	312-397-4010
Member Services	312-397-4040

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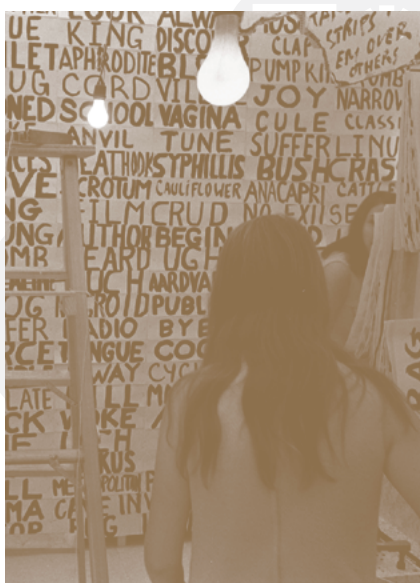
The MCA is a proud member of Museums in the Park and receives major support from the Chicago Park District.

Cover image: Tony Tasset, *Happy Birthday*, 2017.



In 1977, after a decade on the scene, the MCA commissioned leading Chicago Imagist artist Ed Paschke to create a billboard announcing our birthday celebration to the city. He delivered a joyful symbol that captured the playfulness and vibrancy of the museum’s early years.

IN 1967, THE MCA
FIRST OPENED ITS
DOORS, WELCOMING
VISITORS TO
PICTURES TO BE READ/
POETRY TO BE SEEN



WE ARE 50!

This fall is a time for celebration at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago: Our redesign is complete. The Vision campaign is wrapping up. And we are approaching a very significant birthday. This special issue of the magazine, published in time for the MCA's 50th, commemorates not only the museum's founding but also the people who have contributed to our storied history and who ensure our promising future. The integral role that trustees, artists, staff, and audiences play in achieving our goals is showcased throughout this magazine. Thank you!

Though we take pride in the museum as a leading international institution, our hearts belong to Chicago. We are honored to feature on the cover of this magazine a work by Chicago-based artist Tony Tasset. His tribute captures the vibrancy of the MCA at an exciting moment in our history. Artists have been and always will be the catalysts of our work.

When I accepted the position of Pritzker Director at the MCA in 2008, I did so with a humbling awareness of all those who came before me whose work propelled the museum to a position of lasting relevance. In 1967, the MCA's visionary founders brought Chicago its first museum dedicated to contemporary art, and they very intentionally set their mission apart from museums of the past in a manifesto:

A museum of contemporary art is different from the general art museum where the values of the past are enshrined. Instead, it is a place where new ideas are shown and tested.

This spirited pursuit of the untried led to a roster of remarkable collaborations with—and often important milestones for—artists, many of whom went on to shape the field, including Chris Burden, Christo (who completed his first public wrap in the United States on the MCA's original building at 237 East Ontario Street), and Cindy Sherman. Over the decades, the MCA established itself as a place of firsts, presenting the first retrospectives of artists such as Lee Bontecou, John Currin, Dan Flavin, Jim Nutt, Doris Salcedo, Lorna Simpson, and Wolfgang Tillmans, as well as the first major solo museum exhibitions of artists including Jeff Koons, Mona Hatoum, Rashid Johnson, and Martin Puryear. Performance has always been integral to our interdisciplinary focus, with highlights of past seasons including performances by Laurie Anderson and Taylor Mac, Eighth Blackbird's artists residency, and a musical installation by Andrew Bird.

We continue to introduce new and powerful works by contemporary artists this fall, with the first solo museum exhibition of Iraqi-American artist Michael Rakowitz—who thoughtfully provided a recipe for the inside cover of our birthday issue—and a high-caliber performance season featuring work by dancer and choreographer Twyla Tharp, whose groundbreaking career in modern dance arose parallel to the MCA's. Other stellar offerings that coincide with this momentous occasion

include *We Are Here*, a major three-part exhibition that offers a look at contemporary art through the lens of the MCA's collection; *Woman with a Camera*, drawn from the recent remarkable donation of 50 photographs by women artists from Trustee Jack Guthman and his wife Sandra; and Chicago artist Amanda Williams's solo show, which raises important questions about the intersection of race and the urban environment. Adding an appropriate degree of levity to our fall program is *Felix* (2001), the enormous and enormously popular, fossilized feline created by Maurizio Cattelan as a playful nod toward the Field Museum's beloved dinosaur skeleton Sue.

The MCA's history is filled with people whose commitment to a project larger than themselves has greatly enriched the city of Chicago. One such group, the Women's Board, is also celebrating its 50th. We couldn't accomplish all that we do without these champions of contemporary art and education who support our work at every level and who have been essential to the success of the MCA since its earliest years.

The MCA's 50th, on October 21, 2017, is accompanied by the unveiling of new spaces that were designed to better serve twenty-first century audiences: Central to the museum is the Commons, a place where visitors can congregate and learn; Marisol, a restaurant and bar offering a seasonal menu; and the unveiling of a number of new artworks in free spaces, including murals by Lorna Simpson and Chris Ofili, custom furniture, plants, and lighting by Pedro y Juana, and a four-story installation by Ernesto Neto. We are also taking advantage of the museum's birthday weekend to show our appreciation to dedicated Trustees, visitors, and die-hard MCA members alike for their support, offering free admission to the museum as well as an array of artist projects, talks, performances, screenings, and, of course, birthday cake. Come out and join us for MCA ♥ Chicago on October 21 and 22.

When the MCA was founded, Franz Schulze, an art critic for the *Chicago Daily News*, wrote about the young institution: "A new museum can strike a fire in this city—however confined—that not only needs striking, but that gives every hope of burning brightly." Today, the MCA has reached a point of institutional maturity, but we have not lost our momentum. We have worked to achieve our Vision, aligning our architecture and programming with our ideals, and we are more prepared than ever to engage our audiences, serve our community, and make strides for contemporary artists for years to come.


Madeleine Grynsztejn
Pritzker Director

PAST
CELEBRATIONS





Leslie Bluhm and Meredith Bluhm-Wolf.

LESLIE BLUHM AND MEREDITH BLUHM-WOLF ALONG WITH THE BLUHM FAMILY FOUNDATION HAVE COMMITTED A GENEROUS GIFT TO NAME THE BLUHM FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ZONE. LOCATED IN OUR FORMER CAFÉ SPACE, THIS DELIGHTFUL RENOVATION NOW HOUSES THE COMMONS, A FLEXIBLE SPACE FOR VISITORS TO REFLECT, SOCIALIZE, AND PARTAKE IN THE MCA'S DYNAMIC PROGRAMMING. THE BLUHM FAMILY'S GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE MCA IS A FACET OF THEIR PHILANTHROPY FOCUSING ON EDUCATION, ARTS, AND CULTURE IN CHICAGO.



The lush installation of greenery and lights by Pedro y Juana is now on view in the Commons, located in the Bluhm Family Engagement Zone.

It seems like yesterday, but it was, in fact, more than five years ago, when I had my first face-to-face conversation with Pritzker Director Madeleine Grynsztejn. She asked me, "How do you imagine a museum of the twenty-first century?" This meeting inspired me to think about how my contribution as the Director of Learning and Public Programs might shape the vision of the MCA. After a short time at the museum, I knew the MCA's DNA called for community, as well as social action, and reflected a desire to connect art, culture, and critical thinking to the world. These are the values that important cultural institutions must prioritize in the twenty-first century.

The museum is now more than a repository of objects; it is an organism composed of many producers, including visitors. The museum needs to be a committed partner within a larger ecosystem, making connections to the outside world. As educators at an institution where different modes of thought and creative expression are supported, we are committed to transcending disciplinary and intellectual boundaries, broadening ideas of culture and art, and fostering communities of learners and civic partners. As a site for new forms of learning, interaction, and participation, the MCA strives to offer ways of engaging with one another that prompt visitors to consider what makes us different and what we hold in common.



Nancy and Steve Crown.

NANCY AND STEVE CROWN ALONG WITH THE CROWN FAMILY HAVE COMMITTED A GENEROUS GIFT TO THE VISION CAMPAIGN, CONTINUING THEIR LONG HISTORY OF SUPPORTING EDUCATION AND ARTS PROGRAMS AT THE MCA AND THROUGHOUT CHICAGO. IN ADDITION TO OFFERING CRITICAL SUPPORT FOR OUR NEW EDUCATION SPACES, THE CROWN FAMILY'S GIFT WILL PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE MCA'S INNOVATIVE SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP FOR ART AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT (SPACE), OUR CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL ARTIST RESIDENCY PROGRAM. THE NEWLY RENOVATED THIRD-FLOOR MEETING ROOM WILL BE NAMED IN HONOR OF THE CROWN FAMILY'S COMMITMENT TO THE MCA AND ITS PROGRAMMING.

BECKY AND LESTER KNIGHT



Becky and Lester Knight.

THE GENEROSITY OF BECKY AND LESTER KNIGHT HELPS US UNVEIL EXCITING PROGRAMS IN THE MCA'S NEWLY OPENED COMMONS, LOCATED AT THE HEART OF THE MUSEUM. THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THIS NEW COMMUNITY HUB, WHICH IS VITAL FOR CHICAGO'S CREATIVE AND CIVIC LIFE, IS PART OF THEIR COMMITTED EFFORTS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION IN THE CITY AND EMPOWER CHICAGO'S YOUTH.

Two years ago, the MCA took a bold step, renovating the building to reimagine the way we go about things and clearly marking our invitation and intention to expand access to creative experimentation and civic engagement. In advance, we connected with our colleagues from all over the world. Many brilliant artists, thinkers, directors, and educators, including Tom Finkelpearl, Jonathan Moscone, Thelma Golden, Rick Lowe, Anna Cutler, Sally Tallant, and Lonnie Bunch, were thinking in similar ways and moving in similar directions as us, and we welcomed them to conferences, workshops, charettes, evening conversations, and public dialogues in Chicago. And I traveled: to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Van Abbemuseum in The Netherlands, London, SALT in Istanbul, and Creative Time in New York, to see how other museums were working with artists at the crossroads of learning and public practice. I also spoke with artists Tania Bruguera, Michael Rakowitz, Paul Ramirez Jonas, and Rick Lowe, all of whom work across disciplines and think deeply about their roles as artists, activists, and educators.

From our explorations, the Commons was born. This October the space opens, as do new learning studios on our newly expanded third floor. The Commons, which is housed in our new Bluhm Family Engagement Zone, is both a physical space and an ongoing program, bringing together artists, thinkers, and audiences in a constellation of artist projects, conversations, performances, interactions, workshops, presentations, and readings. We commissioned Pedro y Juana, a design and architecture team based in Mexico City, to create a site-specific installation that inspires visitors to investigate and interact. *From the Tropics with Love* is an installation comprising more than 120 hanging lamps and planters and a suite of multi-functional furniture that doesn't just animate the space but also provokes our audience to think more deeply about art, culture, and the world in which we live. *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours*, the first of our biannual artist commissions, considers open urban spaces as areas for both public and private moments to gather and exchange ideas, and invites visitors to consider the possibilities for civic engagement in their own communities.

These projects reflect the MCA's commitment to partnering with our creative and civic communities and to providing spaces for our visitors to explore socially engaged and audience-focused practices. We are also launching a new engagement and partnership program in the Commons that affords our many partners, who make up the rich and diverse cultural communities of our city, opportunities to be long-term and integral players in the work of the museum.

This strategic thought is foundational to the MCA's relevance. The Commons is evidence of the ways museums can serve as hubs of community activation and learning as we foster cultural access, build better, more sustainable community relationships, and grow our twenty-first-century audiences.

MARLENE BRESLOW-BLITSTEIN AND BERLE BLITSTEIN



Marlene Breslow-Blitstein and Berle Blitstein.

A REMARKABLE GIFT TO OUR VISION CAMPAIGN HAS NAMED A NEW TRANQUIL SPACE CARVED OUT IN OUR RECENT RENOVATION. VISITORS CAN RELAX IN THE MARLENE BRESLOW-BLITSTEIN AND BERLE BLITSTEIN LOUNGE. OFFERING A SPOT TO MEET UP, COLLECT YOUR THOUGHTS, OR JUST REST YOUR FEET, THE NEW SPACE IS AS GENEROUS AS THE WONDERFUL COUPLE AFTER WHOM IT IS NAMED.

STREET VIEWS

After months of anticipation, we have opened the Street, the first-floor thoroughfare to the theater and restaurant. Here's a glimpse of the new spaces and art installations.



STREET VIEWS

TAKE A STROLL DOWN OUR FORMER FIRST-FLOOR LOBBY, NOW A VIBRANT, MULTIUSE AVENUE LEADING TO THE COMMONS ON THE SECOND FLOOR.



A new staircase with images of iconic works from the MCA Collection leads from the Commons to the Robert B. and Beatrice C. Mayer Education Center on the third floor.



A grand staircase that honors the MCA's original iconic staircase leads from the Street to the Commons, a dynamic learning space.



The MCA commissioned British artist Chris Ofili to design an immersive art environment for Marisol, the new restaurant and bar at the MCA.

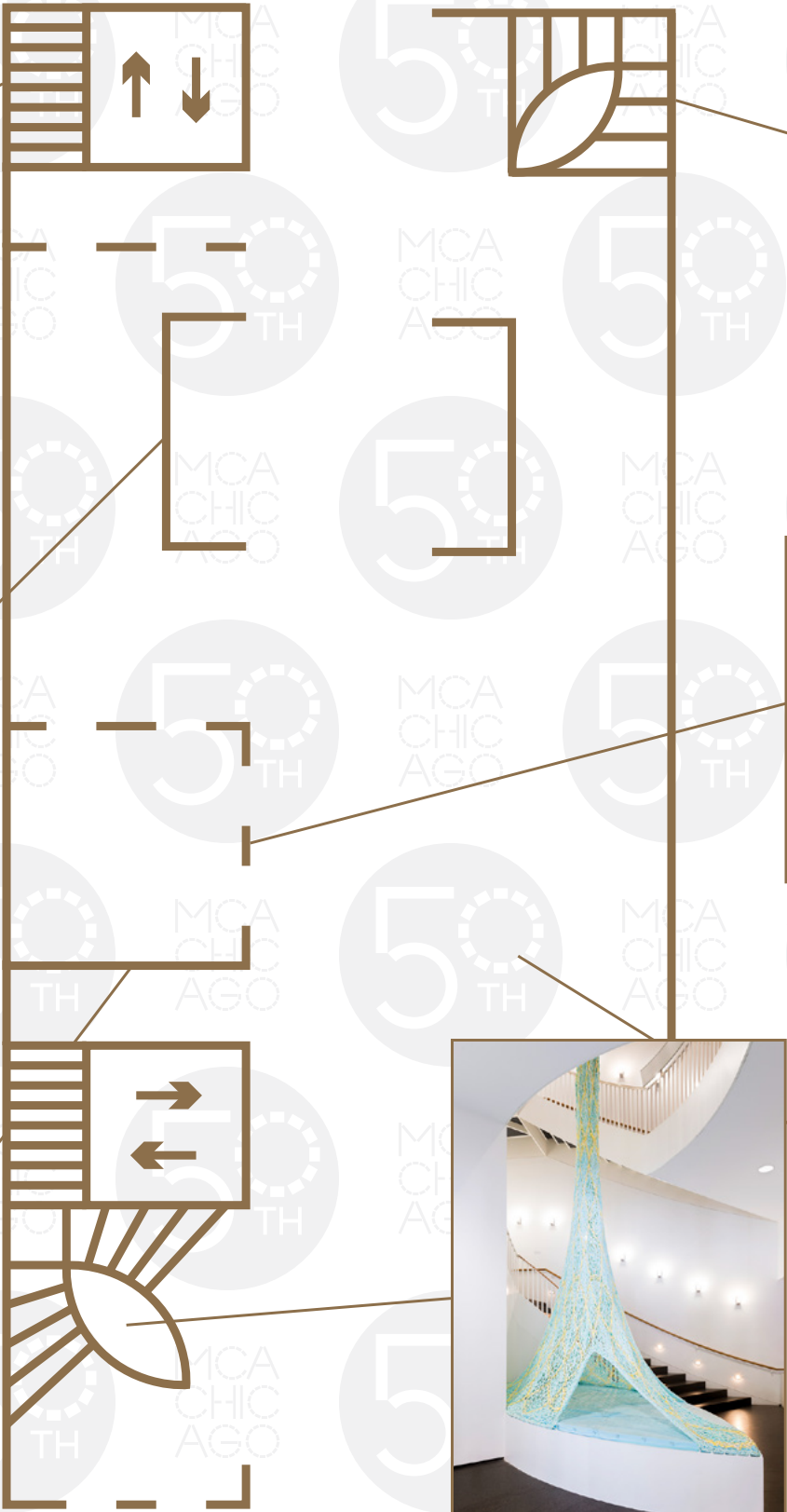


Enjoy Marisol cocktails inspired by the life and art of the restaurant's namesake.



The centerpiece of Chris Ofili's restaurant design is this unprecedented vibrant wall painting, which inspired the restaurant's gem-toned color scheme. The mural depicts a sorceress in a cave, two figures, and a mythical beast.

E PEARSON ST



PLAZA



Ernesto Neto's site-specific installation connects the newly redesigned first floor to the exhibition spaces above and offers visitors a multisensory place for rest, camaraderie, and reflection.



The MCA's newly renovated northwest entryway offers generous seating and an open, uninterrupted view of the Street.

FIRST
IMPRESSIONS

We conclude our series recognizing the people who have transformed the MCA from the inside. The work of these departments—Communications; Design, Publishing, and New Media; and the MCA Store—is highly visible both in and beyond the museum. Though the redesign is complete, these staff members continue to shape the great first and lasting impressions that visitors have of the museum, inspiring our audiences to return.



COMMUNICATIONS

Shown here, left to right: Phongtorn Phongquantum, Melissa Roels, Matti Allison, Julia Kriegel, Kristen Kaniewski, Molly Laemle, Lauren Smallwood, Amanda Abernathy, Abraham Ritchie, Elizabeth Philip, Katy O'Malley, Ruida Zhu, Elena Grotto, and Pat Fraser. Not Pictured: Karla Loring

DESIGN, PUBLISHING,
AND NEW MEDIA

Shown here, left to right: Lisa Meyerowitz, Susan Chun, Gabriel Melcher, Shauna Skalitzy, Sheila Majumdar, Joe Iverson, Dylan Fracareta, and Anna C. Lavatelli. Not pictured: Meghan Coppoletti

MCA STORE

Shown here, from top, left to right: Michael Thomas, Stephen Zirbel, Dakota Lecos, Chris Emslie, Judith Harding, Jourdan DeVies, Martin Oliver, Juana Alvarez, Lindsey Hauck, Alanna Zaritz, John Gustafson, Alexis Dassios, Mark Milmore, and Luanne Newman. Not Pictured: Stefanie Greisbach, Sarah Grosspietsch, Rachel Hector, Veronica Inberg, Claire Johnston, Jonathan Sommer, Carl Wiggins, and Sovannra Yos.

MEET
JANUARY PARKOS ARNALL



Curator of Public Programs January Parkos Arnall.

Learning and public programs are central to the MCA's vision for the future of contemporary art museums. The relationships among visitors, artworks, artists, and educators are at the forefront of our curators' minds, because as these relationships shift so, too, does the meaning of the art we present. This summer, Curator of Public Programs January Parkos Arnall joined the MCA team as we prepared to open the Commons—a space dedicated to creative and civic dialogue—and unveil a newly redesigned street-level space where the Edlis Neeson Theater, Marisol Restaurant and Bar, and visual art will converge.

Arnall's previous work at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, reflects her commitment to public programs and audience engagement. There, Arnall oversaw the multifaceted endeavor *In Real Life: 100 Days of Film and Performance*, collaborating with the curatorial team on four film series, a stage for daily open rehearsals, and fifteen high-impact weekend performance and engagement events. Through the platform *IRL: Studio*, she offered space for a diverse group of socially aware artists to experiment with new ideas and reach out to audiences historically disenfranchised within museum environs.

We are excited to see Arnall, with her dedication to multifaceted exploration, learning, and participation, embrace the opportunities afforded by our newly configured public spaces. She is an invaluable addition to the dynamic team expanding the museum's connection to its public and to Chicago's artists.

JILL GARLING AND
TOM WILSON

WITH THEIR GIFT SUPPORTING THE DYNAMIC EDUCATION OFFERINGS THROUGHOUT THE COMMONS, JILL GARLING AND TOM WILSON'S GENEROSITY IS FUELING OUR INNOVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE LEARNING AND EXPERIENTIAL NEEDS OF TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY VISITORS. OUR DIVERSE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING TAKES PLACE MORNING, NOON, AND NIGHT THROUGHOUT THE MUSEUM AND FEATURES NEW INTERACTIVE, COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES WITH OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS.

AN ICON AND
INSPIRATION



Photograph of Marisol, date unknown. Collection of the artist's estate. Image courtesy of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery Digital Assets Collection and Archives, Buffalo, New York. © Albright-Knox Art Gallery. Photographer unknown.

Andy Warhol called her "the first girl artist with glamour."¹ Gloria Steinem called her "an enigmatic and beautiful young woman," with an "honesty that [was] disconcerting."² Others called her "a sphinx without a riddle."³ Despite her reputation as fashionable, mysterious, and taciturn, Marisol (Venezuelan-American, 1930–2016)—the namesake of the MCA's new restaurant and bar—had a life that tells a richer story.

She was born María Sol Escobar to affluent Venezuelan parents, and the family lived between France, Venezuela, and the United States before settling in Caracas after Marisol's mother committed suicide in 1941. At 19, Marisol went to Paris to study at the École des Beaux-Arts and a year later left for New York, where she took classes at the Art Students League with Abstract Expressionist Hans Hoffman. Marisol's

career skyrocketed when she shifted from working in "the ultra-painterly Hofmann style"⁴ to sculpture after seeing an exhibition of pre-Columbian art in 1953. She began making small erotic figures in clay and assemblages of wooden figures and soon found her works exhibited alongside those by emerging stars Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg in a 1957 group show. Her works blending pop art with a folk sensibility earned her a breakout solo show at New York's famed Stable Gallery in 1962.



Marisol, *Six Women*, 1965–66. Wood, paint, mirrors, shoes, formica, and plaster; 69 x 105 x 52 in. Gift of the artist, 1968.1.

Around this time, she appeared in films of Andy Warhol, who was a close friend, including *The Kiss* (1962) and *13 Most Beautiful Girls* (1964–65). Marisol's popularity only grew from there. In 1977, she was featured in the Museum of Modern Art's *Artists' Cookbook*, a collection of recipes from contemporary artists, which reveals her aversion to cooking (her kitchen served as her studio) and includes a salad dressing recipe that inspired Marisol chef Jason Hammel's green goddess dressing.

Perhaps Marisol's greatest legacy to Chicago is her gift of *Six Women* (1965–66), a wood and Formica sculpture that depicted her face on several figures. (She often included her own image in her work, which, she explained with her deadpan humor, was not because of narcissism but simply because "It's easier . . . I'm usually the only person around to use as a model."⁵) Though the MCA was founded as a non-collecting museum, the sculpture was accepted and accessioned, inaugurating our permanent collection. The gift from the fiercely independent, internationally oriented artist made an indelible mark on the museum, setting the stage for the next 50 years.

1 Grace Glueck, "It's Not Pop, It's Not Op—It's Marisol" *New York Times*, Mar 7, 1965.
2 Gloria Steinem, "Marisol: The Face Behind the Mask" *Glamour* (June 1964): 92–97, 123, 129, 137.
3 Steinem, "Marisol: The Face Behind the Mask."
4 Glueck, "It's Not Pop, It's Not Op—It's Marisol."
5 Glueck, "It's Not Pop, It's Not Op—It's Marisol."

MEET OUR NEW
TRUSTEES

THIS YEAR WE ADDED NINE MEMBERS TO OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES, WELCOMING A NEW GENERATION WHOSE FRESH, VISIONARY IDEAS ADD TO THE DIVERSE VIEWPOINTS OF OUR LEADERSHIP.

- ELLEN-BLAIR CHUBE
DIMITRIS
DASKALOPOULOS
DR. JULIUS FEW
NICKOL HACKETT
SULTAN SOOD
AL QASSEMI
MARJORIE K.
STAPLES*
NIGEL F. TELMAN
BEN WEPRIN

Artist Trustee
LORNA SIMPSON

*Ex-Officio Trustee





Ken Griffin.

A GENEROUS GIFT FROM THE KEN GRIFFIN CHARITABLE FUND HONORS THE MCA'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY VIA SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL AND TEACHER PROGRAMS, AND ENSURES THAT THE MUSEUM IS OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL CHICAGO YOUTH, FROM BOTH CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT ILLINOIS. THESE FUNDS ALSO SUPPORT THE MCA'S GIFT TO CHICAGO DURING ITS ANNIVERSARY ON OCTOBER 21 AND 22, 2017—A WEEKEND OF FREE ADMISSION AND PROGRAMMING COMMEMORATING THE MUSEUM'S ANNIVERSARY.

The MCA is celebrating its 50th anniversary, Chicago, and the role contemporary museums play in fostering creative connections and communities vwith a vweekend-long event. Enjoy free admission and join preeminent Chicago artists from a range of disciplines to pay homage to the past, celebrate the present, and pave the wway for the future.



MCA♡CHI IS CO-ORGANIZED BY MCA CHICAGO AND NO SMALL PLANS PRODUCTIONS.

ALBERTO AGUILAR/JEANETTE ANDREWS/SARAH AND JOSEPH BELKNAP/CHERYL LYNN BRUCE/CHICAGO CHILDREN'S CHOIR/BILLY CORGAN/CUMBIASAZO!/CHRISTA DONNER/RACHEL ELLISON/ENEMY KITCHEN/BRENDAN FERNANDES/LUPE FIASCO*/MUFFY FISHBASKET/GLITTERGUTS/ IKRAM GOLDMAN/CHRIS JONES/LYKANTHEA/LOU MALLOZZI/LI2 MCCARTHY/KAYCEE ORTIZ/MICHAEL RAKOWITZ/EDRA SOTO/SOUTH SHORE DRILL TEAM/LUCY STOOLE/THEMIND/JAMILA WOODS/YOUNG CHICAGO AUTHORS

*This event is free but requires a ticket.

Generous funding for MCA♡CHI is provided by Kenneth C. Griffin. Lead support is provided by Helen and Sam Zell, R. H. Defares, Anne L. Kaplan, Cari and Michael Sacks, Liz and Eric Lefkowsky, The Bluhm Family Foundation, Nancy and Steve Crown, Stefan Edlis and Gael Neeson, Caryn and King Harris, Kovler Family Foundation, The Bellick Family, Marlene Breslov-Blitstein and Berle Blitstein, Elissa Efroymsen and Adnaan Hamid, Lois and Steve Eisen and The Eisen Family Foundation, Marilyn and Larry Fields, Stephanie and John Harris, and Barbara Bluhm-Kaul and Don Kaul. Major support is provided by Carol Prins and John Hart/The Jessica Fund and Nancy and Nicholas Giampietro. Generous support is provided by Ambassador Louis and Marjorie Susman, Sara Albrecht, Cynthia Hunt and Philip Rudolph, Vicki and Bill Hood, BMO Harris Bank, Citi Private Bank, the Duchossois Family Foundation, Marquis D. Miller and Pamela Buchanan Miller, Rebecca W. Knight and Lester B. Knight, The Malkin Family, Carol and John Winzeler, and Jamerson & Bauwens Electrical Contractors. Special thanks to Bank of America for underwriting free admission for our 50th-anniversary vweekend.

BMO Harris Bank

citi Private Bank

Jamerson & Bauwens Electrical Contractors, Inc.

THE DUCHOSSOIS FAMILY FOUNDATION ROOTED + REACHING

CURRENT AND FUTURE EXHIBITIONS

CLOSING SOON

To the Racy Brink Closing Dec 10

To the Racy Brink honors the artists and exhibitions that placed the MCA in the vanguard of contemporary art since 1967, highlighting some of the MCA's daring early projects with emerging artists through a selection of rare videos, photographs, and ephemera from our archives.

Chicago Works: Amanda Williams Closing Dec 31

Architect and artist Amanda Williams's first solo museum show presents new sculptures and photographs that respond to changing urban environments, encouraging us to think about what the form of a house, a street, or a neighborhood says about its value.

ON VIEW NOW

Woman with a Camera Through Jan 14, 2018

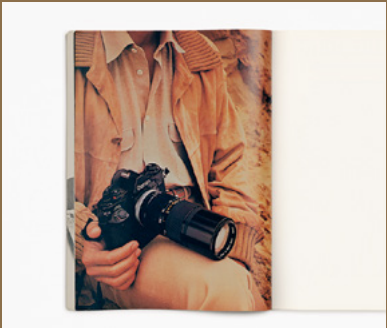
Woman with a Camera is drawn from the 50th-anniversary gift from Jack and Sandra Guthman of 50 works by women photographers. The selection demonstrates the remarkable breadth of the Guthman's collection and attests to the camera as an expressive tool.



To the Racy Brink



Chicago Works: Amanda Williams



Woman with a Camera



Michael Rakowitz: Backstroke of the West

Michael Rakowitz: Backstroke of the West Through Mar 4, 2018

Drawing on personal experiences, research, history, and popular culture, Iraqi-American artist Michael Rakowitz makes work that invites viewers to contemplate their relationship to the political world around them. The artist's first museum survey features major installations, a new commission, and culinary interventions.

We Are Here

In honor of the MCA's 50th anniversary, the museum presents *We Are Here*, a major three-part exhibition drawn from the MCA's collection. The shows declare that art and culture have the power to change the way that we see and act in the world.

I Am You Through Apr 1, 2018

I Am You presents some of the most iconic and beloved artworks in the MCA's permanent collection that question how we relate to and are shaped by our environments.

You Are Here

Oct 21, 2017–Jan 28, 2018

You Are Here examines how the role of the viewer has changed over time—from passive onlooker to active participant—with some artists forging new physical relationships between viewers and art objects and others exploring how the body may be subjected to power.

We Are Everywhere

Oct 21, 2017–Jan 28, 2018

We Are Everywhere showcases artists who borrow from popular culture—using soup cans, movie stills, neon signage, and floor tiles to consider the ways that our social lives inflect our perceptions of the world around us.

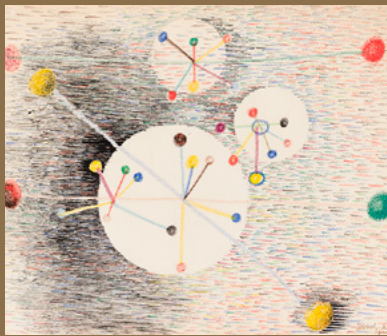
Felix
Oct 14, 2017–Apr 8, 2018
The MCA's beloved sculpture *Felix*—on view for the first time since 2006—is a nod to the Field Museum's legendary female T-Rex, Sue, but in typical Maurizio Cattelan fashion, the skeleton is a gigantic cat rather than an actual fossilized specimen.

Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours
Oct 21, 2017–Feb 25, 2018
In this site-specific, interactive installation created for the Commons, Edra Soto prompts visitors to consider the nature of urban space, cross-cultural dynamics, the legacy of colonialism, and personal responsibility.

Heaven and Earth: Alexander Calder and Jeff Koons
Oct 21, 2017–Dec 16, 2018
Bringing together two of the most important artists in the MCA's history, *Heaven and Earth: Alexander Calder and Jeff Koons* finds common ground between these iconic, seemingly disparate artists.

MCA Screen: Paul Pfeiffer
Dec 23, 2017–May 20, 2018
Paul Pfeiffer manipulates media footage from sports and music culture, using repetition and omission to expose the absurdity, complexity, and violence of popular spectacles. In its museum debut, *Three Figures in A Room* (2015–16) deconstructs the infamous boxing match between Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao in May 2015.

Chicago Works: Paul Heyer
Jan 16–Jul 1, 2018
Paul Heyer creates paintings that explore the moments just before life and right after death. Taking cues from the Spanish Renaissance painter El Greco, 1990s rave culture,



We Are Here



Edra Soto



MCA Screen: Paul Pfeiffer



Chicago Works: Paul Heyer



Howardena Pindell:
What Remains to Be Seen

and the humble objects of daily life, Heyer meditates on what it means to be free from the limits of our physical and perceived bodies.

Endless Summer
Jan 27, 2017–Aug 5, 2018
Titled after the classic Bruce Brown surfing documentary from 1966, *Endless Summer* offers a snapshot of the hedonistic minimalism that emerged in Los Angeles in the 1960s.

Howardena Pindell: What Remains to Be Seen
Feb 24–May 20, 2018
Trained as a painter, Howardena Pindell has challenged the staid traditions of the art world and asserted her place in its history as a woman and one of African descent. Since the 1960s, she has used materials such as glitter, talcum powder, and perfume to stretch the boundaries of the rigid tradition of rectangular, canvas painting.

James Lee Byars, November 13, 1969, performance during *Art by Telephone* (Nov 1–Dec 14, 1969).

Amanda Williams, *It's a Goldmine/Is the Gold Mine?*, 2016. Imitation gold metal leaf on salvaged Chicago brick; dimensions variable.

Anne Collier, *Man with A Camera (Telephoto)*, 2011. Chromogenic development print; framed: 47 3/4 x 46 1/2 in. Promised gift of Jack and Sandra Guthman, PG2016.6. © Anne Collier. Courtesy of the artist; Anton Kern Gallery, New York; Galerie Neu, Berlin; The Modern Institute/Toby Webster Ltd., Glasgow; and Marc Foxx Gallery, Los Angeles.

Michael Rakowitz, *May the Arrogant Not Prevail*, 2010. Found Arabic packaging and newspapers, glue, cardboard, and wood; 235 1/4 x 194 1/4 x 37 1/2 in. Gift of Marshall Field's by exchange, 2015.4.

Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, *Untitled*, 1946. India ink and crayon on paper; framed: 23 x 26 1/2 x 2 in. Gift of Albert A. Robin 2005.14. © 2017 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Edra Soto, 1-4-17: *Hennessy, Rémy Martin, Patron, Jose Cuervo, D'Ussé, Budweiser, Miller, Bud Ice, Paul Masson*, 2017. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Paul Pfeiffer, *Three Figures In A Room*, 2015-16. Two synced video channels on two projectors, four synced audio channels, Mac Minis; dimensions variable, 48 minutes, looped. © Paul Pfeiffer. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York.

Paul Heyer, *Small Cowboy*, 2015. Acrylic on silk chiffon; 15 x 20 in. Photo: Robert Heishman, courtesy of Paul Heyer and Chapter-NY.

Howardena Pindell, *Free, White and 21*, 1980. Videotape (color and sound). Gift of Garth Greenan and Bryan Davidson Blue, 2014.22. Courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.

MCA 50

1967–2017

SPECIAL

WE ARE

1967
PICTURES
TO BE READ,
POETRY TO BE SEEN,
THE MCA'S FIRST
EXHIBITION,
IS ORGANIZED BY
FOUNDING DIRECTOR
JAN VAN DER
MARCK.

1967
THE
MUSEUM OF
CONTEMPORARY
ART CHICAGO
OPENS AT
237 E ONTARIO
ST.

THE
PHOTOGRAPHS
IN THIS
ANNIVERSARY
SECTION ARE DRAWN
FROM THE MCA'S
ARCHIVES. FOR
CAPTIONS,
VISIT MCACHICAGO.ORG/50THMAG.

1968
THE FIRST
BENEFIT
ART
AUCTION
IS HELD.

1969
CHRISTO:
WRAP IN,
WRAP OUT IS
THE ARTIST'S
FIRST US
BUILDING
WRAP.



1970S
ALEXANDER
CALDER
RETROSPECTIVE;
DOOMED BY
CHIRS BURDEN IS
PERFORMED;
FRIDA KAHLO'S
FIRST US
EXHIBITION

1971
MCA
AFFILIATES
ARE
FORMED.

1979
FIRST MAJOR
SHOWS OF
VITO ACCONCI
AND MARTIN
PURYEAR

1979
A NEWLY
RENOVATED
MCA SPACE
OPENS.

1979
THE
CONTEMPORARY
ART CIRCLE
IS FORMED.

1978
GORDON
MATTA-
CLARK'S FIRST
MUSEUM
"EX-STALLATION"
IS CREATED.



1981
HELYN D. GOLDENBERG
IS NAMED
THE FIRST FEMALE
CHAIR OF ANY
MAJOR
US MUSEUM.

1988
JEFF KOONS:
WORKS
1979-1988
IS THE ARTIST'S
FIRST SOLO
MUSEUM
EXHIBITION.

1996
THE MCA'S
NEW BUILDING
OPENS AT 220 E
CHICAGO AVE WITH A
24-HOUR SUMMER
SOLSTICE CELEBRATION.

1993
LORNA
SIMPSON:
FOR THE SAKE OF
THE VIEWER
IS THE ARTIST'S
FIRST SURVEY
EXHIBITION.

1982
LAURIE
ANDERSON
PERFORMS
AT THE
MCA.

1988
GERHARD
RICHTER:
PAINTINGS
IS THE ARTIST'S
FIRST US
EXHIBITION.

1996
ART IN
CHICAGO, 1945-
1995 CELEBRATES
50 YEARS OF ART
AND 150 ARTISTS IN
THE CITY.

2007
THE MCA
CELEBRATES ITS
40TH ANNIVERSARY
WITH A GALA
PERFORMANCE BY
PATTI SMITH.

1998
CINDY SHERMAN
IS THE FIRST
ARTIST'S FIRST
MAJOR MUSEUM
SURVEY.

2003
JOHN CURRIN
IS THE FIRST
ARTIST'S FIRST
MAJOR MUSEUM
SURVEY.







2011 RASHID JOHNSON: MESSAGE TO OUR FOLKS IS THE FIRST EXHIBITION IN THE MCA'S ASCENDANT ARTIST SERIES.

2008 DIALOGUE, AN ANNUAL CONVERSATION ON MUSEUMS, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION, IS INAUGURATED.

2010-11 THE MARK BRADFORD PROJECT ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

2011 TEEN CREATIVE AGENCY, AN IMMERSIVE PROGRAM FOR TEENS AGE 15 TO 19, IS FOUNDED.

2009 THEASTER GATES: TEMPLE EXERCISES IS THE ARTIST'S FIRST US MUSEUM SOLO SHOW.



MCA 50

2010-17

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Michael Darling
James W. Alsdorf
Chief Curator



Michal Rovner
Decoy #12, 1991
Chromogenic print
Three parts, each framed: 30 3/4 x 30 3/4 in.



Melanie Schiff
Skatepark, 2008
Chromogenic print
Framed: 38 1/4 x 60 3/4 in.



THE
GUTHMAN GIFT
OF 50



Eve Sussman
Themes and the Island, from "Rape of the Sabine Women," 2005
Digital chromogenic print
Framed: 50 3/4 x 59 1/2 in.



Mickalene Thomas
A Moment's Pleasure, 2006
Black-and-white print
Framed: 17 3/4 x 21 1/4 in.



Laurie Simmons
Lying Objects, 1992
 Offset photo
 Framed: 17 7/8 x 22 5/8 in.

Woman with a Camera, on view through Jan 14, 2018, is curated by Nina Wexelblatt, former Curatorial Research Assistant.

I was blown away when I got a call from MCA Trustee Jack Guthman announcing his and his wife Sandra's intention of giving 50 photographs by female artists to the MCA on the occasion of the museum's 50th anniversary. The fact that it also coincided with the couple's own 50th wedding anniversary in 2017 made the news even sweeter. It reflects that combination of personal passion and civic responsibility that is a hallmark of the Guthman's wide-ranging contributions to our city. They know that the MCA is committed to correcting historical oversights by strategically pursuing work by women artists for its collection—something they've long pursued themselves, with female artists representing a large portion of their ever-growing collection of contemporary art. Their gift complements existing strengths in our holdings, adding photographs by artists such as Sophie Calle, Anne Collier, and Xaviera Simmons, while filling gaps with our first works by Mickalene Thomas, Emily Jacir, and Marina Abramovic, among others.

One of the curators' jobs is to stay current with the artists who are defining the terms of today's art. Jack and Sandra are regularly in step and even one step ahead of us, introducing MCA staff to artists they have discovered on their travels so that we too become excited, bringing their works into the collection or featuring them in an exhibition. The gift comprises photographs by established masters, such as Carrie Mae Weems and Sam Taylor-Wood, as well as by significant emerging talents, including Michele Abeles and Annette Kelm. The scope of the work is vast, ranging across decades and nations. Viewed together, the gift forms a robust representation of the state of contemporary photography today and of the diverse nature of work by female photographers. This landmark gesture is in turn being celebrated with an exhibition called *Woman with a Camera*, while other works from the gift will appear in various exhibitions during our 50th anniversary year. I would like to personally thank Jack and Sandra for being ideal partners in our quest to honor and respect the most exemplary art of our time, and for their inexhaustible curiosity, which makes them such fun to be around.



Annika von Hausswolff
Untitled (shirt #33, pale beige), 2002
 Chromogenic print
 Framed: 24 3/4 x 19 3/4 in.

CELEBRATING 50 WITH THE WOMEN'S BOARD

Fifty years ago, a group of impassioned women founded the MCA Women's Board, forging ties between the museum and our community that endure to this day. These pioneering women not only recognized the significance of weaving together visual and performance art, dynamic educational programming, and food and social activities, but were willing to put in the work to bring these experiences to the city of Chicago and beyond. From vacuuming the floors to taking admission—and returning it when patrons felt fifty cents was too steep a price for a Dan Flavin exhibition—the members of the Women's Board were among the MCA's first, most dedicated stakeholders.

The MCA Women's Board initiated many of our most successful projects that remain at the heart of the museum's mission, including docent and learning programs, the library, and the museum café. The Women's Board also established the MCA Store, which in the early years featured precious art objects such as jewelry by Marisol and Robert Indiana, and dishware by Roy Lichtenstein. Told that it would never succeed, the store's original incarnation was a small box on wheels, built to fold up and be stored in the broom closet when it inevitably failed. Today, thanks in part to the dedication of those intrepid early Women's Board members, the MCA Store is considered by many one of the best museum gift shops in the world.

From their inspired ranks rose the MCA's first female Board Chair, Helyn Goldenberg, in 1981. Profiled in *Parade* magazine, Helyn was not only the first woman to hold the position of Board Chair at the MCA, but the first at any major art museum in the United States. During her tenure on the Women's Board,

Helyn spearheaded the creation of the first ever artist-designed T-shirt in 1974, in collaboration with Alexander Calder. Like many early Women's Board contributions, this was an idea well ahead of its time, and one that has since become ubiquitous—evidenced by the overwhelming popularity of our Takashi Murakami merchandise. In another addition to the MCA's reputation as a place of firsts, the Women's Board developed and implemented a model for benefit art auctions that has since been widely replicated in museums across the country.

Today, under the leadership of newly elected president Margie Staples, the group is continuing their legacy of generous leadership, having committed a \$1 million gift to underwrite construction of new learning studios in the Robert B. and Beatrice C. Mayer Education Center.

On the MCA's 50th birthday, it is our great honor to celebrate the Women's Board's years of dedicated service to the MCA, to contemporary artists and audiences, and to our city.



Members of the MCA's Women's Board in the new learning studios, 2017.

Through
Dec 10

Lynne Warren
Curator



TO THE RACY BRINK

Above: Installation view, *Dan Flavin: Pink and Gold*, MCA Chicago, Dec 9, 1967–Jan 14, 1968. Photo: David Van Riper.

Chris Burden, *Doomed*, 1975.



In the late 1960s, innovative artists of the post-World War II generation were revolutionizing the way art looked and was presented. A new term arose to describe what was going on: contemporary art. After the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago opened in the fall of 1967 a series of now-legendary exhibitions, including *Dan Flavin: Pink and Gold*, *Art by Telephone*, and *Christo: Wrap In Wrap Out*, brought visitors “to the racy brink that today’s artists sometimes fall over . . .”

THE SIMPLEST ANSWER THEN (AS IT IS NOW) WAS TO LISTEN TO THE ARTISTS.

By the time I arrived at 237 East Ontario Street for my first day of work a decade later, the MCA had staged dozens of exhibitions, poetry readings, avant-garde concerts, dances, and presentations of a new art form becoming known as performance art, including *Doomed* (1970) by Chris Burden (American, 1946–2015), in which he lay not drinking or eating and barely moving for more than forty-five hours. It is hard to convey how challenging these activities were, even to those bold enough to visit the MCA in the first place. Anything seemed to go, and visitors often demanded their admission fees back—which, early on, topped out at fifty cents. Back then the art was also new to curators, whose training consisted of earning an art history degree and then more or less learning on the job about contemporary art and how to best exhibit it. The simplest answer then (as it is now) was to listen to the artists.

The MCA pioneered the artist interview as an educational adjunct to exhibitions. In 1980, for example, a video of Vito Acconci (American, 1940–2017) describing his working methods in his deep voice and idiosyncratic manner of speech accompanied his retrospective of videos, sculptures, and photography, as well as new works created for the MCA. Two years later, in Magdalena Abakanowicz’s (Polish, 1930–



MCA President Joseph Shapiro and Trustee Dorie Sternberg riding one of Vito Acconci’s works in *Vito Acconci: A Retrospective 1969–1980*.

2017) first US exhibition, the Polish artist explained, in her halting but excellent English, what being an artist meant to her, all the while seated on the floor in front of her signature textile works and dragging on a cigarette! Magdalena was wise, formidable, and charismatic, and having the opportunity to observe her provided lessons that deeply shaped me as a young curator. With the passing of seminal figures such as these, the MCA’s collection of artists’ voices is proving to be a treasure trove.

Looking back, I realize there were no best practices for contemporary art exhibitions. Our staff was indeed living on the “racy brink,” learning from artists and trying our best to bring their projects to life. It is now forty years since I first showed up for work at the MCA, and so much has changed. But working hard and single-mindedly to realize artists’ visions in ways that deeply engage our visitors, that has absolutely stayed the same.



Installation view, *To the Racy Brink*, MCA Chicago, July 1–December 10, 2017.

We Are Here: Curating 50 Years of Collecting

Naomi Beckwith,
José Esparza Chong Cuy,
and Omar Kholeif

MCA curators Naomi Beckwith, José Esparza Chong Cuy, and Omar Kholeif shared their insights on the current state of contemporary art and the MCA's role in the shaping the history of twentieth- and twenty-first-century art as they prepared for *We Are Here*, the major three-part collection-based exhibition celebrating the MCA's 50th anniversary. Excerpts from the conversation are presented here.

On Surveying the Contemporary Art Landscape

OK It was an overwhelming challenge, a monumental task to try to understand 50 years of the MCA's collecting and represent the polyphony of voices that existed in the MCA's holdings—in terms of not only artists but also the important collectors who have contributed to the collection's formation. I decided to approach this by relying on my own strengths and interests.



René Magritte, *Les merveilles de la nature* (*The Wonders of Nature*), 1953. Oil on canvas; framed: 38 1/4 x 46 1/4 x 21/2 in. Gift of Joseph and Jory Shapiro, 1982.48 © 2017 C. Herscovici / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

JECC Art history is not a linear story. Part of the curator's practice is demonstrating that surveying the contemporary art landscape is not simply a matter of organizing history; there are multiple histories happening simultaneously. The artworks that we're pulling from the collection convey different experiences—lived by many different artists across time and in different geographies—that speak to the present.

NB I think we all approached the contemporary as an outlook rather than a time period. And with that premise in mind, we were able to think

about what perspective each curator would bring to the show. One thing that seems to bond our work together is an interest in the viewer and the implication for the viewer's relationship to the object. Each show takes on the relationship between the viewer and the art object or even sometimes the artist. It created beautiful layers of confluence in putting the show together.

Art and Life Today

JECC What is *not* confusing about the contemporary world we live in? Previous eras surface in the present. This new condition of being hyperlinked with different historical periods opens up a multiplicity of voices and ways of expression. The contemporary world is really, really messy.

NB Messiness is not a new condition. Whatever has been called "contemporary art" throughout the ages has always initially been confusing, especially those that we historically listed as avant-garde—those things that looked and behaved so radically differently from what preceded them. I think if anything has changed in our current moment, it's that people trust themselves less to live with messiness.

OK I like the idea of messiness. We're able to go down so many different paths in terms of how we consume content. Contemporary art lends itself to such a huge set of frameworks and references. Contemporary art is—if we have to define it—an object in the world that encourages you to interrogate

I Am You
Through Apr 1, 2018
Sylvia Neil and Daniel Fischel
Galleries

You Are Here
Oct 21, 2017–Jan 28, 2018
Griffin Galleries
of Contemporary Art

We Are Everywhere
Oct 21, 2017–Jan 28, 2018
Griffin Galleries
of Contemporary Art

Lead support for *We Are Here* is provided by the Harris Family Foundation in memory of Bette and Neison Harris: Caryn and King Harris, Katherine Harris, Toni and Ron Paul, Pam and Joe Szokol, Linda and Bill Friend, and Stephanie and John Harris; The Pritzker Traubert Collection; the Nancy Lauter McDougal and Alfred L. McDougal Exhibition Fund; Ken Griffin; Helen and Sam Zell; and Anne L. Kaplan.

Major support is provided by Nancy and Steve Crown, Kovler Family Foundation, The Bellick Family, Marlene Breslow-Blitstein and Berle Blitstein, Lois and Steve Eisen and The Eisen Family Foundation, and Lannan Foundation.

Generous support is provided by Citi Private Bank, Sara Albrecht, Rebecca W. Knight and Lester B. Knight, The Malkin Family, Carol and John Winzeler, Anne and John Kern, Susan and Lew Manilow, Meta S. and Ronald Berger Family Foundation, and Laura De Ferrari and Marshall B. Front.

Special thanks to the Bank of America Art Conservation Project.

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something about the world, whether it is about yourself or about the fundamental material of that object or how it's located.

An Exhibition in Three Parts
JECC *I Am You* presents different experiences that are materialized through the art object. You'll see in the exhibition work by some artists who take a more inward turn and a more introspective analysis of what's happening. While other artists take a much more outward stance against what's happening.

NB *You Are Here* thinks about the shifting relationship of the viewer to the object or the idea, starting with our holdings of minimalism. At some point people stopped simply looking at artworks and began to interact with them physically—you could walk around them, you could walk on them, sit on them, what have you. Once artworks began to focus on their surroundings and the viewer, there developed a focus on histories and the identities of viewers. That shift brought in a real flourishing of art as a dialogic space to think about politics. That's how the *You Are Here* segment of the 50th anniversary show developed, starting with minimalism and moving through to discussions of politics and identity.

OK My chapter, *We Are Everywhere*, begins with Andy Warhol, the most recognizable of pop artists. It moves from big pop to counter pop to the birth of contemporary photography to a focus on the individual and the ego—to artists who were experimenting with reproducible technology and creating multiple senses of what the individual could be. Technological and social change has meant that art reaches not only a much broader audience but also implicates a much broader swath of society.

Movements and Motifs

JECC It's also very important to underline that contemporary art is not a movement. The exhibition acknowledges and introduces voices of many movements that were happening in different places. And while they might share aesthetics, or the viewer might make connections, those connections are also interpretations. The power of a lot of these objects is that they give agency to the viewer to make different associations.



Rashid Johnson, *Glass Jaw*, 2011. Mirrored tile, black soap, wax, books, shea butter, vinyl album cover, BC radio, oyster shells, and paint; 88 1/2 x 118 1/2 x 12 in. Gift of Mary and Earle Ludgin by exchange, 2012.2. © 2011 Rashid Johnson. Photo: Martin Parsekian.

NB There was a surprise moment for me when I realized so many of the works in my segment have mirrors in them. And the idea, of course, for a mirror facing the viewer in a show called *You Are Here* is a provocative exercise in self-examination vis-à-vis an object. But I was interested in the mirror as a motif, and, all of a sudden, I have a work by an artist from Argentina next to one by a black artist from North America next to another by a Persian woman. And all of a sudden, juxtapositions that you wouldn't have expected to be put together begin to work.

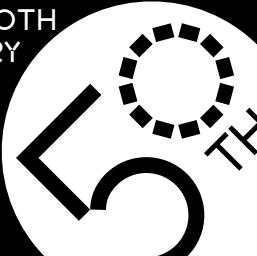
OK One of my primary interests is how art affects society in the broader sense and how technological change has led to vast political shifts in terms of how we see art. In *We Are Everywhere*, I focused on that particular angle, because I saw that Naomi was talking about the political implications of the art object in relation to the body. And I felt that my approach was in many ways an appropriate extension of hers. I thought: how do I then expand that relationship between the body and the art object into a macro position that allows us to think about multiple bodies and multiple sites and multiple spaces. Art has become very specifically popular

FELIX
OCT 14, 2017–
APR 8, 2018



Maurizio Cattelan, *Felix*, 2001. Oil on polyvinyl resin and fiberglass; 26 x 6 x 20 ft. © 2001 Maurizio Cattelan. The Edlis/Neeson Art Acquisition Fund, 2001.22.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ELEVEN YEARS, THE MCA'S MUCH-BELOVED *FELIX* (2001)—CREATED BY ITALIAN ARTIST MAURIZIO CATTELAN (B. 1960) TO RIVAL SUE, THE FIELD MUSEUM'S T-RX—IS ON VIEW IN THE MARJORIE BLUM KOVLER ATRIUM. THE SCULPTURE IS ONE OF A NUMBER OF ICONIC WORKS IN THE MCA'S COLLECTION, INCLUDING JEFF KOONS'S *RABBIT* (1986), RENE MAGRITTE'S *WONDERS OF NATURE* (1953), AND FRANCIS BACON'S *STUDY FOR A PORTRAIT* (1949), THAT ARE BEING PRESENTED AS PART OF SERIES OF EXHIBITIONS CELEBRATING THE MUSEUM'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY





Gillian Wearing, *Still from Confess all on video. Don't worry, you will be in disguise. Intrigued? Call Gillian*, 1994. Single-channel color video with audio. Joseph and Jory Shapiro Fund by exchange, 2006.3. © 1994 Gillian Wearing. Courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects, Los Angeles.

from José's introspective section, which is *I Am You*. We move upstairs to see Omar's *We Are Everywhere*, and my section, *You Are Here*, is thinking about the shifting relationship of the viewer to the object or the idea. I also love the idea that this is not meant to be a definitive conversation about the contemporary. Part of thinking about *We Are Here* was a question of what has the MCA been doing over the last 50 years, and how does the MCA frame the way in which the three of us are thinking of contemporary art.

JECC *We Are Here* not only hints at where we are now but also presents the institution as a sanctuary, a space—physically but also conceptually—where visitors are always welcome.

The Role of Contemporary Art Museums

OK I love this idea of sanctuary that José mentioned. Museums are sanctuaries for free thinking and spaces where the mind can wander and interrogate the self and the world, which can feel scary, especially now in our current social and political moment.

JECC Museums guard collections, but the MCA's collection represents all the experimental and crazy and radical ideas of different people throughout different periods of time. And this is one of the many aspects we're trying to reflect with the exhibition—that the collection is not only here for artists but also for our audiences.

NB Our collection really is a resource; it's supposed to be put to use by the viewer. Look at it. Interrogate it. Ask questions and by all means be confused.

Going Forward

NB All of us have been thinking through the idea of the global and trying to move away from privileging artists from North America and Western Europe. What do these different parallel contemporaries look like elsewhere, outside of those regions? And that doesn't mean only going far wide. It also means expanding the types of art and looking at artists in the United States that we have not been paying attention to as an institution.

JECC We are thinking globally, and we're doing this in a very sensitive and responsible way. It's not that we want to represent all the different geographies in one place or branch out for the sake of being international; we strongly believe we can learn from each other's experiences, regardless of national boundaries.

OK We've all been thinking about different territories and geographies in the broader sense. Naomi showed The Propeller Group for example, which, for me, opened up a whole new way of thinking about Vietnam and what the social and political context is there. So, we are thinking collectively not only about the collection but about how programmatically as an institution we want to shape something that is much more global.

and it explodes the boundaries of the individual.

All in a Name

OK *We Are Here* is a declarative statement that makes a point: not only has the MCA been here for 50 years, but it's going to be here for another 50 years, and it's going to make a different statement about what the contemporary is and what contemporary art will be.

NB I think it's important that the titles are all in present tense. That's what we were talking about: what the contemporary is—*We Are Here*—in the moment

HELEN AND SAM ZELL



Helen and Sam Zell.

HELEN AND SAM ZELL ARE TWO OF THE MCA'S OLDEST AND DEAREST FRIENDS. THEIR SIGNIFICANT MCA 50 GIFTS UNDERWRITE MANY ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THE MURAL THAT LORNA SIMPSON CREATED IN HONOR OF OUR 50TH BIRTHDAY, NOW ON VIEW IN OUR SECOND-FLOOR ATRIUM. OVER THE YEARS, THIS GENEROUS COUPLE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO NUMEROUS MUSEUM-WIDE INITIATIVES, SUPPORTING EXHIBITIONS, PROGRAMS, ARTIST RESIDENCIES, SPECIAL EVENTS, AND CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS. HELEN, A FORMER BOARD CHAIR, HAS BEEN INVOLVED WITH THE MCA SINCE ITS EARLIEST DAYS AND TODAY SERVES AS A TRUSTEE AND DONATES HER TIME, WISDOM, AND SUPPORT, SERVING ON THE MCA'S COLLECTION, COMPENSATION, AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES.



Lorna Simpson UNTITLED

Through
Jul 29, 2018



Lorna Simpson. Photo: James Wang.

American artist Lorna Simpson (b. 1960), whose first retrospective the MCA mounted in 1992 and who was recently appointed Artist Trustee to the MCA's Board, created a mural to honor the museum's 50th birthday. Displayed in the second-floor atrium, *Untitled* (2017) adds to our growing offerings of works in free spaces at the MCA.



Lorna Simpson, *Untitled*, 2017. Vinyl wallpaper; 24 × 38 ft. Courtesy of the artist and Hauser & Wirth.

Through
Mar 4, 2018

Omar Kholeif
*Manilov Senior Curator and
Director of Global Initiatives*

MICHAEL RAKOWITZ

BACKSTROKE OF THE WEST

Michael Rakowitz, study for *The Ballad of Special Ops Cody*, 2017. Stop motion animated film, 14 minutes, 42 seconds.

This fall, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago is presenting Chicago-based Iraqi-American artist Michael Rakowitz's first major museum survey, on view through March 4, 2018. I have long admired Rakowitz as an artist, teacher, father, husband, citizen. His works fundamentally peel back the political actions of nations such as the United States and encourage us to consider the impact that our government's acts have on our everyday lives. Do we, he inquires, play a complicit role in these attacks?

Working at the forked edge of hostility and hospitality, Rakowitz deploys both humor and earnest collaboration as means to pose grand political questions. Take, for example, his ongoing project *Enemy Kitchen* (2003–ongoing). The artist workshopped Iraqi-Jewish dishes and set up a food truck to serve the cuisine with local Iraqi chefs who helped finalize a menu that was prepared with the support of US veterans of the Iraq War working as sous-chefs. Rakowitz initiated the project just as the United States was beginning its second invasion of Iraq. Through works like these, the artist asks: Can we separate ourselves from the actions of our state? Or do we continue to enjoy the fruits of foreign nations in spite of our violence toward them?



Michael Rakowitz, *Enemy Kitchen*, 2012–ongoing. Commissioned by the Smart Museum of Art for the exhibition *Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art*, 2012. Courtesy of the artist, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago; Jane Lombard Gallery, New York; Galerie Barbara Wien, Berlin. Photo: Greg Broseus.

Rakowitz's career began in earnest when he was a graduate student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he crafted one of his most important projects to date, *paraSITE* (1997–ongoing).

THIS PROJECT . . . QUESTIONS THE LINKS BETWEEN HISTORY AND THE CULTURE THAT IT PRODUCES

The work is based on a set of instructions and an installation that allows homeless people to erect independent shelters using the ventilation systems of nearby buildings. This project has given way to an artistic practice that questions the links between history and the culture that it produces. In recent works, Rakowitz explored the relationship of *Star Wars* (1977) iconography in Iraq during Saddam Hussein's regime, the history of the Beatles—drawing links between their breakup and the collapse of Pan-Arabism—as well as the fall of subsidized housing in America, and so much more. I invite you to join me in exploring Rakowitz's world.

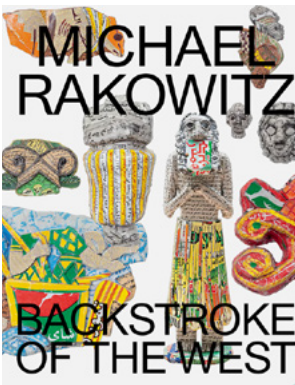
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EXHIBITION CATALOGUE



A fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition, with original essays by Omar Kholeif and Ella Shohat and a short story by Shumon Basar.

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Stefan Edlis and Gael Neeson.

STEFAN EDLIS AND GAEL NEESON HAVE MADE MANY EXTRAORDINARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MCA OVER THE LAST THREE DECADES, INCLUDING ICONIC ARTWORKS AND A REMARKABLE GIFT TO THE VISION CAMPAIGN IN 2012 TO NAME THE EDLIS NEESON THEATER. IN ADDITION, THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO MAJOR CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS AND EXHIBITIONS AND HAVE TAKEN GREAT CARE OF THE MUSEUM BUILDING PROPER, BY SUPPORTING CRITICAL UPKEEP MEASURES, HELPING THE MCA THRIVE OVER THE YEARS.



TWYLA THARP

AN EVENT FOR THE MCA

Yolanda
Cesta Cursach
Curator of Performance

Twyla Tharp in
Re-Moves at the Judson
Memorial Church, 1966
Photo: © Robert Barry.

Lead support for the 2017-18 season of MCA Stage is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman.

Generous support is provided by Lois and Steve Eisen and The Eisen Family Foundation, David Herro and Jay Franke, Ginger Farley and Bob Shapiro, the Martha Struthers Farley and Donald C. Farley Jr. Family Foundation, Sharon and Lee Oberlander, Maya Polsky, Carol Prins and John Hart/The Jessica Fund, Susan Manning and Doug Doetsch, D. Elizabeth Price and Lou Yecies, and Ms. Shawn M. Donnelley and Dr. Christopher M. Kelly.

Additional generous support for MCA Stage is provided by Enact, the MCA's performance affinity group.

The MCA is a proud member of the Museums in the Park and receives major support from the Chicago Park District.

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In New York in the late 1950s, the growth of dance companies and the cultivation of dancers by academies stifled experimentation, isolating choreographers from new trends. Breaking from this risk-averse climate in the 1960s—as the MCA was being created to satisfy Chicago's need for a contemporary art museum—Twyla Tharp (American, b. 1941) was part of a wave of choreographers who gave dance a renewed energy. She engaged her body and mind as a dancer and aligned with painters and composers, finding among them ideas, collaborators, and a public for her work.

For the first time, Tharp recreates excerpts from twenty of her earliest works made between 1965 and 1970. In *Minimalism and Me*, staged specifically for the MCA, she narrates photographs and original films of several site-specific, gender-fluid, audience-immersive experiences, illuminating the progression of the art movement and its influence on Tharp's choreography. There are other similarities among her works from this period: each was performed in silence in a different outdoor or indoor space (including museums) and rigorously governed by systems organizing time and space. In addition, the choreography was injected with humor, combining technique with natural movements, such as running, walking, and skipping.

Minimalism and Me is performed by a small group of dancers, including Tharp, and includes samples of the more than a thousand pages of charts, drawings, and sketches she made to document the dances. These materials, never before exhibited, are examined in the context of the New York art world at the time. In conversation about reconstructing

early works for MCA, Tharp recalled life below Canal Street among the interdisciplinary art milieu of 1960s New York:

In warehouses and factory spaces before there was loft living—no beds, no hot water. Across the street was Barnett Newman. Frank Stella had a building on Walker where Carl Andre and Hollis Frampton lived and worked. Robert Morris and La Monte Young were on Church just down the block from Franklin Street. We all exchanged weekend studio visits within this community.

This “we” is a powerful concept for Tharp, one that she developed while studying music at Barnard College (she graduated in art history) and also dancing with the Paul Taylor Dance Company. Downtown New York was a hotbed then for dancers, artists, philosophers, and art appreciators from different backgrounds who were engaging emerging ideals of social equality and community. In this culture, Tharp developed her populist conception of movement, which reflected her prevailing concern for the role of viewers and their physical relationship to art.



Twyla Tharp in *Generation* in the Wagner College gym, 1968. Photo © Robert Propper.

Tharp's style, which is free-flowing yet requires a high level of technique, has always embodied our culture, identities, histories, and politics. She continues to create, popularizing the important experience of dance, which, for Tharp, can communicate who we are and who we want to be.

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Fri, Oct 13, 6 pm **SOLD OUT**
Talk: Vince Staples

California rapper Vince Staples, considered the most exciting man in rap by *Rolling Stone*, discusses the evolution of his music as part of In Sight Out, a conversation series copresented with Pitchfork.

Sat, Oct 21, 10 am–11 pm
Sun, Oct 22, 10 am–5 pm
MCA ♥ Chicago

This free weekend-long event features great talks, performances, DJ sets, birthday cake, and a dynamic lineup of Chicago artists, celebrating our city and the role the MCA plays in fostering creative communities.

Fri, Oct 27, 6 pm
Open 24 Hours: Social Music by Sadie Woods

Sadie Woods’s DJ set mines the sociopolitical meanings and calls to resistance in a selection of anthems and mantras. Her performance, part of *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours*, examines celebrated voices in pop culture and highlights the aspirations, struggles, and cultural experiences encoded in music.

Thu–Sat, Nov 9–11, 7:30 pm;
Sun Nov 12, 2 pm

Faye Driscoll
Thank You For Coming: Play
Thank You For Coming: Play, the second in a series by the Bessie Award-winning director and choreographer Faye Driscoll, asks how personal and societal



Vince Staples



MCA ♥ Chicago



Chance the Rapper



Edra Soto

narratives both define and reduce our lived experience and inform the stories we tell about ourselves. Copresented with the Chicago Humanities Festival

Nov 10–19
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Sun, Nov 12
Artist Workshop: Edra Soto
Join artist Edra Soto in transforming bottles and refuse from your neighborhood into beautiful artworks. Presented in conjunction with *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours*.

Fri, Nov 17, 6 pm
Talk: Chance the Rapper
Join Chicago-based musician and activist Chance the Rapper for an evening of conversation. Copresented with Pitchfork as a part of In Sight Out, a conversation series exploring new perspectives in music, art, and culture.

Tue, Dec 5, 6 pm
Day With(Out) Art: Alternate Endings, Radical Beginnings
The 28th installment of Visual AIDS’ Day With(Out) Art features new short works by seven artists about the ongoing HIV/AIDS crisis. Organized by curators Erin Christovale and Vivian Crockett, the event prioritizes black narratives affected by the epidemic.

Fri, Dec 8, 7:30 pm
Open 24 Hours:
“Wassup w/that ‘YAC?!” with Felicia Holman
As part of *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours*, artist Felicia Holman’s original performance takes on the perspective of a black, Gen X, cis-female unpacking the connection between African American culture and cognac.

Vince Staples. Photo: James W. Mataitis Bailey; Chance the Rapper. Photo: Zoe Rain; Edra Soto. Photo: Daniel Hojnacki.



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