

MICA



Museum of
Contemporary Art
Chicago

Members' Magazine
Winter/Spring 2018

MOMENTS OF TRUTH

Gerhard Bette, 2017

One of the museum’s longtime Trustees, Gerhard Bette, identifies key moments in the MCA’s history.



SHOW TRANSCRIPT

TELL US YOUR STORY VIEW STORIES MCA CHICAGO

The MCA Stories site at stories.mcachicago.org features interviews with important figures in MCA history.

MCA STORIES

This November, in honor of our 50th anniversary, the museum launched MCA Stories, a website that gathers the stories of our community to celebrate and document the MCA’s history. On the site, a picture emerges of the MCA as a place of excellence and experimentation, inspired by a committed group of founders with a goal to build an institution unlike any other in Chicago and for visitors with an appetite for the new.

Many of the stories are told by our founders, patrons, artists, and staff, but the site has been built to grow, and we are adding new stories all the time. Browse the Stories site and you’ll find very recent stories, including the text of Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s proclamation of “MCA Day in Chicago,” and the poem that Cheryl Lynn Bruce wrote for our anniversary celebration. And we hope to hear from you, our visitors and members too. You can contribute your memories or stories through the TELL US YOUR STORY button on the MCA Stories site at stories.mcachicago.org.

WINTER/ SPRING 2018 A MUSEUM FOR ALL OF US

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Madeleine Grynsztejn

It is appropriate that this issue of *MCA Members’ Magazine*, the first of the MCA’s next fifty years, is dedicated to our friend and founder Lew Manilow, who played a major role in shaping the museum’s first half century. Lew passed away in December, and a tribute on pages 28–29 celebrates his remarkable life and legacy.

The museum’s first fifty years, supported by visionaries like Lew and inspired by the city and its people, culminated last October in a free weekend of compelling programming, great company, and a notable honor: Mayor Rahm Emanuel, in recognition of the museum’s longstanding contributions to arts and culture of the city, proclaimed October 21 to be “MCA Day in Chicago.” Shortly thereafter, on our front steps, Cheryl Lynn Bruce delivered a powerful poem—a story of the museum’s history and an ode to the new and the now that captured the MCA “looking over the ledge, locked and loaded, with potential, with promise, with possibilities.”

There is, indeed, much to look forward to this year: The Commons, a space for learning and engagement, is now open and activated by the inaugural artist project, *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours*. Off of the Pearson Street entrance, Marisol and the Street offer visitors a space to rest, work, socialize, and refuel. And on the newly created third floor overlooking Lake Michigan, student and teacher programs are in full swing. These possibilities were unlocked by an ambitious and visionary redesign that puts audience experience at the heart of the museum.

Other important undertakings at the MCA, though they may be less visible—and unaccompanied by cake and confetti—are just as integral to the museum’s mission. I am tremendously proud of MCA staff, who work daily to make the museum a welcoming destination for visitors of all backgrounds and abilities. Thanks to Liz and Eric Lefkowsky, we are also thrilled to offer free admission to visitors 18 and under, one of the ways we are making the MCA financially accessible for all. This issue features articles that reveal some of the necessary and inspiring steps that the MCA and our fellow cultural institutions are taking to offer our public a radically inclusive experience—one that extends from the galleries, to the theater, and even to people’s homes.

This winter, in the spirit of generosity and hospitality that drives our work, I invite each and every one of you to the MCA for new experiences with limitless potential.

Madeleine Grynsztejn
Pritzker Director

MCA
CHIC
AGO

Museum Hours

Mon	Closed
Tue	10 am–9 pm
Wed–Thu	10 am–5 pm
Fri	10 am–9 pm
Sat–Sun	10 am–5 pm

Admission is always 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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Free admission for visitors 18 and under is generously provided by Liz and Eric Lefkowsky.

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

Cover image: Still from Howardena Pindell, *Free, White and 21*, 1980. U-matic (color, sound); 12 min., 15 sec. Gift of Garth Greenan and Bryan Davidson Blue, 2014.22. Photo courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.

AN MCA FOR ALL OF US

We are proud of our progress in making the MCA accessible to all, and in this special section of the MCA magazine, we highlight three current areas of activity: MCA Director of Visitor Experience Pat Fraser details the MCA's implementation of best accessibility practices; Carrie Sandahl, of Chicago's Bodies of Work, an organization that supports the development of disability arts, discusses new models of radical inclusivity in the theater; and MCA Chief Content Officer Susan Chun describes Coyote, the museum's recently developed toolkit that helps web users who are blind or have low vision "see" images online—a game changer in the digital age.



Above: Visitors from the Blind Service Association take a tour of *Pop Art Design*.

Left: Visitors handle art objects on a touch tour of *Chicago Works: Amanda Williams*.

MORE THAN ONE
IN TEN ILLINOIS
RESIDENTS LIVES
WITH SOME KIND
OF A DISABILITY.

ACCESSIBLE OFFERINGS AT THE MCA

Pat Fraser
*Director of
Visitor Experience*

A year and a half ago, ADA 25 Chicago: Greater Together celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a law that prohibited discrimi-

nation based on disability—a major civil rights victory. The celebration opened the eyes of the city and its cultural institutions to what it means to be truly accessible and welcoming. With new insights, the MCA created a pan-institutional accessibility leadership team to take on the challenge of engaging an even broader audience. The team's value statement reads, in part:

Continued on next page

ALL OF US FOR THE MCA

AN MCA FOR ALL OF US

"In keeping with the MCA's commitment to access, inclusion, and equity, the museum's Board, staff, and volunteers endeavor to extend an authentic welcome to our building, exhibitions, programs, and information at all times and to all visitors. This includes visitors with disabilities, that is: people with mobility problems, vision impairment, hearing impairment, and cognitive disabilities, whether temporary or permanent."



ADA 25 Chicago cites that more than one in ten Illinois residents lives with some kind of a disability. The MCA accessibility leadership team realized the museum wasn't fully addressing this segment of our audience and decided to redress this deficit. We started by partnering with JJ's List—an organization that brings businesses and people with disabilities together for the benefit of both—to train our staff. JJ's List brought in actors with disabilities, who showed us the right and wrong ways that we might encounter visitors with disabilities. They also taught us to use "person first" language, to describe a visitor as someone who is also blind or hard of hearing, for example, rather than as a blind person. We played the role of guides, offering to lead the actors who were blind and—when the offer was accepted—giving them an elbow. Though it sounds simple, this took a lot of practice. Over and over, JJ's List reminded us, "Just ask." Assume nothing. We follow this advice all of the time now.

We then audited our accessibility offerings and found that, while we were doing good work in the theater, which has historically offered American Sign Language (ASL) and captioning for select performances, there was room for improvement. Following the

example of accessibility leaders such as Steppenwolf Theatre Company, we explored live-audio description for patrons, for which a "whisperer" in the sound booth describes the stage set and performers' actions. The description is then wirelessly transmitted to patrons' headsets in real time. Additionally, we worked toward offering our first relaxed performance, for Julie Atlas Muz and Mat Fraser's *Beauty and the Beast*. Many of our staff members were unfamiliar with "relaxed" performance, so we spent time learning how to provide a stage experience for visitors who feel uncomfortable in or excluded from traditional theater environments. Without violating the integrity of the performance, we made changes to light and sound and cleared a path to come in and out of the theater that improved audience members' ability to move around during the show. This helped visitors with sensory disabilities feel at home in our theater, a true first at the MCA.

Another invaluable method we learned from advocates in the field of accessibility was to take our most popular offerings and tweak them to be universally accessible as well as consistent. Our biggest success? Touch tours provided by our Chicago Works artists. Andrew Yang led our first touch tour in December 2016 and gave visitors who are blind or have low vision a window into his microcosm of the universe by allowing them to hold his beautiful objects as he discussed his thoughts and practice. Chris Bradley went a step further by providing touchable objects for the duration of the exhibition. These intimate experiences of touching art are wildly popular with all visitors.

We are always looking for ways to make the MCA more welcoming and accessible for everyone. By assigning the Pearson Street entrance a dedicated address, for example, patrons can be easily dropped off at street level. We've also upgraded assistive listening devices in the theater and made available EnChroma color blindness-correcting glasses for individuals and tour groups. Behind the scenes we are also making improvements: taller and sturdier docent stools are on the way for those who have difficulty standing for long periods of time, and now every exhibition meeting includes time to envision a path for wheelchairs and mobility devices.

True to what we've learned, our varied experiences enrich both the community at the MCA and the culture of Chicago. We hope you will join us for a museum experience meant for all.



Visitors handle art objects on a touch tour of *Chicago Works: Andrew Yang*.



Andrew Yang describes his work to visitors on a touch tour of *Chicago Works: Andrew Yang*.

THESE INTIMATE EXPERIENCES OF TOUCHING ART ARE WILDLY POPULAR WITH ALL VISITORS.

ALL OF US FOR THE MCA

AN MCA FOR ALL OF US



Above: Performance view with an ASL interpreter, Twyla Tharp, *Minimalism and Me*, MCA Chicago, Dec 7-10, 2017.

Right: Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis, *The Way You Look (at me) Tonight*. Photo: hagolani.com.



RADICAL INCLUSION AS RADICAL AESTHETIC

Carrie
Sandahl

CONTEMPORARY
ARTISTS HAVE
LONG
EXPERIMENTED
WITH THE ARTIST-
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RELATIONSHIP AS
A WAY OF
DRAWING
ATTENTION TO
THE PERMEABLE
BOUNDARY
BETWEEN ART
AND LIFE.

The MCA's mission and vision gives equal weight to the artist and the audience, understanding that the dynamic flow between the two is what creates meaning. Describing itself as "audience-centered," the MCA prides itself as a place where "culture and ideas are shared and tested." Contemporary artists have long experimented with the artist-audience relationship as a way of drawing attention to the permeable boundary between art and life. The stage of the imagination can be a rehearsal for possible worlds to come.

The MCA's commitment to making our possible worlds radically inclusive of the city's diverse communities is evidenced in their openness to people with disabilities as both audience members and artists. Both the former Director of Performance, Peter Taub, and current curator, Yolanda Cesta Cursach, were founding members of Bodies of Work, which is a city-wide consortium of individuals and organizations dedicated to the development of disability art and culture. From initial conversations, to two city-wide international disability art festivals (2006 and 2013), to ongoing programming, the MCA has contributed significantly to Chicago's reputation as an international epicenter of the disability art and culture movement. I am a disabled artist/scholar, and the director of Bodies of Work, which is housed in the Department of Disability and Human Development at the

University of Illinois at Chicago. The MCA is among our most active consortium members. Our membership believes that disabled people's way of being in the world is a source of aesthetic innovation and that artists with disabilities contribute significantly to the contemporary art ecosystem. We make art because of disability, not in spite of it.

As a disabled artist, I am fully aware that the MCA's unwavering support of our work is not to be taken for granted. In 2009, my colleague Dr. Carol Gill and I completed a three-year qualitative study funded by the National Endowment for the Arts on the barriers and facilitators to arts careers for deaf and disabled Americans. Disabled artists told us time and again how an imaginative teacher or organization made them feel they belonged in the art world. Artists told us that while civil rights laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act have increased opportunity for participation, such laws do little to promote meaningful inclusion if gatekeepers lack imagination.

The MCA has demonstrated imagination in spades by consistently programming some of the most innovative disabled performing artists—from companies such as the Bay Area's AXIS Dance to Australia's Back to Back Theatre—in their regular season.



which includes those with autism, sensory processing differences, and mental health issues. American Sign Language for the Deaf and audio description for those who are blind or low vision are also available at these same performances so

Continued on next page



Above: Performance view, Faye Driscoll, *Thank You For Coming: Play*, MCA Chicago, Nov 9-12, 2017.

Left: Performance view, ONEOFUS Julie Atlas Muz & Mat Fraser, *Beauty and the Beast*, MCA Chicago, Dec 1-11, 2016.

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ALL OF US FOR THE MCA



Above: 600 Highwaymen, *The Fever*. Photo: Maria Baranova.

Right: An ASL Interpreter sits on the stage with the audience during Faye Driscoll's *Thank You For Coming: Play* at the MCA.

Opposite: Detail of the MCA's homepage showcasing Coyote image descriptions.

AN MCA FOR ALL OF US

that diverse members of the disability community can enjoy the experience together.

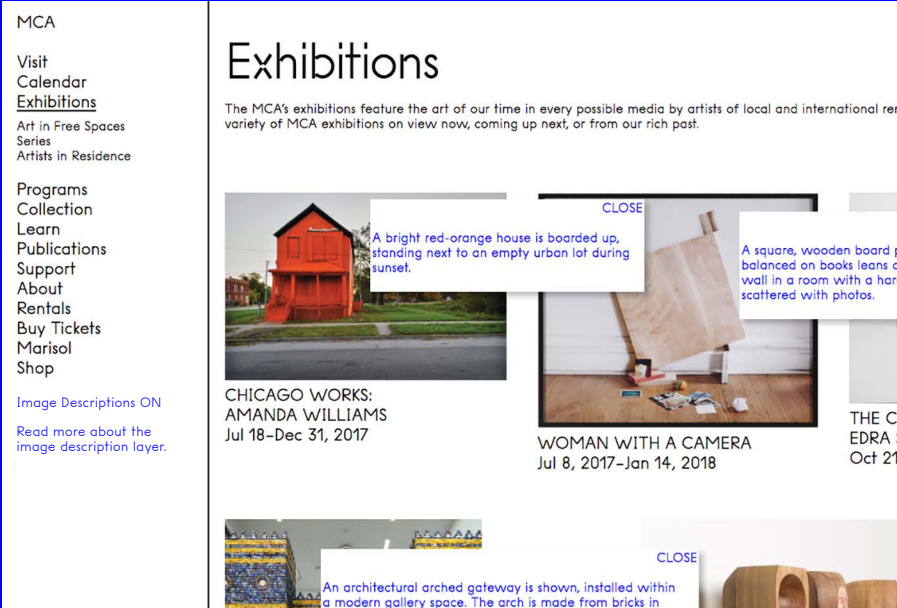
Disabled people are often excluded from audiences due to what is most often considered our unseemly comportment: the need to move around, make involuntary noises, or have equipment that makes sound (such as a ventilator). Relaxed environments expand what is considered acceptable audience behaviors. The production tempers the sensory intensity of a work by adjusting lights and sound. The house lights are kept at a glow so audiences can come and go as needed. Sensory “rest areas” are available for audience members who need to take a break during the performance. Additional ushers are available to assist audience members in navigating their expanded choices.



This radical inclusion of disabled audience members necessarily changes the dynamic between performers and audience members. For the better. Artists with and without disabilities who collaborate with us on these performances, such as Mat Fraser and Julie Atlas Muz of ONEOFUS, 600 HIGHWAYMEN, Faye Driscoll, and Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis of Gravity, have been enthusiastic, if sometimes a bit nervous, about changing their work for a new environment. But ultimately, all involved recognize that to truly imagine a radically inclusive world, our artwork must model the way.

DISABLED ARTISTS
TOLD US TIME
AND AGAIN HOW
AN IMAGINATIVE
TEACHER OR
ORGANIZATION
MADE THEM FEEL
THEY BELONGED
IN THE ARTS
WORLD.

ALL OF US



SEEING WITH COYOTE

In 2015, the MCA launched a redesigned website that showcases the museum’s exhibitions, programs, archives, and stories and features the lively identity developed for the museum by Mevis & Van Deursen. A less visible feature of the site is its purposeful attention to accessibility. Our efforts to create a site that adheres to best practices in accessible design—and that is also generous and experimental in its accommodations for visitors with vision, hearing, or cognitive impairment—led us to create Coyote, an open-source software and a project to create and publish visual descriptions of the images on our website. Coyote makes it possible for people who are blind or have low vision to fully experience our site by using software programs that read aloud image descriptions. Helping people with vision impairment to enjoy our image-rich site is another way to send the message that the MCA is a place for everyone.

Coyote descriptions are written by staff from many departments at the MCA, all of whom volunteer their time to contribute. Monthly description sprints, called “Donuts for Descriptions,” bring together curators, educators, publishing staff, security guards, store managers, visitor services team members, and others.

Continued on next page



Kerry James Marshall, *Untitled (Painter)*, 2009. Acrylic on PVC panel; 44 3/4 x 43 1/4 x 3 3/4 in. Gift of Katherine S. Schamberg by exchange, 2009.15. © 2009 Kerry James Marshall.

This is one of our earliest descriptions—a Coyote-team favorite—written by former Curatorial Assistant Karsten Lund.

This painted portrait depicts a young woman with jet-black skin holding a long, thin paintbrush up to a colorful, messy painter's palette. She is shown in a three-quarter pose, gazing directly at the viewer. Her face, which is central to the square composition, stands out against a large, white, canvas, almost blending into the pitch-black background to her right. Closer inspection reveals, however, that her skin is subtly rendered, with various shades of contours and highlights. She wears two large hoop earrings, three small hoop earrings, and an oversized, boxy, high-collared jacket made of stiff fabric. Her voluminous hair—black with an ochre sheen—rises in thick coils on top of her head. The canvas to her left shows a partly finished paint-by-number self-portrait; in it, her likeness is broken up into smaller segments with pale-blue outlines and numbers. She has outlined many of the segments and filled them in with colors from her palette: orange, blue, yellow, pink, brown, and a few shades of green. The paint-by-number canvas does not accurately represent the color and pattern of the jacket she wears, which features mustard yellow sleeves and collar and deep blue and maroon and light-yellow stripes.

ALL OF US FOR THE MCA



H. C. Westermann, *Memorial to the Idea of Man If He Was an Idea*, 1958. Pine, bottle caps, cast-tin toys, glass, metal, brass, ebony, and enamel; 56 1/2 x 38 x 14 1/4 in. Susan and Lewis Maniloff Collection of Chicago Artists, 1993.34. Art © Dumbarton Arts, LLC/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

Sky Cubacub, creator of Rebirth Garments, a custom fashion line that celebrates people of all genders, sizes, and abilities, wrote a description of her favorite work on view at the MCA for a recent Family Day.

A wooden box with a smaller wooden rectangle on top represents the shape of a human. The wooden rectangular piece on top is smaller than the bottom and represents the head. There are small turrets on the upper box that make the top of the head look like a castle, and a single globe marble rests on the middle turret. There is one big eye, white and outlined with blue with a red pupil and thin vein lines. The eye reaches almost all the way across the "forehead" of the top box, and little knobs for ears are on either side of the head. A carved nose is directly below the eye. The mouth is lined in red and is wide open; the inside of the mouth is indented into the wood. There is the shadow of a human figure inside the darkness of the mouth. Two wooden arms, one red and one blue, are bent to look like they are resting on hips. The arms are etched with squiggles. The torso section of the human box is open and inside the door are the letters HCVW spelled out in bottle caps. The box is separated by a wooden shelf inside, and there are bottle caps that completely fill the back wall and the sides of the interior. The bottle caps are colorful, many are red, white, and blue. There are small figurines on the top shelf of the box that look like upside-down human figures.

AN MCA FOR

Together, we have learned how to write effective descriptions, and along the way discovered that there are poets among us.

Like many of the best projects, Coyote has taken us down some unexpected paths. As we began to share our descriptions with museum colleagues, patrons, and—most importantly—members of the disability community, we were asked over and over why these descriptions should be available only to people with screen readers. Our friends pointed out that the descriptions might be of interest to anyone who might sometimes feel uneasy or confused in a museum. Heeding this advice, we developed a feature for the site, launching soon, that will allow any visitor to mcachicago.org to "turn on" image descriptions and to read them. Visit our site soon to check it out.



MCA staff gather on the stage to write Coyote descriptions.



Our image descriptions will be in use beyond the web as well! A technology innovation grant from the Knight Foundation in 2017 supported the Coyote project and our idea to use visual descriptions to create fun activities for sighted and unsighted visitors alike. We're currently developing a city-wide scavenger hunt using descriptions of artworks in a mobile phone interface.

Successful accessibility projects embrace the idea of "universal design"—the idea that supporting one visitor, like someone with vision impairment, will ultimately benefit all visitors. The promise of Coyote, on the web and beyond, is its offer to use tools developed for the blind to extend a radical welcome to all.

Special thanks to the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and Lois and Steve Eisen and The Eisen Family Foundation for their support of this project.

ALL OF US

HOWARDENA

Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, *Howardena Pindell* from the series *Art World*, 1980. Gelatin silver print, edition 2 of 2; 13 1/4 x 10 1/4 in. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Neil E. Kelley, 2006.867. © Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, All Rights Reserved. Courtesy of Hiram Butler Gallery.

PINDELL

Naomi Beckwith
Marilyn and
Larry Fields Curator

Feb 24–May 20

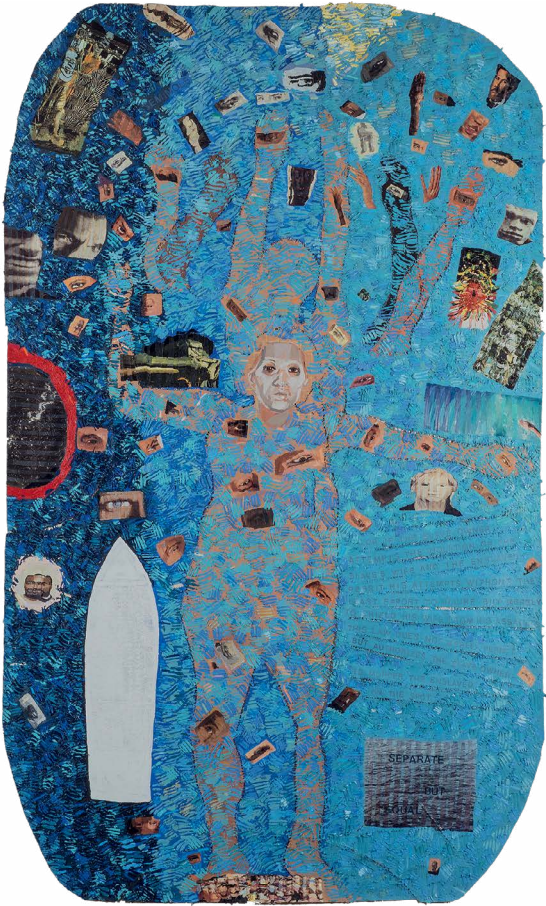
ARTIST, ACTIVIST, VISIONARY

Over the last fifty years, Howardena Pindell (American, b. 1943) has interrogated the materials, methods, and motivations for making art. Her independent vision, which led her to not only shape new visual forms but also envision new possibilities for other women and artists of color, is showcased in the MCA’s major retrospective *Howardena Pindell: What Remains To Be Seen*. The exhibition presents the artist’s prolific output, from the early, abstract works to later, more overtly autobiographical pieces, arguing that there is more in common between these bodies of work than first meets the eye.

HER WORK INTERSECTED WITH A GROWING SENSE THAT ONE CAN TAKE UP ADVOCACY FOR WOMEN AND ARTISTS OF COLOR WHILE RELENTLESSLY PURSUING ART MAKING.

Pindell came of age in the 1960s, studying at Yale University under professors of the New York School and graduating with an MFA in 1967 (her classmates Judith Bernstein and Victor Burgin would also go on to make influential bodies of work). After moving to New York City—and lodging at a friend’s poorly lit apartment—she began making works that radically departed from her formalist training, her rapidly evolving practice staying one step ahead of the changing contemporary art world around her.

By 1987, Howardena Pindell was twenty years into her professional life as an artist. During that period, she was quietly innovating in her studio to produce radically new objects: Instead of stretching her canvases on wooden frames, she left them to drape directly on the wall; she cut and sewed several patches of canvas together to make ambitious, billboard-sized objects rather than standard-scale paintings; instead of exclusively using paint, she added



Autobiography: Water (Ancestors/Middle Passage/Family Ghosts), 1988. Acrylic and mixed media on canvas; 118 x 71 in. Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund. Photo courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.



Untitled #4, 1973. Mixed media on board; 10 x 8 in. Collection Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, Deaccession Funds, 2014 2014-14.1. Photo courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.



validate art. She was also well aware that, though the art world purported to support artists based on the quality of their work alone, not everyone had equal access to galleries and museums.

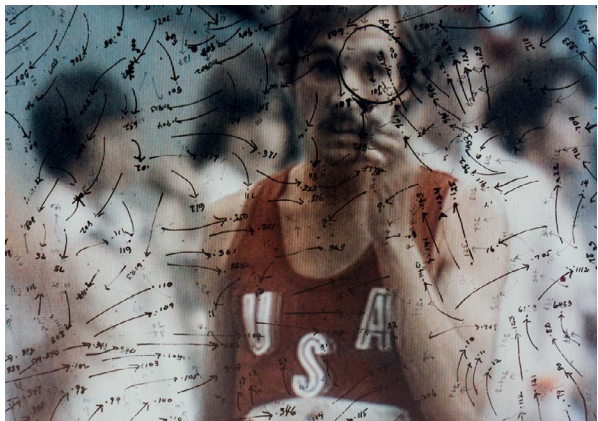
This much Pindell surmised while maintaining her studio practice and working at the Museum of Modern Art, where, as the first black woman to hold a curatorial position at the museum, she observed how old traditions and social relationships influenced the museum’s decisions. This experience inspired Pindell to use social science techniques to systemically document the racial demographic of artists shown in museums and galleries around New York. She first exhibited her findings in “Art (World) & Racism: Testimony, Documentations and Statistics,” presented in 1987 at the Agenda for Survival Conference at Hunter College, New York. Several iterations followed—

Above: *Free, White and 21*, 1980. U-matic (color, sound); 12 mins, 15 sec. Gift of Garth Greenan and Bryan Davidson Blue, 2014.22. Photo courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.

PINDELL PUT PRESSURE ON THE VERY MEANING OF PAINTING—AS AN ACTION AND AS AN OBJECT.

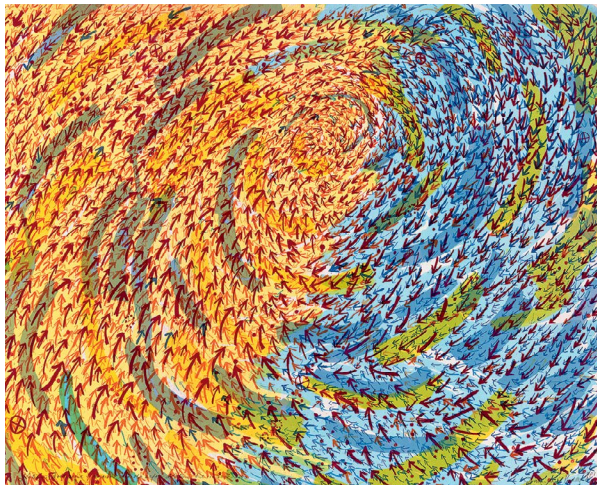
glitter, paper, powder, and perfume to her works; and rather than using a paintbrush, she wielded a spray gun. In a flurry of creation, Pindell put pressure on the very meaning of painting—as an action and as an object.

There is an important, if lesser-known, facet of Pindell’s career, however, that emerged during this time. She knew that any inventions she created would mean nothing if she received no support from art world players, including commercial galleries and fine art museums, that sell, collect, and



Video Drawings: Track, 1976. Chromogenic print; 4 ½ x 6 ½ in. Courtesy the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York. Photo courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.

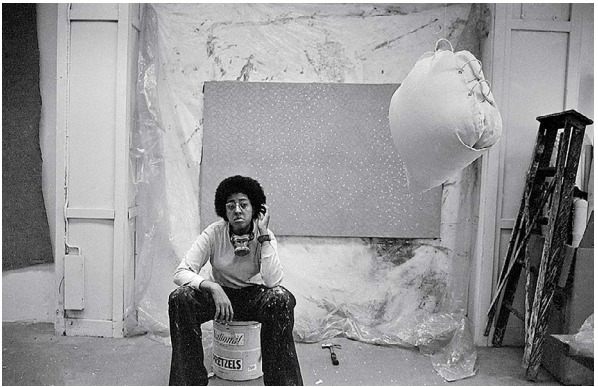
commonly titled “Art World Racism”—which updated those figures, sometimes to sobering effects. Pindell became one of the first scholars to recognize and argue that the cultural world was not immune to the prejudices all too common in the world at-large.



Katrina Footprints Drawn, 2007. Lithograph; 21 1/4 x 26 in. Collection of James Blue and Florence Davidson, Australia. Photo courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.

Artist, curator, scholar, activist, educator—these are just a few of the hats that Howardena Pindell has worn over her long career, and the MCA’s exhibition *What Remains To Be Seen* brings together these strands to illuminate the legacy of this unprecedented artist. Her work intersected with a growing sense in the late twentieth century that one could advocate for women and artists of color while relentlessly pursuing art making. Pindell’s lifelong dedication to expanding access and inclusion in the art world has opened

paths for subsequent generations, and she remains a model for artists who are engaged in the world as much as they are in their studios.

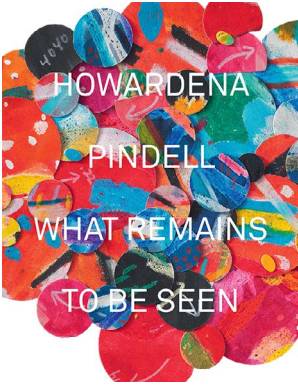


Howardena Pindell in her studio, in front of *Untitled* (1968–70), c. 1972. Photo courtesy of the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York.

Lead support for *Howardena Pindell: What Remains To Be Seen* 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; Kenneth C. Griffin; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; and Marilyn and Larry Fields. Major support is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Terra Foundation for American Art, Charlotte Cramer Wagner and Herbert S. Wagner III of the Wagner Foundation, and Liz and Eric Lefkowsky. Generous support is provided by Nathan Cummings Foundation, with the support and encouragement of Jane Saks, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Broughton; Garth Greenan Gallery; Agnes Gund, Heiji and Brian Black; Lester N. Coney and Mesirow Financial; Ashlee Jacob; Nickol and Darrel Hackett; Denise and Gary Gardner; Vicki and Bill Hood; Cheryl Mayberry McKissack and Eric McKissack; Jeanne and Kevin Poorman; Desirée and Victoria Rogers; Dr. John E. Ellis; Cathy Ross and Chris Liguori; and Lloyd A. Fry Foundation.



EXHIBITION CATALOGUE



HOWARDENA PINDELL:
WHAT REMAINS
TO BE SEEN

This monograph celebrates fifty years of Howardena Pindell’s art, including painting, works on paper, collage, photography, film, and video. With original essays by Sarah Cowan, Lowery Stokes Sims, Naomi Beckwith, Valerie Cassel Oliver, Charles Gaines, Grace Deveney, and Brian Wallis.

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Store in February.
\$58.50 for members
(\$65 for nonmembers)
mcchicagostore.org

Through
Dec 16

Heaven and Earth

Alexander Calder and

Michael Darling
James W. Alsdorf
Chief Curator



Alexander Calder, *Orange Under Table*, c. 1949. Sheet metal, paint, metal rods, and steel wire; 72 x 82 in. diameter. The Leonard and Ruth Horwich Family Loan, EL1995.11.01-15. © 2018 Calder Foundation, New York/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Jeff Koons



Jeff Koons, *Lifeboat*, 1985. Bronze; 20 ½ x 87 ¼ x 62 ¾ in. Gerald S. Elliott Collection, 1995.56.a-c. © Jeff Koons.

On the museum’s second floor, delicate, abstract forms of wire, glass, and wood precariously hang in stark contrast to a firmly planted bronze sculpture and basketballs floating in a fish tank. Yes, the pairing in *Heaven and Earth: Alexander Calder and Jeff Koons* is unexpected. But though the differences between the works couldn’t be more apparent, the artists actually have quite a lot in common: the simplicity of their aesthetics belies the complexity of their work, and, as artists who revolutionized the field of contemporary art, they have played integral roles in the MCA’s telling of contemporary art history.

Calder (American, 1898–1976) trained as an engineer and used his knowledge of mechanics to construct the floating wire sculptures, later to be called “mobiles,” for which he is best known. Having established a name for himself in the 1920s, his esteem in Chicago only grew over time. The MCA has exhibited his works throughout the years, including in a major retrospective in 1974 and in *MCA DNA: Alexander Calder* (2013–15), which traced fifty years of the artist’s evolving, influential ideas.

Koons (American, b. 1955) helped usher in an era of art in the 1980s that took inspiration from the mundane—advertisements, celebrity paraphernalia, and domestic goods—and upended the tastes of the contemporary art world. The MCA had the honor of organizing a young Koons’s first museum exhibition in 1988 and, in 2008, presenting the mature body of work by a seminal figure of contemporary art.

We invite you to return to *Heaven and Earth* throughout its extended run and experience the work of these artists—which are periodically updated with substitutions by both artists—as the museum has, again and again.



IN ATTENDANCE
WERE
FOUNDERS,
BOARD MEMBERS,
AND
50TH CHAIRS.

ON OCTOBER 21,
2017, THE MCA
KICKED OFF A TWO-DAY
50TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION WITH AN
OPENING CEREMONY
ON THE MUSEUM'S
FRONT STEPS.

MCA
50TH

50TH

THE OPENING
CEREMONY
PRECEDED TWO
FREE DAYS OF
REVELRY OPEN
TO THE
COMMUNITY.

MAYOR RAHM
EMANUEL
DECLARED
OCTOBER 21, 2017,
"MCA DAY IN
CHICAGO."

MCA
50TH

Edra Soto

Open 24 Hours



Edra Soto with her installation *Open 24 Hours* in the Commons.

A soft sound drifts toward you as you find yourself singing along, “Blame it on the booze, got you feeling loose, blame it on the ‘tron, got you in the zone, blame it on the a-a-a-a-alcohol.”¹ An artist approaches, asking if you would like to adopt a bottle, and the glint of translucent green glass catches your eye. Its smooth surface belies its rugged life spent discarded on the streets of East Garfield Park. You cover the vestige with shells, laying claim to the refuse and transforming it. The collaborative artwork

then joins others in Edra Soto’s installation for the Commons, *Open 24 Hours*.

The project began a couple of years ago, when Soto became dismayed by the epidemic of trash in her neighborhood. Noticing that the litter was primarily liquor bottles, she began to collect, revitalize, and research these objects, scrutinizing in particular the historical use of cognac in her pre-dominantly African American community. Inspired by her learnings, Soto posits a legacy of



Visitors in the Commons, located in the Bluhm Family Engagement Zone, take part in Edra Soto’s workshop during the 50th-weekend celebration.

An experiment in communal critical inquiry, *Open 24 Hours* is contemplative and hopeful, bringing MCA visitors together to explore the hidden stories of forgotten trash.

inequality and cross-cultural pollination that began in World War II.

In the space of the Commons, Soto invites a community of collaborators as well as the public to consider and respond to her proposal within an architectural installation reminiscent of public gathering spaces in the artist’s home country of Puerto Rico. Writing stations prompt visitors to address their civic agency, and Friday-night programs reflect on these vwritten contributions. Twice a month, audiences collaborate with Soto in bottle-making workshops while listening to a playlist crafted by the artist Sadie Woods, an auditory reflection on Soto’s questions. An experiment in communal critical inquiry, *Open 24 Hours* is contemplative and hope-

ful, bringing MCA visitors together to explore the hidden stories of forgotten trash.



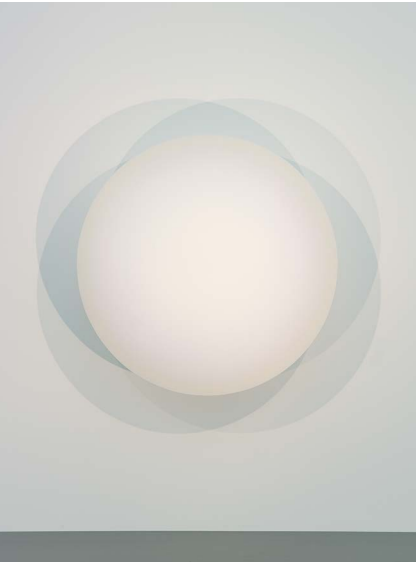
Installation view: *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours* in the Commons.

1 Jamie Foxx featuring T-Pain. “Blame It.” *Intuition*, J Records, 2008.

ENDLESS SUMMER

Jan 27–
Aug 5

Michael Darling
James W. Alsdorf
Chief Curator



Robert Irwin, *Untitled*, 1965–67. Acrylic lacquer on shaped aluminum; 60 in. diameter × 4 in. Gift of Lannan Foundation, 1997.40. © 2018 Robert Irwin/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Taking its title from the classic Bruce Brown surf movie from 1966, *Endless Summer* offers a snapshot of a particular type of alluring painting and sculpture that emerged from Los Angeles in the 1960s. During this period, LA was a hotbed of contemporary art innovation: the city where Andy Warhol first showed his seminal soup can paintings, where Marcel Duchamp (the godfather of conceptual art) had his first ever museum show, and where pop art received one of its first museum assessments. A regionally specific variant of minimalism also arose during this time. Sometimes called “Finish Fetish” or “Light and Space” art, it was characterized by slick surfaces and dreamy, sometimes

atmospheric, color that was influenced by the surf industry, custom-car culture, and the legendary climate of Southern California. Distinct from the East Coast artists who were creating a variant of minimalism, West Coast artists did not shy away from color; instead, they embraced new materials such as fiberglass, plastic, and resin and reveled in the vagaries of perception rather than objective facts.

In 2014, an important gift of seven works by the leading practitioners of this movement was given to the MCA from the estates of Walter Netsch and Dawn Clark Netsch, drastically improving our ability to document this fertile chapter in art. Gathered together in *Endless Summer* are works from that gift, joined by related works already in the MCA collection. The range of work reveals the wide variety of approaches that artists of this time and place were pursuing: Peter Alexander, for instance, became best known for his delicate wedges of translucent, colored resin that taper off at the tops and blend with the atmosphere. Craig Kauffman’s wild experiments with vacuum-formed plastics and atomized spray paints merged painting and sculpture while also alluding to commercial signage and customized car designs. And Billy Al Bengston borrowed from hot-rod culture his material palette of bent metal, high-sheen paints, and stenciled symbols to push painting in a new direction. With additional works by Robert Irwin, John McCracken, Larry Bell, and Ed Ruscha, *Endless Summer* brings the warmth and light of Los Angeles to the MCA—the perfect exhibition for combating the winter doldrums in Chicago!



Ed Ruscha, *News*, 1970. Screen print on paper; portfolio of six, each sheet: 23 × 31 ¼ in., each framed: 29 × 37 1/8 in. Gift of Nicolò Pignatelli, 1979.29.3. © Ed Ruscha.

Peter Alexander, *Brown Black Wedge*, 1969. Cast polyester resin; 91 ¾ × 4 × 3 15/16 in. Gift of the Estates of Walter Netsch and Dawn Clark Netsch, 2014.54.



PICTURE FICTION:
KENNETH
JOSEPHSON AND
CONTEMPORARY
PHOTOGRAPHY

Apr 28–
Dec 30

Michael Darling
James W. Alsdorf
Chief Curator

In an effort to align with the citywide initiative Art Design Chicago, sponsored by the Terra Foundation for American Art, the MCA felt the time was right to construct an exhibition that looks at the influence and achievements of longtime Chicago artist Kenneth Josephson (American, b. 1932). For many years Josephson's work was appreciated primarily within the specialist circles of fine art photography, but his early analyses of picture-making, incisive, and often humorous, have had a much broader impact. He has inspired other artists to reflect on the photographic medium and helped viewers look more critically at the images they consume on a daily basis. *Picture Fiction: Kenneth Josephson and Contemporary Photography* surveys some of the key works of Josephson's half-century-long practice, while also tracing the development of conceptual photography by his peers and subsequent generations of artists.



Stockholm, 1967. Gelatin silver print; sheet: 11 x 14 in., mat: 16 x 20 in. Illinois Arts Council Purchase Grant, 1980.13. © 1967 Kenneth Josephson.



New York State, 1970. Gelatin silver print; framed: 17 x 21 in. Gift of Katherine S. Schamberg by exchange, 2014.4. © 1970 Kenneth Josephson

Primarily drawn from the MCA's renowned collection of conceptually oriented photographs, which includes a recent influx of works by Josephson, the exhibition places the artist's work in a broader context of photo-based provocations by contemporaries such as Vito Acconci, John Baldessari, and Ed Ruscha. Like Josephson, these artists played with the supposedly unbiased and documentary nature of photography to provoke viewers into thinking more carefully about the "truths" they are fed. Their work opened up a large field of inquiry in the world of contemporary art that has grown all the more pressing and acute in the digital age. The exhibition presents work by younger practitioners, including Rodney Graham, Anne Collier, and Xaviera Simmons, who are the worthy inheritors of Josephson's pioneering pictures, making a case for a school of critical, photo-based art that claims Josephson as one of its central early protagonists. The exhibition celebrates this great artist who continues to live and work in Chicago, a testament to the rich, local artistic traditions that exert influence far beyond Chicago's borders.

Picture Fiction: Kenneth Josephson and Contemporary Photography is made possible through support from the Terra Foundation for American Art.

Generous additional support is provided by the David C. and Sarajeane Rutenberg Arts Foundation.



Picture Fiction: Kenneth Josephson and Contemporary Photography is part of Art Design Chicago, an exploration of Chicago's art and design legacy, an initiative of the Terra Foundation for American Art with presenting partner The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation.



Bandit, 2014. Oil and acrylic on silk chiffon; 29 x 35 in. Collection of Lukas Hall. Photo: Dawn Blackman, courtesy of Paul Heyer and Night Gallery.

Jan 16–
Jul 1

Erin Toale
*Former Curatorial
Assistant*

Paul
Heyer

Anything
Can
Happen



Five Apples, 2015. Oil and acrylic on polyester; 50 x 70 in. Photo: Robert Heishman, courtesy of the artist and Chapter-NY.

Chicago Works: Paul Heyer asks you to press pause, to enter a frame of mind where the things that govern our lives—politics, religion, addiction—are destabilized, all the rules are off, and you are free to play. In one room, a silver, cloud-like blanket fills the space surrounded by large, vivid paintings on polyester. In another gallery, blackened brooms hang from the ceiling in a tight circle (a spooky model of the universe) near works that ask viewers to be the sky or live for ten thousand years. Though the mood and the materials of the works differ, a shared thread emerges in the sense of infinite possibilities that they inspire.

Heyer (American, b. 1982) thinks a lot about alternate universes—not those beyond our Milky Way but the ones that we can imagine. By presenting familiar objects in unfamiliar ways—such as brooms charred and strung from the ceiling and pretty paintings marred by burn marks—the Chicago native reframes the world and asks, "What world will we create together?"

Generous support for *Chicago Works: Paul Heyer* is provided by the Sandra and Jack Guthman Chicago Works Exhibition Fund, Night Gallery, Chapter NY, and Susie L. Karkomi and Marvin Leavitt.

Mar 31–
Sep 9

Omar Kholeif
Manilow Senior
Curator and Director
of Global Initiatives

Otobong Nkanga

To Dig a Hole That Collapses Again

Filtered Memories—Teargas, 1978, Yaba, Lagos, 2009. Acrylic and stickers on paper; 16 ½ x 11 ¾ in. Private collection. Courtesy of Lumen Travo Gallery, Amsterdam, and Galerie In Situ-Fabienne Leclerc, Paris.

Otobong Nkanga (Nigerian, b. 1974) is an artist who acts as part geologist, part geographer, and part social anthropologist. She spends much of her time exploring how Africa's natural resources, specifically its minerals, are mined and captured by different groups and then exported into the West, forming covert trade routes and diverse ecologies.

The artist's first ever US survey exhibition, *To Dig a Hole That Collapses Again*, takes its name from the history of Tsumeb, a town in Namibia that houses the "Green Hill" mine, one of the country's "rare gems." The mine contained hundreds of minerals, and its rich reserves were historically protected by local tribes. Unfortunately, they were unable to guard the hill as they repeatedly tried to build a well to supply water. It is claimed that the brittle, dolomite earth of the Green Hill caused the well to collapse, again and again.



In Pursuit of Bling: The Discovery, 2014. Tapestry; 74 ¾ x 70 ¾ in. Edition of 5, aside from an artist's proof. Courtesy of Lumen Travo Gallery, Amsterdam, and Galerie In Situ-Fabienne Leclerc, Paris.

Nkanga maps contexts such as this in drawings, installations, and performances, creating a universe in which viewers can witness the capture of our world's natural resources. For this exhibition, I began by looking at Nkanga's works on paper, painterly drawings of amorphous figures engaged in constant battle. In *The Apparatus* (2015), for example, a plethora of hands intertwine as if they are about to destroy the earth beneath them. These hands, painted in an

innocent, almost cartoon-like fashion, exist in stark contradiction to the violence that they enact.

The centerpiece of the exhibition at the MCA is the installation *In Pursuit of Bling* (2014). This work explores the metaphoric transformation of raw materials into their finalized product. Mica is the starting point for the installation, a word that emerged from the Latin *micare*, which means "to twinkle" or "to glitter." The mineral relates to Nkanga's fascination with "shine," a concept she dubbed that conjures an image from her childhood, of seeing the earth glimmer before her eyes.

NKANGA [CREATES] A UNIVERSE IN WHICH VIEWERS CAN WITNESS THE CAPTURE OF OUR WORLD'S NATURAL RESOURCES.

At the heart of this installation are two tapestries: one reveals a gemstone bludgeoned by needles, and the other shows the legs of a man entrenched in a mining landscape. Around these are metallic forms that contain geological samples, photographs, and minerals such as mica, malachite, and copper, along with texts printed on limestone. Nkanga can also be seen on two videos walking the streets of Berlin with raw materials on her head. In a corner of the installation lies one product of these mineral exports into the West—makeup—which brings "shimmer" to the faces of its users. Nkanga asks, what measures do we take in pursuit of bling, in pursuit of the shine and gloss that we aspire to project each and every day as we go out in the world?

To Dig a Hole That Collapses Again considers the divergent ways that we relate to the environment. Will we protect it, or are we too concerned with using it again and again to satisfy our immediate, material needs?

Lead support for *Otobong Nkanga: To Dig A Hole That Collapses Again* is provided by R. H. Defares; 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 Margot and W. George Greig Ascendant Artist Fund; and Helen and Sam Zell. Major support is provided by Nancy and Steve Crown, and Elissa Efraymson and Adnaan Hamid. Additional generous support is provided by Jean-Marc Decrop, Galerie In Situ-Fabienne Leclerc, Paris, and CE Horton.

Grace Deveney
Assistant Curator

Through
May 20

MCA SCREEN:
PAUL PFEIFFER



THREE FIGURES
IN A ROOM

The seamless synchronization of moving image and sound in film—often taken for granted—is routinely achieved by an intricate, behind-the-scenes editing process. Ambient sound such as footsteps, creaking doors, and others that aren’t easily picked up during the filming process are added back during post-production. Sound technicians, known as Foley artists, are often the unseen source of these noises, re-creating them in sound studios. Video artist Paul Pfeiffer (American, b. 1966) explores this aspect of filmmaking in his recent work *Three Figures in a Room*, a video of Foley artists at Kantana Sound Studios in Bangkok whom Pfeiffer commissioned to create an unusual soundtrack to accompany footage from the “Fight of the Century,” a 2015 boxing match between Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao at the MGM Grand Las Vegas.

Three Figures in a Room is a two-channel video installation that presents two audio technicians simulating the sounds of the boxers’ footsteps, punches, and the rustling of their silk shorts as they move through the ring alongside the TV footage of the fight, intermittently interrupted by glitches,

erasures, and repetition—the signature-style editing of Pfeiffer’s video work. Perhaps most striking is the complete absence of sound coming from the crowd, no cheering or commentary. Pfeiffer edited the pre-existing footage to tell a different story, one about the strangeness of spectacle that becomes apparent when the crowd is hushed and we must focus on watching the main event. Without the noise of the spectators, the larger entertainment industry as well as the violence and tedium of the fight are heightened.

Over the course of his career, which includes a mid-career survey at the MCA in 2003, Pfeiffer has become known for videos and sculptural installations that deconstruct sports, music videos, and other televised events in order to shed light on the ways that viewers participate in them. The museum debut of *Three Figures in a Room* offers an opportunity to take your place alongside the boxers and Foley artists and witness the artist’s process of manipulating moving images to expose the absurdity, complexity, and violence of popular spectacles.

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

CURRENT
AND
FUTURE
EXHIBITIONS

CLOSING SOON

Woman with a Camera
Through Jan 14

A testament to the expressive power of the camera, this remarkable selection of fifty works by women photographers is drawn from the 50th-anniversary gift from Jack and Sandra Guthman.

Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours
Through Feb 25

Edra Soto prompts visitors to consider the nature of urban space, cross-cultural dynamics, the legacy of colonialism, and personal responsibility in this interactive installation in the Commons.

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.

You Are Here
Through Jan 28

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



Michael Rakowitz: Backstroke of the West



We Are Here: You Are Here



Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours



Felix

how the body may be subjected to power.

We Are Everywhere
Through Jan 28

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.

I Am You
Through Apr 1

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.

ON VIEW NOW

Michael Rakowitz:
Backstroke of the West
Through Mar 4

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.

Felix
Through Apr 8

The MCA’s beloved sculpture *Felix* is a nod to the Field Museum’s legendary T-Rex, Sue, but in typical Maurizio Cattelan fashion, the skeleton is a gigantic cat rather than an actual fossilized specimen.

MCA Screen: Paul Pfeiffer
Through May 20

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.

Heaven and Earth:
Alexander Calder and
Jeff Koons

Through Dec 16
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.

ON VIEW/ NEXT

Chicago Works: Paul Heyer
Jan 16–Jul 1

Paul Heyer's most immersive installation to date creates a dream-like realm with ethereal paintings and spooky sculptures.

Endless Summer
Jan 27–Aug 5

Titled after the classic Bruce Brown surfing documentary from 1966, *Endless Summer* offers a snapshot of the alluring minimalism that emerged in Los Angeles in the 1960s.

Howardena Pindell:
What Remains To Be Seen
Feb 24–May 20

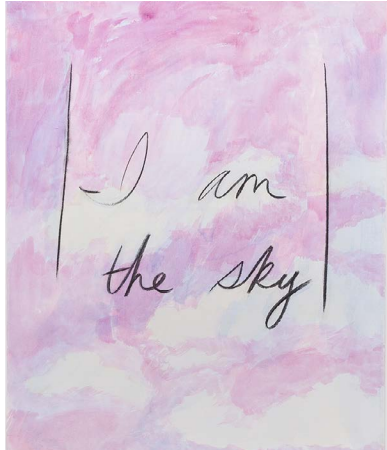
Trained as a painter, Howardena Pindell has challenged the staid traditions of the art world and asserted her place in its history as a woman and one of African descent. Since the 1960s, she has used nontraditional materials to stretch the boundaries of the rigid tradition of rectangular, canvas painting.

Otobong Nkanga: To Dig
a Hole That Collapses Again
Mar 31–Sep 9

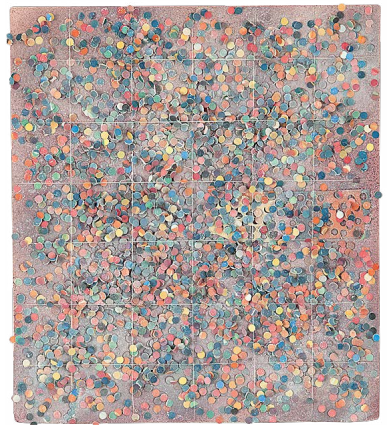
Otobong Nkanga acts as a cultural anthropologist, tracing the violent means by which minerals and objects are taken from their natural environments, and considers how they are transported to the West.



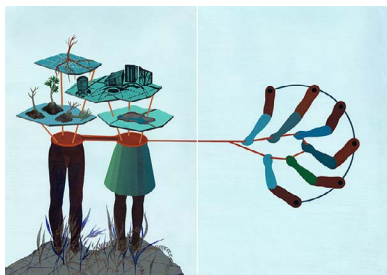
Heaven and Earth:
Alexander Calder and Jeff Koons



Chicago Works: Paul Heyer



Howardena Pindell:
What Remains To Be Seen



Otobong Nkanga:
To Dig a Hole That Collapses Again

Picture Fiction: Kenneth
Josephson and Contemporary
Photography

Apr 28–Dec 30

In playing with the unique qualities of photography, Kenneth Josephson changed the way we think about pictures. This exhibition considers his work in the larger context of conceptual art and draws parallels with contemporary artists working in photography, film, and sculpture.

Joan Giroux
May 1–Oct 7

Joan Giroux invites visitors to consider their roles in shaping the future of public green spaces in our cities, using the formats of map-making and board games to encourage play, learning, and conversation.

I Was Raised on the Internet
Jun 23–Oct 14

Due to new types of gaming and entertainment and the rise of social media and alternative modes of representation, the everyday is no longer what it used to be. *I Was Raised on the Internet* looks at how these new technologies and trends have changed the way we experience the world.

Installation view, *Michael Rakowitz: Backstroke of the West*, MCA Chicago, Sep 16, 2017–Mar 4, 2018; Installation view, *We Are Here: You Are Here*, MCA Chicago, Oct 21, 2017–Jan 28, 2018; Installation view, *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours*, MCA Chicago, October 21, 2017–Feb 2, 2018; Maurizio Cattelan, *Felix*, 2001. Oil on polyvinyl resin and fiberglass; 26 x 6 x 20 ft. The Edlis/Neeson Art Acquisition Fund, 2001.22. © 2001 Maurizio Cattelan; Alexander Calder, *Performing Seal*, 1950. Sheet metal, paint, and steel wire; 33 x 23 x 36 in. The Leonard and Ruth Horwich Family Loan, EL1995.7. © 2018 Calder Foundation, New York/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; Paul Heyer, *I Am the Sky (Version 1: BORN)*, 2016. Acrylic and charcoal on canvas; 21 x 25 in. Collection of Meredith Darrow. Photo: Robert Heishman, courtesy of the artist and Night Gallery; Howardena Pindell, *Untitled #27*, 1974. Mixed media on board; 13 3/4 x 12 in. Weatherspoon Art Museum, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, gift of Donald Droll, 1983.3525. Photo: Courtesy the artist and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York; Otobong Nkanga, *Social Consequences IV: The Takeover*, 2013. Acrylic and stickers on paper; two parts, each: 16 1/2 x 11 1/4 in. Courtesy of Maurice van Valen, Eindhoven. Courtesy of Lumen Travo Gallery, Amsterdam, and Galerie In Situ–Fabienne Leclerc, Paris.

FEB 8–
FEB 11

Yolanda Cesta Cursach
Curator of Performance

Glasgow-based artist Claire Cunningham (b. 1977) creates multi-disciplinary performance works often rooted in the study and use/ misuse of her crutches as well as the exploration of the potential of her specific physicality. The self-identifying disabled artist—recently selected for the coveted Factory Artists residency with tanzhaus nrw, in Dusseldorf, Germany—makes her Chicago debut at the MCA with Jess Curtis, performing *The Way You Look (at me) Tonight*, a lilting collage of movement, video, and music that examines the ways that we, as a society, perceive others of different ages, bodies, and backgrounds.

Cunningham is receiving commissioning support and a residency by the MCA to develop her forthcoming work *Thank you very much . . .*. Conceived for five performers including Cunningham, the piece looks at the notions of impersonation versus tribute—of grooming and training to be someone else yet never reaching the supposed ideal—through the lens of the Elvis Presley phenomenon and the competitive world of Elvis tribute artists. Hosted later in February by The Hyde Park

Art Center, the MCA residency brings together for the first time Cunningham and two of her Chicago-based collaborators: writer-choreographer Barak adé Soleil and media artist Chun-Shan (Sandie) Yi.

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.

Foundation Season Sponsor	Hotel Sponsor
	

Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis, *The Way You Look (at me) Tonight*. Photo: hagolani.com.

Claire Cunningham & Jess Curtis

The Way

You Look (at me) Tonight





MCA trustees thank Lew Manilow for taking on a fifth year as Board Chair at the annual Board of Trustees meeting, 1980.

AT JUST FORTY YEARS OLD AND THE YOUNGEST SERVING TRUSTEE, LEW SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY TO FUSE HIS BUSINESS ACUMEN AND LOVE OF VISUAL ART.

LEWIS MANILOW

Aug 11, 1927 – Dec 12, 2017

On December 12, 2017, we lost one of our most formative influences, founding trustee and former Board Chair Lewis Manilow.

A Harvard Law School graduate and prominent attorney, Lew was an incisive planner with a strong civic spirit. In 1967, he was invited by founding Board Chair Joseph Shapiro to join the first institution in Chicago devoted solely to contemporary art. At just forty years old and the youngest serving trustee, Lew seized the opportunity to fuse his business acumen and love of visual art.

He began his service as inaugural Exhibition Committee Chair, a critical player in the burgeoning, non-collecting museum. Seeking challenging and energizing art, Lew championed the iconic wrapping of our first building by Christo; he watched over this exhibition, staying on-site to ensure it was not shut down by the Chicago Fire Department. For Lew, the exhibition captured the spirit of the MCA: it was "avant-garde in the best possible sense."

A collector since his early twenties, Lew soon advocated for establishing what would become the MCA's legendary permanent collection. "When collectors dream of finding artists who will go on to become influential and valuable, they are dreaming of Lew's eye, ability, andchutzpah," James W. Alsdorf Chief Curator Michael Darling said, "and lucky for the MCA, Lew brought that track record and energy to develop this museum into the internationally recognized institution it is today."

As inaugural Chair of the Collection Committee and in partnership with his fantastic wife Susan, Lew brought into the MCA iconic works by artists such as Shirin Neshat and H. C. Westermann and expanded the holdings of work by Chicago artists including Jeanne Dunning, Leon Golub, Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle, and Kerry James Marshall. The MCA's 50th-anniversary exhibitions feature many of their visionary gifts.

Lew served a remarkable five-year tenure as Board Chair (1976-81), securing much-needed space for the permanent collection and shows devoted to Chicago art. Unforgettably under his watch, Gordon Matta-Clark cut into the museum's soon-to-be renovated museum



Lew Manilow at the dedication of the Manilow Gallery at the Ontario St. building, 1982.



Judith Kirshner, Lew Manilow, and Pritzker Director Madeleine Grynsztejn, 2011.



Susan and Lew Manilow at the Circle Preview for William Kentridge, 2001. Photo: Steve Becker.

annex to create *Circus: The Caribbean Orange*. (Once again, spending time with the fire department!)

Lew was vital to the relocation of the MCA to its current building, where he continued to support exhibitions and acquisitions. As believers in the public good of donating art, Susan and Lew gifted works such as a Kara Walker's 150-foot-long installation of landscapes in the antebellum South, which Lew famously was moved to purchase after seeing it at the Renaissance Society. The couple also gifted one of the most important bodies of work by William Kentridge, making possible his first US survey, co-organized by the MCA.

Lew's influence was not limited to the galleries or the boardroom. The dynamic MCA Stage season that today's audiences enjoy was created through his activism. Lew was instrumental in promoting the then-radical idea of having a theater with year-round, original programming in a museum.

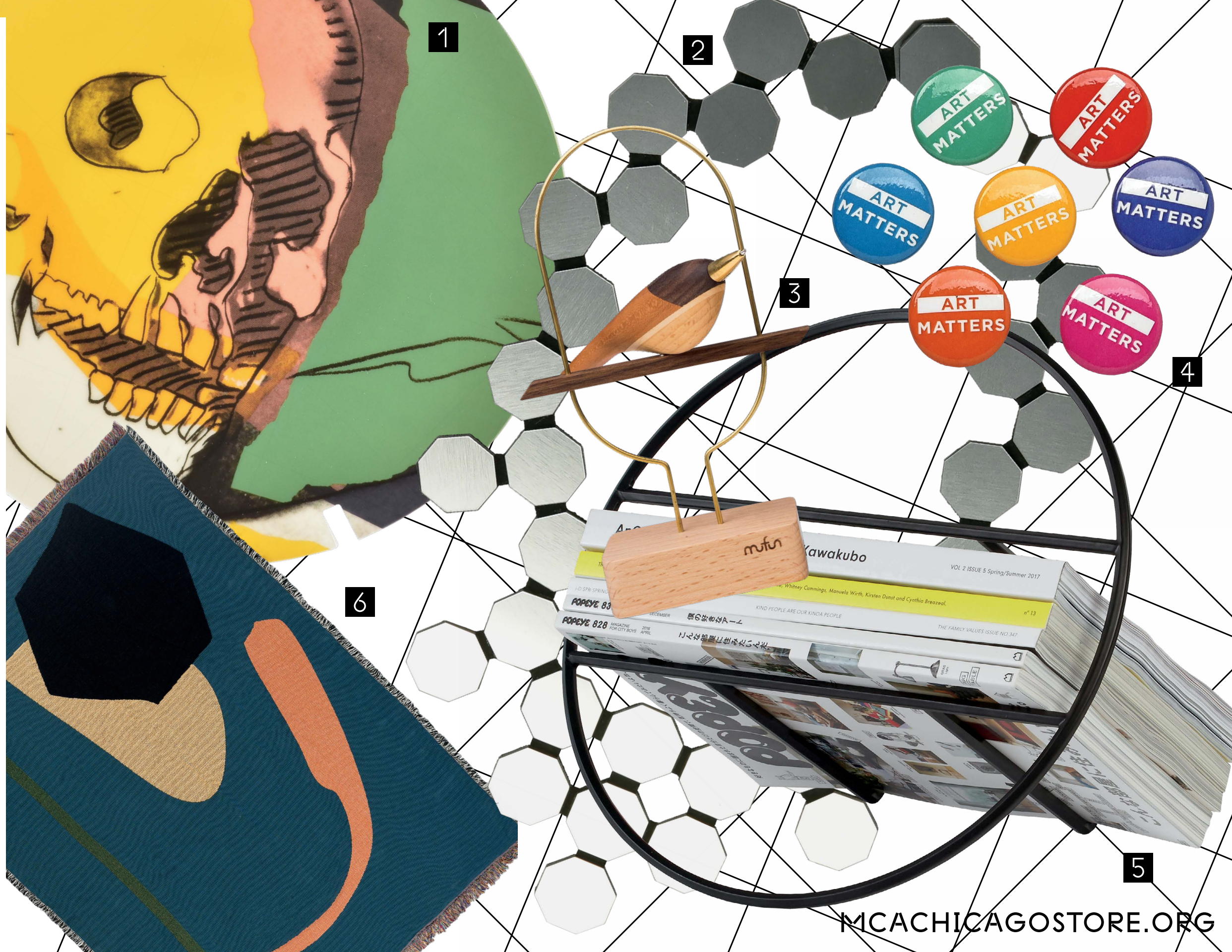
In 2010, Lew was honored as an MCA Life Trustee. The shape of the MCA and the wealth of gifts we share with the city of Chicago would be far lesser without Lew's unflinching, brilliant, and impassioned advocacy and dedication. His legacy of pushing the boundaries and relevance of contemporary art live on through an endowed senior curatorship (held by Omar Kholeif), and he will be remembered as we try to live up to his infallible optimism, indefatigable enthusiasm, and bottomless generosity.

MCA STORE

Wild and Wearable Winter Selections

- 1 WARHOL SKULL PLATE
\$121.50
(Nonmembers \$135)
- 2 GRETA OCTAGON
NECKLACE
\$157.50
(Nonmembers \$175)
- 3 WINGED PEN
\$80.10
(Nonmembers \$89)
- 4 ART MATTERS
BUTTONS
\$.90 EACH
(Nonmembers \$1 each)
- 5 HOOP MAGAZINE RACK
\$45
(Nonmembers \$50)
- 6 SHAPES THROW
\$220.50
(Nonmembers \$245)

MCA MEMBERS
RECEIVE A DISCOUNT
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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Check your mailbox, inbox, and our website often for more information about these and other upcoming events.

mcachicago.org

Tue, Jan 23, 6 pm

In Progress: Access and Museums

Join a conversation about access and inclusion with Chicago-area museum workers and academics. Along with MCA representatives, panelists include Michael Christiano of the Smart Museum, Kris Nesbitt of the Shedd Aquarium, and Carrie Sandahl of University of Illinois at Chicago.

Thu–Sat, Feb 8–10, 7:30 pm;

Sun, Feb 11, 2 pm

Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis

The Way You Look (at me) Tonight

Artist and leading disability culture activist Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis's sensory journey explores how we, as a society, perceive people and the world.

Fri, Mar 23, 6 pm

Talk: 1979! A Conversation Inspired by Howardena Pindell

The year 1979 was a time of radical art and pop culture, and it had radical consequences for US culture and the art and life of artist Howardena Pindell. Join an esteemed panel of thinkers and artists invited by curator Naomi Beckwith as they consider this seminal moment in history.



Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis



Annie Leibovitz



Teju Cole



Ototobong Nkanga:
To Dig a Hole That Collapses Again

Mon, Mar 26, 6 pm

Talk: Teju Cole

Writer, art historian, and photographer Teju Cole talks about his work and thinking around visibility and social dynamics in advance of the exhibition *Ototobong Nkanga: To Dig a Hole That Collapses Again*. Cole wrote an illuminating essay for the catalogue, which, along with his other books, he will be signing after the talk.

Sat, Mar 31, 2–4 pm

Solid Maneuvers, 2 pm

Talk: Omar Kholeif with Ototobong Nkanga, 3 pm

Join us for an afternoon with Ototobong Nkanga as we open *Ototobong Nkanga: To Dig a Hole That Collapses Again*, the Nigerian artist's first US survey, beginning with a performance by the artist in the galleries and culminating in an insightful conversation between Nkanga and curator Omar Kholeif.

Wed, Apr 11

Fundraising Luncheon and Talk with Annie Leibovitz

Renowned photographer Annie Leibovitz serves as the keynote speaker for a luncheon celebrating the MCA Women's Board's fiftieth anniversary. This special event helps raise funds in support of the museum's new Learning Studios, which, throughout the year, host artist-led tours and creation labs at no charge to approximately 10,000 Chicago Public School students, grades 1–12. For more information, call 312-397-4017.

Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis, *The Way You Look (at me) Tonight*. Photo: hagolani.com; Annie Leibovitz, 2012. Photo © Annie Leibovitz/Trunk Archive; Teju Cole. Photo: Martin Lengemann; Ototobong Nkanga, *Filtered Memories—Home, 1977, Yaba Lagos, 2009*. Acrylic and stickers on paper; 16 1/2 x 11 7/16 in. Courtesy of Lumen Travo Gallery, Amsterdam, and Galerie In Situ—Fabienne Leclerc, Paris.

MCA SEEN



JACK GUTHMAN AND BETH HELLER



WILL HOKIN AND DAUGHTER AMY HOKIN



MCA 50TH ANNIVERSARY OPENING CEREMONY PARTICIPANTS



MCA MEMBERS AT THE MEMBERS' PREVIEW OF WE ARE HERE



MEMBERS OF THE TEEN CREATIVE AGENCY DURING THE MCA 50TH ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND

Museum of
Contemporary Art
Chicago

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MARISOL

MCA CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, all events are free for MCA Members.

Illinois residents receive free general admission every Tuesday. Visitors 18 and under get in free!

🎫 Ticket purchase required

For a complete listing of events, ticket information, and access information for people with disabilities, visit mcachicago.org, or call 312-397-4010. Events are subject to change.

STROLLER TOURS

First Wednesday of the month, 11:30 am. Experience a stimulating hour of art with your little one and keep up-to-date with contemporary art.

SEGUNDA SEMANA

Second Tuesday of the month, 6 pm. Participe en una visita guiada bilingüe el segundo martes de cada mes para recorrer las exposiciones en español.

FAMILY DAY

Second Saturday of the month, 11 am–3 pm. Chicago artists transform the museum with unique opportunities for kids age 12 and under and their grownups.

IN PROGRESS

Select Tuesdays, Oct–May, 6 pm. This new series of Tuesday Evening programs gives visitors a glimpse into the working practices of artists.

JANUARY

Fri, Jan 5, 6 pm

Empty: Erin Hayden (in collaboration with Edra Soto)
Vulnerability and instability are at the heart of Chicago artist Erin Hayden’s salon of performances, comedy, readings, karaoke, and more.

Tue, Jan 9, 1 pm

Learning to See: Viewing with All Senses
Gayle Brickman’s thirty-minute mindfulness practice focuses on experiencing art. Each session emphasizes a different sense and includes a short intro to guided meditation.

Tue, Jan 9, 6 pm

In Progress: Speech and Museums
Join a facilitated conversation in light of the current political and social climate.

Fri, Jan 12, 6 pm

Muralla Alta/High Wall: Daniel Hojnacki with Edra Soto/hosted by Susan Snodgrass
An installation of 35 mm slide projections, collected by Edra Soto and Daniel Hojnacki, forefronts subjective narratives and evokes the particularities of memory.

Sat, Jan 13, 11 am–3 pm

Family Day: Secret Codes
Communicate, miscommunicate, and get lost in translation with Billy McGuinness, Story Time with Drag Queens, Mobile Street Art Cart, and more.

Sun, Jan 14, 11 am–3 pm

Artist Workshop: Edra Soto
Turn discarded liquor bottles into beautiful artworks in *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours* in the Commons.

MCA CALENDAR

Tue, Jan 16, 6 pm

In Progress: Aymar Jean Christian
Join Northwestern University professor Aymar Jean Christian, author of *Open TV: Innovation Beyond Hollywood and the Rise of Web Television*, and University of Chicago film historian Jacqueline Stewart for a discussion about the possibilities for and barriers to diversity in media.

Fri, Jan 19, 6 pm

Poetry Is the Only Way to Talk about What Hasn’t Happened Yet, with Sean Ward, Compound Yellow, and the Poetry Foundation
Inspired by Ward’s *Night Bloomers*, Compound Yellow collaborates with Poetry Foundation to lead a series of exercises reflecting on *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours*.

Tue, Jan 23, 1 pm

Learning to See: Viewing with All Senses
See Jan 9 listing.

Tue, Jan 23, 6 pm

In Progress: Access and Museums
Join a conversation about museum access and inclusion with museum workers and academics from Chicago-area institutions. Along with representatives from the MCA, panelists include Michael Christiano of the Smart Museum, Kris Nesbitt of the Shedd Aquarium, and Carrie Sandahl of University of Illinois at Chicago.

Thu–Sat, Jan 25–27, 7:30 pm;

Sun, Jan 28, 2 pm 🎫
Federico León
Las ideas
An informal meeting turns into an intense encounter as two collaborators sit at a ping-pong table with a computer and projector and volley ideas for different art projects.

Fri, Jan 26, 2018, 6 pm

“You Want Too Much,” by Rashayla Marie Brown
This monologue and theatrical spectacle touches on addictive maladies, the impossibility of decolonization, and the death of the archive. Part of *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours*.

Tue, Jan 30, 6 pm

In Progress: Grace Deveney on Paul Pfeiffer
Exhibition curator Grace Deveney discusses organizing *MCA Screen: Paul Pfeiffer*.

FEBRUARY

Fri, Feb 2, 6 pm

Artist Workshop: Edra Soto, with DJ set by Sadie Woods
Turn discarded liquor bottles into beautiful artworks. A DJ set by Sadie Woods and a cognac tasting accompany the program.

Tue, Feb 6, 6 pm

In Progress: Black Photo Futures
Artist Zakkiiyah Najeerah invites photographers Tonika Johnson and W. D. Floyd to discuss their photography in Englewood and on the West Side, respectively.

Thu–Sat, Feb 8–10, 7:30 pm;

Sun, Feb 11, 2 pm 🎫
Claire Cunningham & Jess Curtis

The Way You Look (at me) Tonight
In this sensory journey set to a collage of original music and video, the duo dances, sings, and tells stories in close proximity to the seated audience, exploring how we, as a society, perceive people and the world.

Fri, Feb 9, 6 pm

Untitled, (After Ralph and Louie), by Alexandria Eregbu
Alexandra Eregbu performs a scene from Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*—reinterpreting the simultaneous playing/

singing of Louis Armstrong’s “What Did I Do to Be So Black and Blue.” Part of *Edra Soto: Open 24 Hours*.

MCA CALENDAR

Sat, Feb 10, 11 am–3 pm

Family Day: Picky Eaters
Push the limits of what you can do with food: build a cake palace with Yvette Mayorga, make everyday objects sing with MOCREP, and blend food and art with Michael Rakowitz.

Sat, Feb 10, 11 am

Claire Cunningham & Jess Curtis with Victor Cole
Workshop: Creative Potential of Audio Description for Movement-Based Performance
Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis lead a free workshop for dance and theater artists with leading Chicago-area audio describer Victor Cole. Limited capacity. RSVP by calling the Box Office at 312-397-4010.

Sat, Feb 10, 6:30 pm

Touch Tour: Claire Cunningham & Jess Curtis
The Way You Look (at me) Tonight
Enjoy a hands-on, artist-led touch tour on the MCA Stage. RSVP by calling the Box Office at 312-397-4010.

Tue, Feb 13, 1 pm

Learning to See: Viewing with All Senses
See Jan 9 listing.

Tue, Feb 13, 6 pm

In Progress: Claire Cunningham
Claire Cunningham discusses *Thank you very much . . .*, a new work she is developing that considers impersonation versus tribute through the lens of the Elvis Presley-tribute artist phenomenon.

Tue, Feb 20, noon

Curator Tour: Endless Summer with Michael Darling
Join exhibition curator Michael Darling for a tour of *Endless Summer*.

Tue, Feb 20, 6 pm

Frequency Festival: Martin Arnold
The Frequency Festival returns to the MCA to kick off the third annual installment of the event with composer-performer Martin Arnold. Arnold plays the new work “Sheath and Knife” with Chicago’s Joshua Abrams. Made possible by generous support from the Consulate General of Canada in Chicago

Sat, Feb 24, 3 pm

Talk: Howardena Pindell in conversation with Naomi Beckwith and Valerie Cassel Oliver
Join the curators of *Howardena Pindell: What Remains To Be Seen* opening weekend for an in-depth conversation with the artist about her life and work.

Tue, Feb 27, 1 pm

Learning to See: Viewing with All Senses
See Jan 9 listing.

Tue, Feb 27, 6 pm

In Progress: Omar Kholeif and Paul Heyer
Chicago Works artist Paul Heyer and exhibition curator Omar Kholeif discuss the creation of Heyer’s exhibition.

MARCH

Tue, Mar 6, 6 pm

In Progress: BETA TV Tonight, A Premiere Event
Join BETA TV, a platform for intersectional television and an extension of OPEN TV, as they screen projects from the upcoming season, interview the creators, and take questions from the audience.

Sat, Mar 10, 11 am–3 pm

Family Day: X-Ray Vision
Look inside imaginary creatures, play in Claire Ashley’s inflatable sculptures, and invent comic book characters with Corinne Mucha.

MCA CALENDAR

Tue, Mar 13, 6 pm

In Progress: JACK & with Kaneza Schaal
The director of *JACK &* and her team share media and texts that influence the work, a comedy of errors that considers social codes and trainings, from prison reentry programs to debutante balls.

Tue, Mar 13, 1 pm

Learning to See: Viewing with All Senses
See Jan 9 listing.

Tue, Mar 20, noon

Curator Tour: Howardena Pindell with Naomi Beckwith
Join exhibition curator Naomi Beckwith for a tour of *Howardena Pindell: What Remains To Be Seen*.

Tue, Mar 20, 6 pm

In Progress: Marcela Torres
Reevaluating historical representations of disenfranchised communities, Torres develops a new performance that welcomes interaction with visitors.

Thu, Mar 22, 6 pm

Talk: Paul Pfeiffer
Artist Paul Pfeiffer discusses his practice and the MCA collection pieces that accompany his MCA Screen exhibition.

Fri, Mar 23, 6 pm 🎫

Talk: 1979! A Conversation Inspired by Howardena Pindell
Join curator Naomi Beckwith and a panel of esteemed thinkers and artists as they consider 1979, a significant year for Howardena Pindell as well as for the art and culture of the United States.

Sat, Mar 24, 2–4 pm

Teen Creative Agency Public Project
The MCA’s Teen Creative Agency (TCA) hosts a drop-in gathering for experimental conversations and activities led by Chicago youth.

Mon, Mar 26, 6 pm 🎫

Talk: Teju Cole
Writer, art historian, and photographer Teju Cole talks about his work and thinking around visibility and social dynamics in advance of the opening of *Otobong Nkanga: To Dig a Hole That Collapses Again*. A book signing follows the talk.

Tue, Mar 27, 6 pm

In Progress: The Machine is Neither . . .
Flutist Emma Hospelhorn and composer Ben Sutherland transform sound with wearable technology and help from the audience.

Sat, Mar 31, 2–4 pm

Solid Maneuvers, 2 pm; Talk: Omar Kholeif with Otobong Nkanga, 3 pm
Otobong Nkanga: To Dig a Hole That Collapses Again opens with a performance in the gallery and a conversation between the artist and exhibition curator.

APRIL

Tue, Apr 3, 6 pm

In Progress: Nicole Garneau
Nicole Garneau’s participatory performance *UPRISING* is followed by a discussion about her new book, *Performing Revolutionary: Art, Action, Activism*.

Fri–Sat, Apr 6–7, 7:30 pm 🎫

Mind Over Mirrors
Bellying Sun
Composer-musician Jaime Fennelly unveils his first work for the ensemble Mind Over Mirrors. Violin, percussion, and vocals are performed under a massive moving sculpture illuminated by art projections.

Sat, Apr 7, 2–4 pm

Teen Creative Agency Public Project
See Mar 24 listing.

Tue, Apr 10, 6 pm

In Progress: Luis Sahagun
Luis Sahagun creates sculptures, paintings, and rituals in order to connect with his ancestors. This interactive performance explores personal and cultural histories.

Thu–Sat, Apr 12–14, 7:30 pm;

Sun, Apr 15, 2 pm 🎫
Okwui Okpokwasili
Poor People’s TV Room
Bessie Award-winning artist Okwui Okpokwasili uses text, movement, and sound in a grand narrative about politics, the body, and place that she is creating with media artist Peter Born and an all-woman ensemble.

Sat, Apr 14, 11 am–3 pm

Family Day: Adventurers
Discover natural and imaginary landscapes, meet Eda Yorulmazoglu’s creatures, and travel to Southeast Asia with Axis Lab.

Tue, Apr 17, 6 pm

In Progress: Rhonda Wheatley
Grounded in spiritual and metaphysical practice, Rhonda Wheatley invites visitors to write and perform in energetic interactions using writing and performance.

Sun, Apr 22, 3 pm

MCA Screen: Andrew Rossi & Okwui Okpokwasili, Bronx Gothic
Andrew Rossi’s electrifying portrait of Okpokwasili and her solo show of the same title is followed by a conversation with Chicago artists about race and live performance. Cohosted with the Dance Center at Columbia College Chicago.

Tue, Apr 24, 6 pm

In Progress: Amir George
Filmmaker and cocurator of the series *Black Radical Imagination* collaborates with visitors to make a performative film work.

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