



## MEDIA CONTACT

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# 2021-22 Advance Exhibition Schedule

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## **CURRENT EXHIBITION**

### ***Where the Heart Is: Contemporary Art by Immigrant Artists***

**February 2-April 4, 2021**

This exhibition will feature artists who have immigrated to the United States and whose experiences are reflected in their art practice. There are more foreign-born residents in Santa Clara County (of which Palo Alto is a part) than in any other county in California, about 38% of the population. In a state that has more immigrants than any other (in fact, half of California children have at least one immigrant parent) and a country that has a larger immigrant population than any other in the world, this is a truly meaningful statistic and one we choose not to ignore.

For those of us who have never known what it feels like to be treated as an “other,” the artists in this exhibition have done us a great service. By examining and expressing their experiences, they help us to be more compassionate, more knowledgeable citizens. In the midst of the confusion and outrage permeating immigration policy today, one thing is abundantly clear: these artists have a tremendous amount to add to the cultural and artistic prosperity of our nation.

The exhibition will also feature the Sanctuary Print Project, a participatory mobile printmaking studio which offers printmaking experiences for the public. This project has been committed to sharing and archiving the stories of community members and addresses the complexity of the immigrant experience. *Why did you come here? When did you forget you were an immigrant? A sanctuary is not a quiet place.* Artists Sergio de la Torre and Chris Treggiari will be working to document and share how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the immigrant population, providing opportunities for dialogue around sanctuary cities, immigration, and public health.

## **UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS**

### **Palo Alto Art Center—50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Initiative (2021)**

Created by the community, for the community five decades ago, the Art Center serves as a testament to the potential of collective action. 50 years ago, a group of Palo Altans recognized the value and potency of creativity for the city and the need to give it a home. The Palo Alto Art Center’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary programming will showcase the power of art to make a similarly profound impact—by promoting accessibility, social justice, community healing, and celebration. This golden anniversary will provide an opportunity to celebrate the potent value of art to make a difference in the lives of individuals and the larger community.

## **Cultural Kaleidoscope and Youth Art**

**Spring 2021**

Our annual showcase of youth creativity features artwork by students of all ages in Palo Alto Unified School District as well as artwork created in the Art Center's artist-in-the-schools program Cultural Kaleidoscope.

## **The Black Index**

**May 1–August 22, 2021**

The Palo Alto Art Center is pleased to present *The Black Index*, a group exhibition featuring the work of Dennis Delgado, Alicia Henry, Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle, Titus Kaphar, Whitfield Lovell, and Lava Thomas.

The artists featured in *The Black Index* build upon the tradition of Black self-representation as an antidote to colonialist images. Using drawing, performance, printmaking, sculpture, and digital technology to transform the recorded image, these artists question our reliance on photography as a privileged source for documentary objectivity and understanding. Their works offer an alternative practice—a Black index—that still serves as a finding aid for information about Black subjects, but also challenges viewers' desire for classification.

The works in *The Black Index* make viewers aware of their own expectations of Black figuration by interrupting traditional epistemologies of portraiture through unexpected and unconventional depictions. These works image the Black body through a conceptual lens that acknowledges the legacy of Black containment that is always present in viewing strategies. The approaches used by Delgado, Henry, Hinkle, Kaphar, Lovell, and Thomas suggest understandings of Blackness and the racial terms of our neo-liberal condition that counter legal and popular interpretations and, in turn, offer a paradigmatic shift within Black visual culture.

*The Black Index* is curated by Bridget R. Cooks, Associate Professor, Department of African American Studies and the Department of Art History, University of California, Irvine. Exhibition and tour organized by Sarah Watson, Chief Curator, Hunter College Art Galleries, New York in collaboration with the University Art Galleries at UC Irvine, Palo Alto Art Center, and Art Galleries at Black Studies, University of Texas at Austin.

Lead support for *The Black Index* is provided by The Ford Foundation with additional support by UCI Confronting Extremism Program, Getty Research Institute, Fundación Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso para el Arte, Carol and Arthur Goldberg, Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation, Leubsdorf Fund at Hunter College, Joan Lazarus Fellowship program at Hunter College, Pamela and David Hornik, Loren and Mike Gordon, University of California Office of the President Multi-campus Research Programs and Initiative Funding, University of California Humanities Research Institute, Illuminations: The Chancellor's Arts and Culture Initiative, UCI Humanities Center, Department of African American Studies, Department of Art History, The Reparations Project, and the UC Irvine Black Alumni Chapter. This project was made possible with support from California Humanities, a non-profit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Visit [calhum.org](http://calhum.org).

**The Art of Disability Culture: Artists with Disabilities Dispelling Myths, Dissolving Barriers and Disrupting Prejudice**

**Fall 2021**

“Disability is an art – an ingenious way to live,” wrote Neil Marcus, an award-winning playwright, actor, poet and performance artist.

The wealth of creativity and design innovation that people with disabilities bring to the arts and design landscape rarely hits the mainstream media. And yet, thirty years after the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) there is a growing and dynamic disability culture worldwide. Disability arts organizations, individual artists, and artist collectives or informal groups are challenging expectations and claiming their seats at the table, their slots in the gallery or their time at the microphone.

Every artist or designer featured in this exhibition has one or more visible or invisible disabilities. Far from presenting a single monolithic point of view, they use a wide range of techniques and approaches to share the complex, nuanced and wide range of experiences and identities that contribute to disability culture. Their work ranges from painting and photography to mixed media installations, video and sculpture, design and craft. Some works have been created through a collaborative process with art programs for adults with disabilities.

What new perspectives does a blind visual artist bring to our attention? How does a celebrated artist rethink her work and her painting process after a stroke? Why is this relevant or important? We must remember that the disability community is the only minority group we can all become a member of at any time in our lives. Current census data shows that around 20% of the US population has some kind of disability and indeed, many of us will acquire one or more disabilities as we age. What can we learn from the disability community about the value of collaboration, of exploring alternative paths to creativity, of being vulnerable and sharing our full selves?

**Creative Attention: Art and Community Restoration**

**Winter 2022**

Can art provide a source of healing for our community? Artists in the *Creative Attention* exhibition respond affirmatively, by creating alternatives to our current sense of anxiety, fragmentation, and alienation through practices of mending, healing, restoration, belonging, sustainability, and resiliency.

We are experiencing a heightened level of overall anxiety, triggered by numerous and interrelated factors including a looming recession, acute income inequality, political instability, social discord, climate change, overconsumption, technology saturation, and now, a global pandemic. A recent poll from the American Psychiatric Association found that adult Americans are 39% more anxious today than they were a year ago, based upon stress about safety, health, finances, politics, and relationships.<sup>1</sup>

Through their ability to seamlessly operate between systems and structures, straddling different roles and negotiating between disciplines, artists are unique, offering new ways of seeing, processing, and ultimately solving the issues that surround us. *Creative Attention* collects their novel solutions, bringing together works in a broad range of media that encourage viewers to slow down, and recharge, promoting community connections and restoration. Ultimately, *Creative Attention* intends to promote

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.psychiatry.org/newsroom/apa-public-opinion-poll-annual-meeting-2018>

the value of the arts as a force for healing and expression and as a tool for community building.

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