

ICA LA

INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART, LOS ANGELES

2020 Annual Report





Sadie Barrette
The New Eagle Creek Sabon
El Nuevo Eagle Creek Sabon

FIELD WORKSHOP



Dear ICA LA Community and Supporters,

2020 was a year of unprecedented challenges and great uncertainty. As the coronavirus spread across the globe, it impacted every aspect of our lives. Adapting to this new reality required adjusting priorities and changing plans (often daily!). A few months into the pandemic, the death of George Floyd catalyzed newly urgent demands for racial justice and ushered in a period of reckoning about systemic forms of bias within society's institutions, including museums and arts organizations of all kinds. While the economic downturn created by the pandemic has put far too many nonprofit organizations, businesses, and individuals at risk, it has also been a period of deep contemplation, creative problem solving, and enormous resilience. I am happy, and humbled, to report that ICA LA ended 2020 stronger than we started.

With the support of our loyal communities and generous patrons, ICA LA confronted these challenges head-on and charted a path forward. As always, we were guided by the light of our exceptional mission: to support art that sparks the pleasure of discovery and challenges the way we see and experience the world, ourselves, and each other. Amidst the global movement for equity and calls for increased transparency and accountability by museums, we maintain our mission's commitment to upending hierarchies of race, class, gender, and culture.

As you will see in the following pages highlighting our work over the past year, despite having to shutter our doors in March when the city mandated a safer-at-home order, 2020 was a very active year. We quickly pivoted to provide virtual tours of our exhibitions via Virtual ICA LA, which uses 360-degree virtual reality video technology, and an array of on-line public programming. In order to stay in touch with our audiences and ensure we could be responsive to the cultural shifts taking place, we increased our newsletter production from once a month to once a week and amplified our social media posts. In the fall, we safely welcomed visitors by appointment at a limited capacity and with all safety protocols in place, until further restrictions were reinstated in California during the holidays and we once again closed to the public.

ICA LA had a stellar line-up of exhibitions throughout the year, spearheaded by our gifted senior curator Jamillah James. Our critically acclaimed thirty-year survey of the work of Nayland Blake and exceptional presentation of Sadie Barnette's re-creation of her father's bar in San Francisco were still on view in January, and the Blake exhibition then traveled to MIT's List Visual Arts Center. We were honored to partner with the ICA Philadelphia to bring the first major survey of the influential, yet underknown, work of Ree Morton in nearly forty years to ICA LA. Morton's enchanting work was on view alongside a project with Los Angeles emerging artist Ann Green Kelly, highlighting their shared sensibilities across generations and life experiences. The pandemic interrupted the Morton and Kelly exhibitions, and we responded by shifting our exhibition schedule in order to extend the closing dates of these important shows to late July and allow a limited number of visitors to experience their work in person.

Despite continued uncertainty, we installed and opened our fall exhibitions with Los Angeles artists Harold Mendez and Stanya Kahn and welcomed eager visitors—many of whom were seeing art in person for the first time in months—in a limited capacity. Using distinct mediums and approaches, both artists address the sense of anxiety and turmoil that characterizes our contemporary lives, and their works served as a poignant reminder of the ways in which artists help us to understand our shared experiences.

While these exhibitions were also disrupted by increased rates of infection at the time of the winter holidays, we continued to offer rich and meaningful virtual programs. Led by our intrepid and always community-minded director of learning and engagement Asuka Hisa, we started to produce high-quality videos exploring different ways to interpret and experience art works, including one featuring musician Jeff Parker improvising in response to Mendez's works and an American Sign Language tour and workshop for youth by Jacob Shamberg. We moved outside our walls with a drive-in screening of Stanya Kahn's films and provided space at the museum to artists working across several disciplines—visual arts, performance, dance, writing, social practice—to use to rehearse, create, meet in small groups, and expand their networks via virtual programming through our Field Workshop Action Projects.



None of these achievements could have happened without the remarkable talent and dedication of ICA LA's staff, for whom I have enormous appreciation. While the pandemic forced us to temporarily lay off part-time employees and contractors until we were able to renew our exhibition program and to freeze hiring for all open positions, our full-time team pivoted to working from home with grace and doubled down on the intense amount of work we faced with a reduced team. The staff not only successfully accomplished their work despite all the challenges, but they adjusted to the demands of working within the new COVID context and embraced opportunities for professional growth, taking on new responsibilities and skills with impressive astuteness.

I am deeply grateful for ICA LA's extraordinarily devoted and engaged Board of Directors. Their support throughout this year, as I was still transitioning into my role as executive director when the pandemic hit, ensured our ability to weather the storm and plan for the future. We welcomed two new board members this year—Claudia Flores and Mark Janda—as well as numerous first-time donors. We continued to offer our high-level patron groups—Curator's Council and Field Work—inspiring and informative programming, much of it in the virtual sphere, which allowed us to tour exhibitions and hold studio visits with artists outside LA. We were awarded grants from numerous international, national, and local private foundations, several supporting us for the first time, as well as government agencies. The contributions of these individuals and foundations were critical to our success and provided much appreciated encouragement for the work we do during a difficult period.

In October, we adapted our legendary benefit Incognito to a virtual event, with nearly four hundred artists generously contributing works. Private in-person viewings of the works during three days of Precognito were enabled thanks to the generosity of board member Maria Greenshields-Ziman and all our friends at The Rendon. We also benefited from the energy, knowledge, and care of the wonderful host committee and the support of several corporate sponsorships and in-kind contributions from local businesses. With pre-recorded segments about ICA LA's mission and programs featuring artists, staff, and board members and a live broadcast hosted by actor and comedian Joel McHale and me, the event went off without a hitch, and we exceeded our goals, raising more for the museum than any previous Incognito.

In our on-going commitment to sustainable practices and civic engagement, ICA LA completed its transition to solar power, finalizing the installation of more than 200 solar panels on our roof and “flipping the switch” to lead by example as the first art museum in the United States to run on 100% renewable energy. After a lengthy approval process, the museum became a Los Angeles County Vote Center. In early March, voters from across the city—and especially those living in downtown Los Angeles and adjacent neighborhoods—came to ICA LA over several days to cast their votes. Prior to the election, we held “get to know your ballot” events with facilitators available to provide information on specific measures and candidates (pizza provided!). Because of COVID safety guidelines and distancing requirements, we did not have sufficient space to serve as a Vote Center for the November elections, but we will resume offering this critical civic service in future elections after the pandemic subsides.

ICA LA's continues to play a vital, and unique, role within the constellation of museums in Los Angeles. Our commitment to support the work of many of the most compelling artists and thinkers of our time; explore the intersections between art and social justice; forge wide-ranging creative partnerships; and serve a diversity of communities is unwavering. We are grateful for your support, patronage, and friendship. I am pleased to share this 2020 report and look forward to all that 2021 has to bring.

With gratitude,



Anne Ellegood
Good Works Executive Director

Exhibitions

No Wrong Holes: Thirty Years of Nayland Blake

For over 30 years, artist, educator, and curator Nayland Blake (b. 1960) has been a critical figure in American art, working between sculpture, drawing, performance, and video. *No Wrong Holes* marks the most comprehensive survey of Blake's work to date and their first solo institutional presentation in Los Angeles.

Heavily inspired by feminist and queer liberation movements, and subcultures ranging from punk to kink, Blake's multidisciplinary practice considers the complexities of representation, particularly racial and gender identity; play and eroticism; and the subjective experience of desire, loss, and power. The artist's sustained meditation on "passing" and duality as a queer, biracial (African American and white) person is grounded in post-minimalist and conceptual approaches made personal through an idiosyncratic array of materials (such as leather, medical equipment, and food) and the tropes of fairy tales and fantasy. Particular focus was paid to work produced while Blake lived on the West Coast, first in the greater Los Angeles area as a graduate student at CalArts, followed by a decade in San Francisco—years bookended by the advancement of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1980s and the "culture wars" of the 1990s.

A fully illustrated catalogue designed by Content/Object, Los Angeles, is forthcoming with newly commissioned essays, key reprints, archival material, and content produced by the artist and others.

Traveled to MIT List Visual Arts Center, where it was on view October 16, 2020–February 14, 2021.



Above: Installation view of *No Wrong Holes: Thirty Years of Nayland Blake*, on view September 29, 2019–January 26, 2020. Photo: Jeff McLane.

Left: *Kit # 7 (Flush)*, 1990. Rubber gloves, stainless steel cups, belt, host, shelf, books. 30 × 45 × 5 in. (76 × 114 × 13 cm). Collection of Doug McClellmont and Eric Bryant. Photo: Elon Schoenholz

Right: *Magic*, 1990. Mixed media with puppet and armature. 30 × 48 × 24 in. (76 × 122 × 61 cm). Collection of Igor Da Costa and James Rondeau. Photo: Ron Amstutz



Installation view, Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, September 29, 2019–January 26, 2020. Photo: Jeff McLane



Sadie Barnette: The New Eagle Creek Saloon

For her first solo museum presentation in Los Angeles, Oakland-based artist Sadie Barnette (b. 1984) reimagined the Eagle Creek Saloon, the first black-owned gay bar in San Francisco, established by the artist's father Rodney Barnette, founder of the Compton, CA chapter of the Black Panther Party. From 1990–93 Barnette's father operated the bar and offered a safe space for the multiracial LGBTQ community who were marginalized at other social spaces throughout the city at that time.

Barnette engages the aesthetics of Minimalism and Conceptualism through an idiosyncratic use of text, decoration, photographs, and found objects that approach the speculative and otherworldly. Barnette's recent drawings, sculptures, and installations have incorporated the 500-page FBI surveillance file kept on her father and references to West Coast funk and hip-hop culture to consider the historical and present-day dynamics of race, gender, and politics in the United States. Using materials such as spray paint, crystals, and glitter, she transforms the bureaucratic remnants from a dark chapter in American history into vibrant celebrations

of personal, familial, and cultural histories and visual acts of resistance. The New Eagle Creek Saloon is a glittering bar installation that exists somewhere between a monument and an altar, at once archiving the past and providing space for potential actions. During the run of the exhibition at ICA LA, the installation was activated by performances, talks, and other social events.

Fall/Winter Attendance Total: 5,026

On site: 4,432 Virtual: 594



Play Days: Wrong Edition

Nora Beckman's Days LA extended its retail residency at ICA LA with *Play Days: Wrong Edition*. The shop re-launched alongside (and in response to) exhibitions *No Wrong Holes: Thirty Years of Nayland Blake* and *Sadie Barnette: The New Eagle Creek Saloon*.

The product selections and shop events of *Play Days: Wrong Edition* celebrated the exhibiting artists' boundary-transgressing practices and themes, upholding Days' open-platform investigation of (dis)embodiment, trans-identity, queer futurity, subculture, community building, and expressions of desire and play through objects, clothing, and language.

Events

- 01.16.20** Who Taught You to Feel Good?
- 01.08.20** Turning Old into New: Days Makers Residency & Fabric Donation
- 12.21.19** Last Chance Holiday Shopping Weekend & Solstice Celebration
- 12.08.19** Makers Forum: celebrating the interchange of shopping and art
- 11.23.19** Queer Magic: Herbs + Essences for Gender Expansiveness
- 10.17.19** All Together Now! With Molly Allis
- 09.29.19** Open House for Play Days: Wrong Edition



Space design: Kelsey Sundberg, Graphic Design: Tanya Rubbak, Painted Curtain: Quincy Irving, Photo: Nora Beckman.

Contributors

323, 69 Herbs, Amelia Lockwood, Body Confidence, Body Language Shop, Bullhorn Press, Busted Brand, Chakrubs, Co—Conspirator Press, Confetti System, Corey Moranis, Darin Klein, Dady Bones, Dean Sameshima, Dirty Looks, Dynasty Handbag, Edie Fake, Everybody.world, Formina, Fredericks & Mae, Friends of Similar Size, Gamut Pins, Gemma Castro, General Sisters, Grant Breeding, Hayden Dunham, Heavy Oil, Hikawa Studio, Homoco, House of 950, Iris Eyris, Jacqueline S. Nero, James Kidd Studio, Joint Collaboration, Joseph Algieri, Kelsey Sundberg, KKCo, Laub, M Rassmussen, Foccacia, Made Cozy, Male Glaze,

Molly Allis, Nayland Blake, Nica Ross, Nico Fontana, Nightboat Books, NOTO, Objects for Others, Otherwild, Paper Chase Press, Paul Gellman, Peter Kalisch, Pilar Gallego, Quincy Irving, R. Mehr, Rabbitwire Ceramics, Rosie La Jaguarra, Sacred Sadism, Sanguis Ornatus, Semiotext(e), Sixty Nine, Subvrt, Sun Song/Kwonyin, Talis, Tanya Rubbak, Tom of Finland, Vanessa Lilak, Yuyu Shiratori.

Ree Morton: The Plant That Heals May Also Poison

The Plant That Heals May Also Poison is the first major United States exhibition of artist Ree Morton (1936-1977) in nearly four decades. The exhibition featured several rarely seen works, including a selection of installations, drawings, sculptures, paintings, and archival materials, which span a single decade of artistic production before Morton's untimely death in 1977.

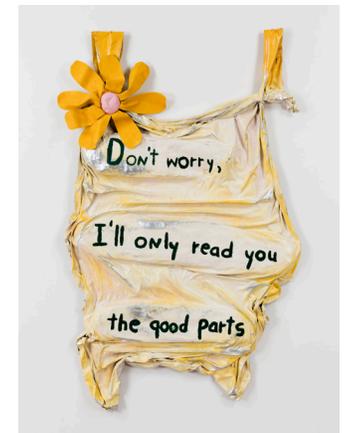
Throughout her career, Morton produced a philosophically complex body of work rich in emotion. Though celebrated by peers and younger artists, Morton's influence on contemporary art remains considerable yet muted, her legacy widely underrecognized. The eclectic arc of Morton's practice was rooted in Postminimalism, the inclusion of personal narrative—through literary, theoretical, and autobiographical references—and use of bold color and theatrical imagery infused her objects with sly humor and a concern with the decorative, generating a feminist legacy increasingly appreciated in retrospect. Reimagining tropes of love, friendship, and motherhood, while radically asserting sentiment as a legitimate subject of artmaking, Morton's conceptually rigorous work demonstrates generosity towards the viewer, its spirit of playfulness and joy inflecting all aspects of the exhibition.

Organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, the exhibition was accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue co-published with Dancing Foxes Press with texts by Kate Kraczon, the exhibition's curator; artist Nayland Blake; Kathryn Gile; and scholars Roksana Filipowska and Abi Shapiro.

*This exhibition was extended due to ICA LA's closure in response to the local and statewide COVID-19 stay-at-home order.



Installation views of *Ree Morton: The Plant That Heals My Also Poison*, on view February 6—July 19, 2020. Photo: Jeff McLane



Above Right: Ree Morton, *Don't worry, I'll only read you the good parts*, 1975. Oil on celastic. 54 x 26 in. (137.2 x 66cm). Collection of Gail and Tony Ganz. ©The Estate of Ree Morton; courtesy Alexander Bonin, New York and Annemarie Verna Galerie, Zurich. Photo: Joerg Lohse

Ann Greene Kelly

Los Angeles-based artist Ann Greene Kelly (b. 1988) looks to the tradition of the readymade (common objects displayed as works of art), combining everyday items, such as mattresses and tires, with plaster, stone, and other sculptural materials. These unique combinations invest the objects with a sense of affection and understanding that is both distinctive and familiar, while simultaneously opening up new and engaging modes of sculpture. Likewise, her drawing practice explores the relationship between domestic, interior space; the urban, industrial landscape; and personal experience. This exhibition marked the artist's first solo museum show.

One month into the run of these exhibitions, the decision was reached to suspend public hours in response to the rapid spread of COVID-19 in Los Angeles. Our promotion of the VR capture of the exhibitions resulted in high virtual attendance.



Installation view of *Ann Greene Kelly*. Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, February 16–June 14, 2020. Photo: Jeff McLane



From left to right: *Untitled (small circular bench)*, 2017. Plastic chairs, resin, wire, hardware, plaster, colored pencil. 12 x 21 x 27.5 in. (64.1 x 76.2 cm), framed. Image courtesy the artist and Michael Benevento, Los Angeles. *Shirt with Smokestack*, 2019. Colored pencil on paper. 25 x 30 in. (33.02 x 53.34 x 69.85 cm), framed. Courtesy the artist and Chapter NY, New York.

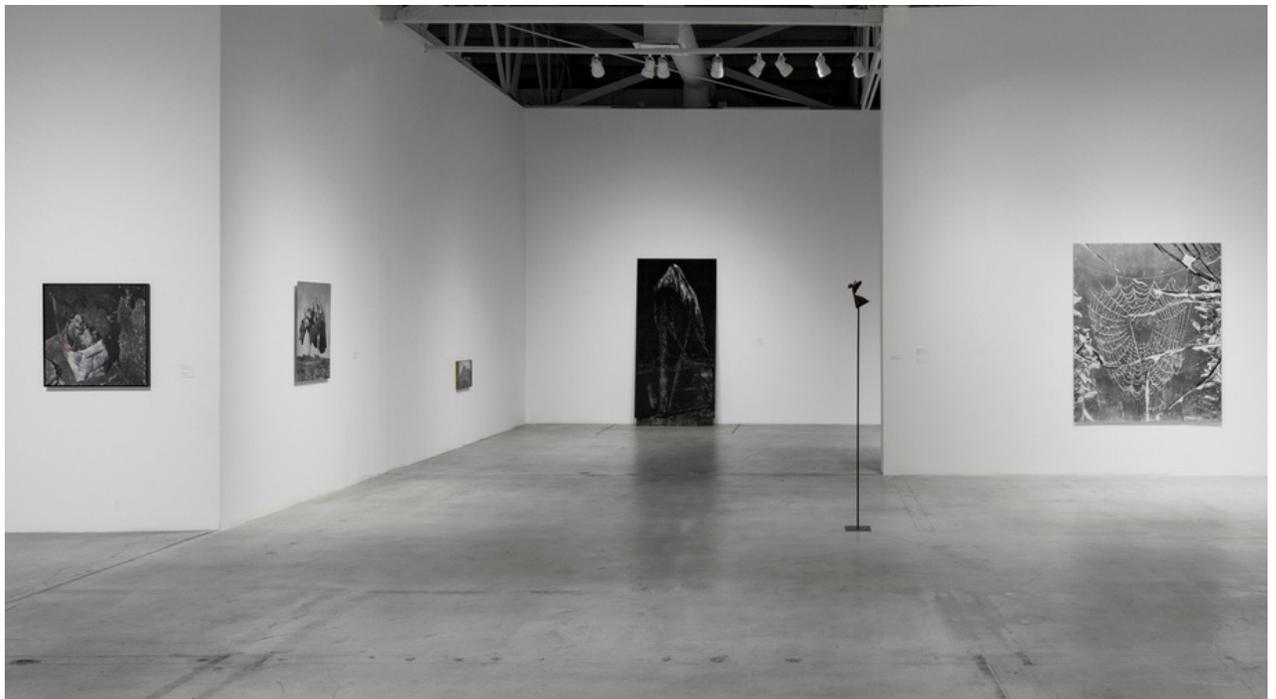
Winter/Spring Attendance Total: 6,046
On site: 1,348 Virtual: 4,698

Harold Mendez: Let us gather in a flourishing way

Let us gather in a flourishing way is the first Los Angeles solo museum presentation of artist Harold Mendez (b. 1977, Chicago). Borrowing its title from a poem by Juan Felipe Herrera, the exhibition included a selection of 19 works by Mendez made over the past decade, including two newly produced works. Working between photography and sculpture, Mendez explores the tension between fiction and truth, visibility and absence, with an interest in how constructions of history and geography shape our sense of self.

A first-generation American of Mexican-Colombian descent, his work often considers the transnational experience, ritual, and cultural memory. Mendez's large format two-dimensional works transform found photographs through a laborious manual transfer process similar to lithography. Using charcoal or graphite to build the surface, Mendez both traces and erases archival imagery with specific sociocultural or art historical references to create otherworldly new images. Mendez's sculptures take found objects, industrial goods, or symbolic organic matter—such as eucalyptus bark, bone, or cochineal pigment—to examine identity and place; certain works become living rather than static objects, requiring the daily replenishment of water or flower petals. While experimenting with dramatic shifts in scale and unorthodox materials, Mendez's excavatory approach to production is a process of unearthing and transforming that highlights the tenuous relationship between history and its representation.

Installation view of *Harold Mendez: Let us gather in a flourishing way*. Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, September 26, 2020–January 10, 2021. Photo: Jeff McLane



Stanya Kahn: No Go Backs

Los Angeles-based interdisciplinary artist Stanya Kahn (b. 1968, San Francisco) works primarily in film and video, with a practice that includes drawing, sound, performance, sculpture and writing. Humor, pathos, and the uncanny are central to Kahn's hybrid approach to moving image, which seeks to reorient relationships between fiction and document, the real and hyper-real, and varied expressions of time. Known for using improvisation and candid, real life scenarios, Kahn's projects often center language as part of a long-term investigation of how rhetoric gains and loses power, as well as the impact of socio-political conditions on lived experience. This exhibition comprised three works by Kahn produced over the past ten years, including her latest short film, *No Go Backs* (2020), marking its Los Angeles debut. Together, these videos present an urgent reflection of our times, foregrounding global concerns such as climate change, racism, state power, and rebellion with the artist's singular humor and embrace of experimental time and narrative.

Completed earlier this year, *No Go Backs* (2020), shot on Super 16mm film with an original sound score and no dialogue, follows two teenagers (and real life friends) who leave the city for the wild. Traveling north into the Eastern Sierra's monumental landscapes, the pair traverse the haunted precarity of a collapsed world, in dreamlike states of distraction, malaise, and resilience. A timely indictment of current crises and a meditation on an uncertain future, *No Go Backs* is a compressed, allegorical epic about an entire generation that must make a new way forward.



Installation view(s) of Stanya Kahn: *No Go Backs*. Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, September 26, 2020–January 10, 2021.
Photo: Jeff McLane/ICALA

*ICALA screened select works online by Kahn on the occasion of the exhibition's premature closure due to COVID-19. The screenings included *No Go Backs* (2020) shown in tandem with earlier works by the artist, including *Sandra* (2009); *Stand in the Stream* (2011-17); *Don't Go Back to Sleep* (2014); and the short *Masuka the Crazy Attack* (1976).

Learning & Engagement

While safer-at-home guidelines were in place in Los Angeles and we were unable to welcome visitors to the museum, ICA LA produced robust online programming. These programs were fundamental to our ability to celebrate and interpret the work of the artists featured in our exhibitions and to engage with our publics. We embraced the ever-evolving digital environment to offer an array of free programs. Ranging from panel discussions, workshops for youth, and professionally produced pre-recorded video content, ICA LA is bringing artists, curators, teachers, students, activists, and arts patrons together to learn and engage with a range of topics.

Online programming also offered an avenue to reach audiences far outside Los Angeles, as people could tune in from anywhere, bringing an even stronger focus on diversifying and expanding our audiences.

Exhibition programs: 16
Community programs: 11
Artist-led workshops: 6
Field Workshop programs: 9



Virtual ICA LA

For the past several years, ICA LA has been exploring ways technology can be leveraged to create new experiences for audiences, creating programs, documentation, and artists projects that use Augmented Reality, Binaural Audio, Distance Learning, 360° Video, and Virtual Reality. Working with Oprena, we have been making Virtual Reality captures of our exhibitions since the Fall of 2018, allowing visitors to navigate exhibitions using their computer or smart phone. When we closed our doors in March, we quickly produced VR captures of Ree Morton and Ann Greene Kelly exhibitions and began to promote them through our newsletter and social media platforms. We saw an enormous increase in our viewership, as people quarantining at home sought to engage with culture in new ways.

Above: Desktop view of virtual tour for *Harold Mendez: Let us gather in a flourishing way*, 2020.

Overall VR attendance:
12,445 visits (9,789 unique)

Highest viewership: Spring 2020

Exhibition Programming

Nayland Blake: No Wrong Holes

- *An Evening with Q Youth Foundation*
- *DisGender Euphoria*: Nayland Blake's First International Intergenerational Gender Discard Party
- *Who Taught You to Feel Good?* A Night of Movement, Music, and Drinks

Ree Morton: The Plant That Heals May Also Poison

- Spring Open House
- *Lunchtime Chat* with Screening of Ree Morton: Interview with Anne Ellegood + Kristina Kite
- *Art Buzz*: Ree Morton*
- *Curators in Conversation*: Kate Kraczon, curator of *Ree Morton: The Plant That Heals May Also Poison* and Jamillah James, Senior Curator
- *Virtual Walk-through*: Anna Katz, Curator, MoCA, Los Angeles and Jamillah James, Senior Curator
- *An Artist Conversation*: Ree Morton, with Jade Gordon, Katie Grinnan, and Evan Holloway. Moderated by Anne Ellegood, Good Works Executive Director.

Ann Greene Kelly

- *Sculpture Workshop*: Shapes of Waste*
- *Art Buzz*: Ann Greene Kelly*
- *Art Insider*: Make Sculpture with Ann Greene Kelly

Harold Mendez: Let us gather in a flourishing way

- *Artist POV Tour*: Jacob Shamberg—Virtual exhibition tour led by artist Jacob Shamberg, conducted entirely in American Sign Language, with options for English or Spanish subtitles and featuring a hands-on art workshop demonstration for youth.
- *Words and 'Let us gather in a flourishing way'*—Roundtable discussion with curator Yesomi Umlu, poet J. Michael Martinez, and artist Harold Mendez, exploring their shared research around the transnational experience, ritual, cultural memory, and the body; hosted online.
- *Artist POV Tour*: Cauleen Smith—Virtual exhibition tour led by interdisciplinary artist Cauleen Smith, a long-time friend of Mendez who carries a familiarity with his work, stories of common ground, and a shared journey to understand and portray humanity.
- *Art Talk*: Harold Mendez and Jamillah James—Online conversation between the artist and the exhibition's curator.
- *Sounds and 'Let us gather in a flourishing way'*—A special recorded solo performance by electric guitarist and composer Jeff Parker, who responds to and explores Mendez's survey with musical improvisations.

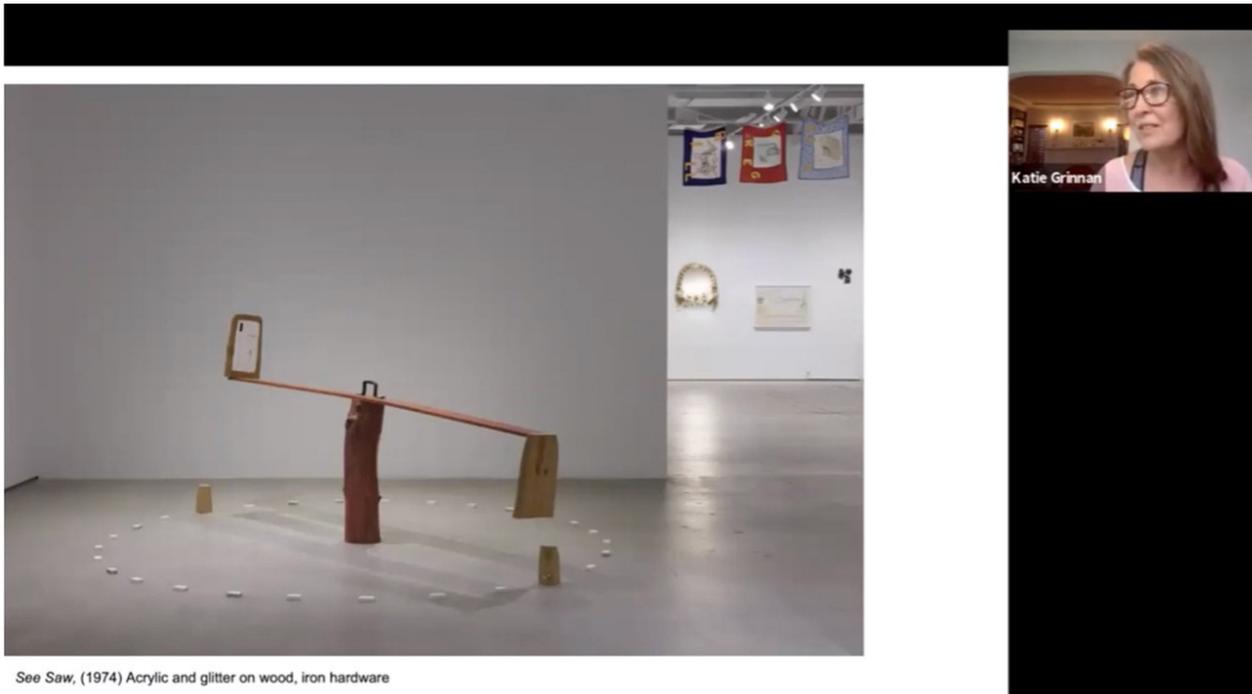
Stanya Kahn: No Go Backs

- Drive-In Screening of *Stanya Kahn: No Go Backs*, followed by conversation between the artist and Senior Curator Jamillah James.
- *Artist Talk*: Stanya Kahn and Jamillah James, Senior Curator

Special Projects:

- *Flip the Switch Party**
- *Dorian Wood: ARDOR*, premiere performance
- 6° conference
- *Paul Pescador: PSA Workshop*
- *Artbound: CURRENT: LA Food*, screening

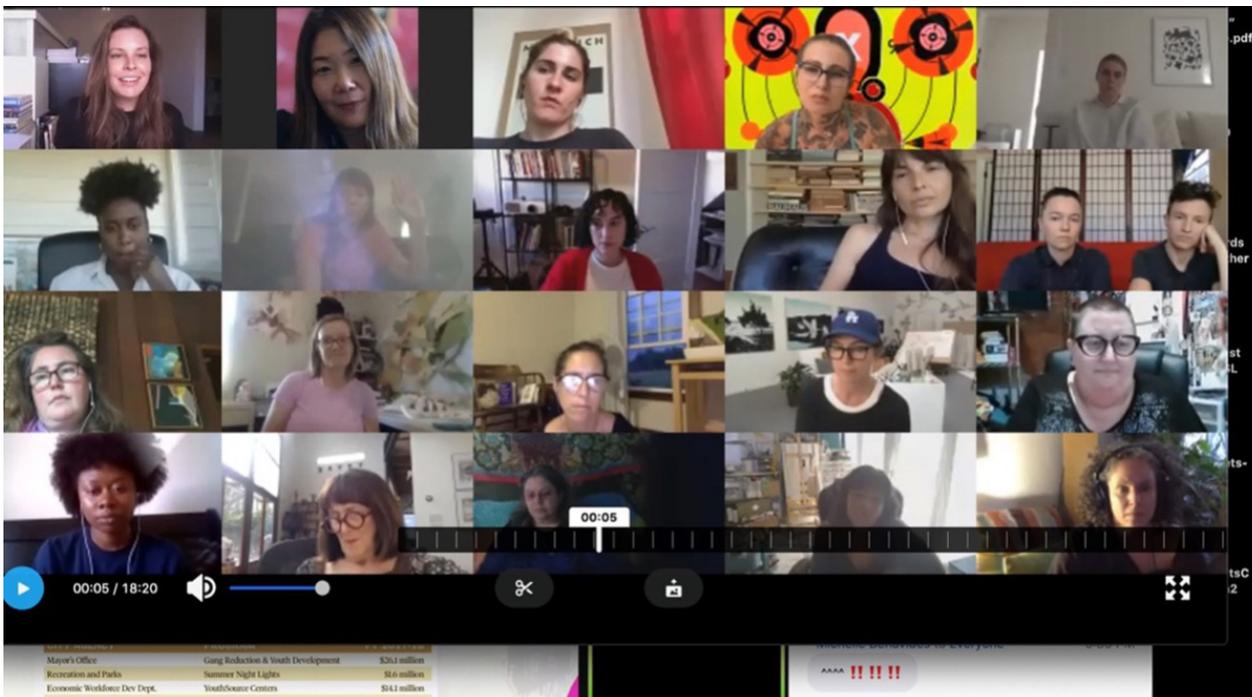
*Cancelled due to *Safer-at-Home* state mandate that required all in-person meetings to be cancelled



See Saw, (1974) Acrylic and glitter on wood, iron hardware

An Artist Conversation: Ree Morton—with Jade Gordon, Kate Grinnan, and Evan Holloway Moderated by Anne Ellegood July 16, 2020

The work of Ree Morton continues to inspire many artists since her untimely death in 1977 at the age of 41. Los Angeles-based artists Jade Gordon, Katie Grinnan, and Evan Holloway gathered over Zoom for a conversation about Morton and her legacy. Moderated by executive director Anne Ellegood.



Possible Futures: Developing Plural Practices in Contemporary Art July 22 & July 29, 2020

A 2-part conversation on self-determination and the potential of expanded models of sustainable, resilient careers in contemporary art, led by Corrina Peipon and Virginia Broersma

The most commonly recognized professional roles for artists are increasingly unstable and precarious. The weight of the global coronavirus pandemic and ensuing economic crisis has added new depth to this insecurity, and the recent social justice uprising has led to questions around artists' professional ambitions in relation to their personal values. These and other cultural shifts are leading artists to consider new ways to make and share their work while meeting their financial needs and deepening their connections to their communities.

Field Workshop: Action Projects

For one month over the summer, ICA LA made its Field Workshop space available for use by artists and community groups dedicated to the movement for social change. We selected projects and activities with a focus on learning, civic engagement, and self-care. Below are three examples of the variety of artist-proposed programming.



Collective Chorus

August 11, 2pm–5pm, Zoom and On-site
August 13, 10am–1pm, Zoom
August 15, 2pm–5pm, Zoom

Collective Chorus was a series of workshops for teens that introduced ideas of artivism (art + activism) and education through the creation of an art installation using vinyl text lettering in the Field Workshop space. The artist-facilitators crafted community dialogue to empower youth to use their voices spatially for public discourse and public art.

Participants learned about the history of text-based art used in public spaces, with an emphasis on movements that have advanced social justice.

Artist-Facilitators: Kristin Bauer, Julio César Morales, Mario Ybarra, Jr.



Radical Pedagogies

August 20, 5pm–7pm, Zoom
August 22, open access

Artist collaborators Litia Perta, Johanna Breiding, EJ Hill, Kandis Williams, and Dylan Mira used this program to address the personal and collective concerns with pedagogy and educational institutions.

A preparatory meeting explored their recollections of their own educational formation and how that experience hoped to inform how they enter the teaching profession. A range of shared questions and desires emerged. The group visualized a future where the learning experience could be less of an authoritative educational model and more of a symbiotic exchange to produce outcomes. The artists imagined a divestment from current educational models starting with a rejection of the video conference meeting (Zoom), and embarked on a collective writing and annotation project.



Undanced Dances Through Prison Walls During a Pandemic

September 1–4, 12pm–6pm, on-site and Zoom

The program began in 2016 to bring dance workshops to a California prison for open participation. During the COVID-19 lockdowns, *Undanced Dances* developed written texts by incarcerated men. For *Field Workshop: Action Projects*, dancer and choreographer Suchi Branfman used ICA LA's space to support the realization of commissioned dance interpretations of these texts by eight choreographer-dancers. For four days, collaborators worked on-site to develop their pieces. On the fifth day, the final dances were performed at ICA LA and shared to a limited audience on-site and a broader audience via Zoom. A panel discussion with the choreographers was also organized as part of the culminating presentation.

New Approaches to Public Programming



Drive-In Screening of Stanya Kahn: No Go Backs

Screening was followed by conversation between the artist and senior curator Jamillah James.

October 7, 2020 — SOLD OUT

A special drive-in screening of Stanya Kahn's latest film *No Go Backs* at Garden Cinema (founded in 1946 and family-run since 1976).

This event was in partnership with the Garden Cinema and Vielmetter Los Angeles.

Late in the year, programming was once again modified and improved with a series of pre-recorded and professionally edited performances.



Jeff Parker—Sounds

In this unique solo performance, Jeff Parker performed a series of improvisations within the exhibition *Harold Mendez: Let us gather in a flourishing way*.

Jeff Parker (b. 1967, Connecticut) is recognized as one of contemporary music's most versatile and innovative electric guitarists and composers - creating works that exploit the contrary relationships between tradition and technology, improvisation and composition, and the familiar and the abstract. A longtime member of the influential indie band Tortoise, Parker has been an associate member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) since 1995. A prolific bandleader and collaborator, Jeff has appeared on over 140 commercial recordings. Currently, Parker has been focusing on music production, small ensembles and solo performance.

This performance was recorded at ICA LA and premiered on ICA LA's YouTube channel on November 19. Since its premiere, *Jeff Parker—Sounds* has become our most viewed program with 1,745 views.



Artist POV Tour in ASL: Jacob Shamberg

+ art workshop demo for youth

ICA LA produced and distributed our first video tour in American Sign Language (ASL). Artist Jacob Shamberg interpreted select works from the exhibition *Harold Mendez: Let us gather in a flourishing way*.

We also created an *Artist POV Tour* for youth featuring a hands-on art project demo by Shamberg. Recommended for ages 7 and up.

Closed caption for both programs was provided in English and Spanish.

Solar and Sustainability

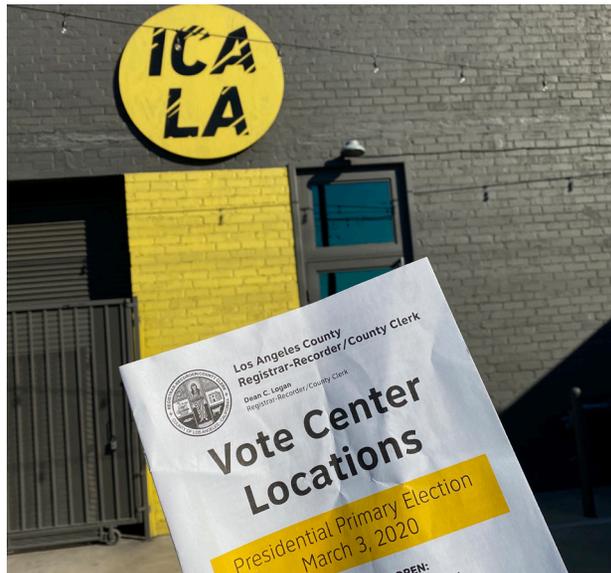
While ICA LA rapidly expands its artistic, social, and civic footprint, we are proud to be reducing its carbon one—leading by example as the first art museum in the United States to run on 100% renewable energy.

In 2019 we launched a Kickstarter campaign to fund the installation of more than 200 solar panels across the museum's rooftop. This effort culminated in 2020 when ICA LA officially “flipped the switch” to running entirely on solar energy.

Today, ICA LA stands committed to building green infrastructure and implement sustainable practices across all areas of operations.

Voting at ICA

ICA LA believes museums can provide a range of meaningful resources and experiences for their communities and offer activities that encourage civic participation. We are proud to be an official Los Angeles Vote Center and welcomed citizens to ICA LA in March to cast their ballots. Working with community partners, we offered study sessions in advance of the election to demystify the voter guide and provided donuts and coffee for voters waiting in line. During the primaries, we expanded the museum's operating hours over a period of ten days, so people—many of them local residents living near the museum and first-time visitors—could vote and view our exhibitions at the same time. Though we lacked sufficient space to be a Vote Center for the November elections, we look forward to offering this service to our communities in future elections.



Advancement

Institutional Giving

- *Art Dealers Association of America (ADAA) Foundation
- Ahmanson Foundation
- *The Angeles Art Fund
- Philip and Muriel Berman Foundation
- *Foundation for Arts Initiative
- Getty Foundation
- Harpo Foundation
- Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture
- City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs
- National Endowment for the Arts
- Pasadena Art Alliance (Mendez)
- *UCLA Arts and Accessibility Grant
- *Jacques Louis Vidal Charitable Fund
- Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts
- Wilhelm Family Foundation

* *First-time supporters*

2020 Fundraising

- \$1,672,477 individual giving
- \$464,880 institutional giving
- \$25,000 corporate giving
- \$3,000 average gift amount
- 559 transactions
- 323 unique donors
- 179 first-time donors
- 48 donors gave to multiple campaigns
- 10 campaigns

DS

Development

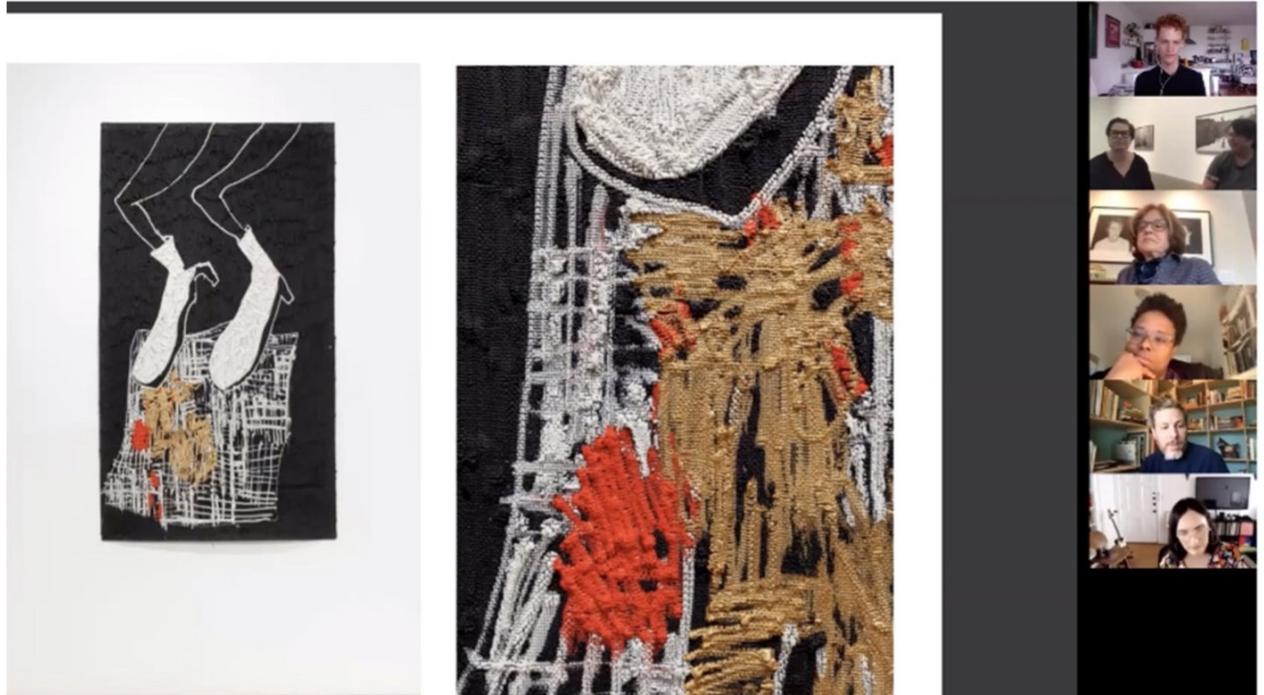
Curator's Council

Dedicated to exploring art, culture, and food in downtown Los Angeles and beyond. Through guided excursions led by senior curator Jamillah James and visits to artists' studios, galleries, museums, and nontraditional art spaces, members enjoy a community of shared learning and fun experiences. Collectively, the group supports ICA LA's curatorial program, which focus on the emerging and under-recognized voices of our time.

Membership: 33

Events: 12; 3 excursions and 9 virtual outings

Right: Desktop view of virtual tour of group exhibition "Turn Back, Turn Back!" at Shulamit Nazarian presented via Zoom for the Curator's Council April excursion.



Fieldwork

Dedicated to learning from the people tackling today's most critical issues. Led by the Director of Learning & Engagement, Asuka Hisa, members venture out into the field year-round for immersive workshops, behind-the-scenes research, cultural and culinary exploration that illuminate the ways in which art is being used for social change, justice, and innovation. Collectively, the group serves as the lead sponsor of Learning & Engagement programs.

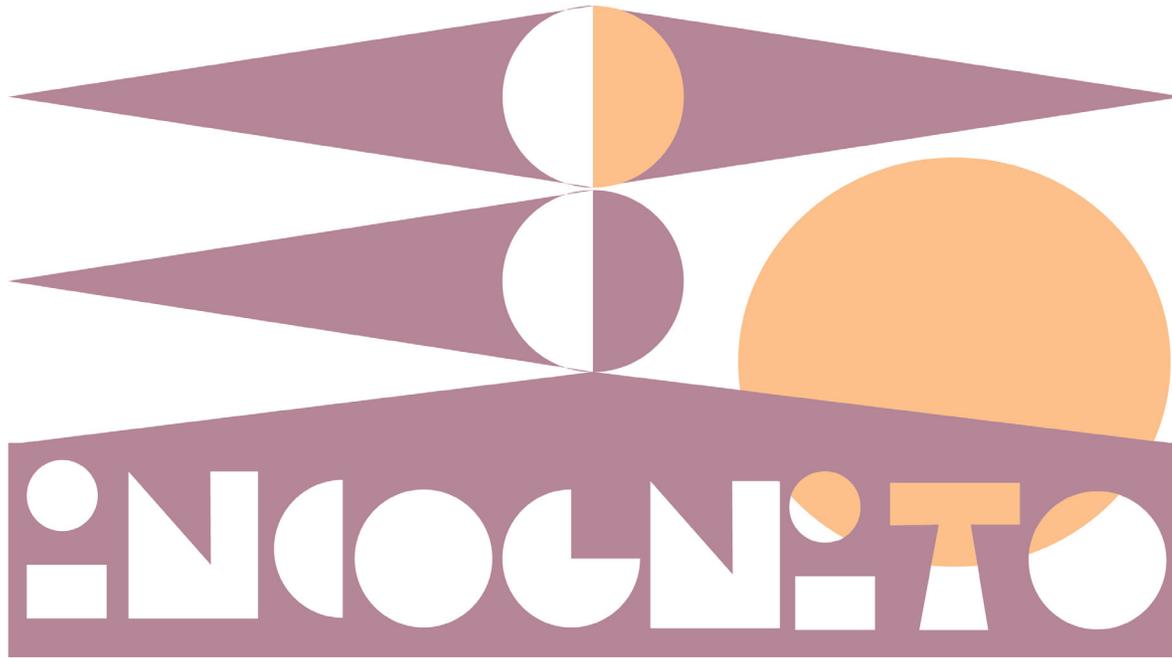
Members: 14

Events: 4; 1 excursion, 2 virtual, and 1 hybrid event

Right: Fieldwork members visit Suay Sew Shop in Frogtown during a hybrid excursion.



Development - Membership



Signature Event

INCOGNITO:

October 17, 2020

Hosted by Joel McHale

PRECIGNITO:

October 15–17, 2020

For the first time, ICA LA produced its legendary benefit INCOGNITO as a virtual happening. In-person previews of the artworks were available during three days of PRECOGNITO, hosted by The Rendon. INCOGNITO consisted of a livestream program, filmed and broadcasted from ICA LA via YouTube, featuring staff, board members, and artists, as well as pre-recorded performances by special guests Kate Berlant, Jade Gordon & Megan Whitmarsh, and Stephen Prina. Ticketholders logged on to the auction platform Handbid to watch the program from home, purchase artworks, and bid on auction packages focused on creative small businesses located in Los Angeles.

Nearly 400 established and emerging artists generously contributed artworks, including Lucas Blalock, Andrea Bowers, Alison Saar, Lisa Anne Auerbach, Rosson Crow, Charles Gaines, Andrea Fraser, Reggie Burrow Hodges, Anna Sew Hoy, Ann Greene Kelly, Ruby Neri, Analia Saban, Tomashi Jackson, Lari Pittman, and Nari Ward.

Ticketholders: 466

Livestream Views: 797

Revenue: \$250,000



Top: Incognito 2020 logo design by Eamon Ore-Giron **Left:** Todd Gray speaking on ICA LA's mission. **Right:** Video still of Joel McHale, host of INCOGNITO 2020.

Sponsorship Partners:

Art at The Rendon, Undeafed, Human Sustainability Project, Crescent Cardboard, Kikori Whiskey, Telluride Slopeside Escape, L.A. Eyeworks, Global Fitness, Phillips, Thrive Market, Toquato, Hauser and Wirth, Art Life Practice, Deux Portes, Uncle Paulies, Urban Palate, Pizzana, The Juice, Block Shop, Angie Banichi, Grace McGrade, Pamela Salman, Spotify, Wyldbentch, The Albright, Topo Chico, Health Ade, Angel City Brewery, Cartwheel Art

Development - Incognito 2020

Strengthening Communications

With nearly 25,000 subscribers, ICA LA's monthly newsletter has been a vital means to communicate with our publics near and far. When we were forced to close our doors in March, we increased the frequency and began sending out our newsletter once a week. In recognition of the extraordinary challenges we were all facing as we navigated unprecedented disruptions to our lives and the new realities of living during a pandemic, we expanded the purview of the newsletter to respond to the moment, providing information and resources, and at times, words of encouragement and solidarity, in addition to ongoing cultural programming made available on our website. During a time of isolation for so many, we intentionally struck a tone of empathy and calm and highlighted the value of community.

General Mailing List: 24,632

HELLO FROM ICA LA STAFF: MASKS ON



We've got our ears to the ground about the reopening of activity. Our masks and resolve to be resilient are on.

Hello from **Anne Ellegood**, Good Works Executive Director; **Asuka Hisa**, Director of Learning and Engagement; **Jamillah James**, Curator; **Adam Lee**, Advancement Office Assistant; **Gisela Morales**, Advancement Officer; **Beth Soroko**, Advancement Officer.

ICA LA STAFF READS



ICA LA partners with great independent booksellers through our bookshelf residency program. Currently, we have **Other Books**—a unique bookshop and collaborative space in Boyle Heights known for a diverse selection of new and used books, comics, and zines. Please support your local bookseller!

Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

Museums exist in a global world...this world is still evolving from a colonial history, and is therefore bifurcated along the racial and ethnic lines engineered by this history.

—Charles Gaines
Artist & ICA LA Board Member

ICA LA stands in solidarity with those who are fighting for racial justice. We join the chorus of voices outraged and heartbroken by the brutal and unforgivable killings of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and far too many others, for far too long. We unite with those speaking out against police brutality and racial violence of all kinds.

Words fail to adequately describe this extraordinary moment or to sufficiently express the myriad of emotions that attend this necessary and vital revolution demanding justice and equality. And yet the limitation of language is no excuse for silence. As we know from innumerable troubling events in our nation's past as well as recent incidents, silence truly equals death.

We live in a country formed by the genocide of indigenous peoples, built on the backs of enslaved Africans and indentured laborers, and structured by hierarchies of power that ensure the prosperity of some while failing to provide basic human rights for others. The proclamation that our nation is a democracy rooted in freedom and liberty has provided cover from the painful truths of these profound historical wrongs. As a society, we have yet to make reparations or reconcile with the ways these atrocities manifest as intractable systemic bias, pervasive oppression, and intolerable inequality for so many of our citizens still today.

Museums are profoundly paradoxical. Many collections were built and institutions founded within colonial and imperialist contexts, and the legacies of these histories remain deeply enmeshed. While many of us are engaged in important efforts towards correcting exclusionary practices related to staffing, board, audience, and programming, there is still a great deal of work to be done. At the same time, we are sites of learning and discovery, community engagement, transformation, and the untapped potential of a brighter future.

May 15: ICA LA announces weekly resources for art and action during COVID-19. **Viewers:** 3,600

May 29: What Are We Reading?
ICA LA staff recommends books to read during quarantine. **Viewers:** 3,339

June 6: It's Time For Change
ICA LA addresses its mission rooted in a commitment to racial justice and the role of the museum in urgent social conversations. **Viewers:** 4,352

Select Press Highlights

REVIEWS

Plastic, pastries and pastel tones – Ree Morton at the ICA LA, reviewed

Catherine Wagley 17 MARCH 2020



The Plant That Heals May Also Poison (2019), Ree Morton. Courtesy PMA Foundation for Women Artists, Anthony, © Estate of Ree Morton.

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It is difficult to write about Ree Morton, as it would be any artist who died under a decade into her career. But Morton poses different challenges from, for instance, Eva Hesse, who was also born in 1936 and died seven years before

LA Weekly review of *Ree Morton: The Plant That Heals May Also Poison*
by Catherine Wagley
March 17, 2020

Harold Mendez at ICA LA

November 10, 2020
Text by Allison Nicole Conner



Harold Mendez installation view (2020). Image courtesy of the artist and ICA LA. Photo: Jeff Mucken-ICA LA.

Five metal animal cages are tucked in the left corner of the room, arranged in a pentagonal formation. A concrete creature stands in each cage. The statues are in a state of ruin—crumbled, decayed, and difficult to clearly identify, as if relics from an ancient history. At the top of each cage, a delicate bone hangs suspended by twine. Like most of Harold Mendez's work, which crosses between sculpture and photography, this installation, *Síed Jaulas* (2017), transports the viewer to an ambiguous landscape charged by under-acknowledged histories culled from the Latin American diaspora, both stateside and beyond. Indigenous rituals and Chimu ceramics are referenced alongside Peruvian literature and Soteria. Mendez gestures to these hidden but resonant narratives through his use of symbolic-rich materials, triggering a rush of wide-open associations, from the history of colonization and current

Contemporary Art Review Los Angeles online review of *Harold Mendez: Let us gather in a flourishing way*
by Allison Nicole Conner
November 10, 2020

FEATURES INTERVIEWS LISTINGS & REVIEWS OPINION STUDIOS VISIT

Stanya Kahn's Communication Breakdown

At the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the artist's trio of short films explore the boundaries of language

BY JAN TUMLIR IN REVIEWS | 17 NOV 20



Stanya Kahn's current outing at ICA Los Angeles consists of just three filmic works produced over a ten-year span. Anyone hoping to grapple with a greater breadth of the artist's considerable output, will have to wait. That said, the curatorial choices here are pointed and vividly bring to life the artist's core themes. Foremost among these is an abiding concern with the problem of language – that part of communication which structures human experience and renders it meaningful, yet by the same token can serve to limit, and even undermine existence as such. All three videos would seem to take their cue from an acute premonition of communication breakdown, which is seen to rebound, with mounting force, between continually marginalized human actors.

Advertisement
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Frieze online review, *Stanya Kahn: No Go Backs*
by Jan Tumlir
November 17, 2020

Additional Highlights:

“Narratives of Personhood: Harold Mendez Interviewed by Brandon Sward” BOMB Magazine • “A Surreal and Eerie Look at Los Angeles Over the Past Decade” Hyperallergic; “25 Shows to See Across the US as Museums Reopen” Artnet • “Art Insider: Ree Morton’s artwork centers on sentiment and personal experience” KCRW • “Ann Greene Kelly Estranges the Familiar” Hyperallergic • “55 Best Virtual Adventures You Can Take to Explore SoCal Right Now” KCET • “Ree Morton: The Plant That Heals May Also Poison (review)” ArtReview • “Visit these 7 LA museums without leaving your home” CurbedLA • “Plastic, pastries and pastel tones: Ree Morton at the ICA LA (review)” Apollo • “Getting Hard with Nayland Blake: on the artist’s recent exhibition in Los Angeles” LA Review of Books • “Nayland Blake” ArtForum • “Staying in the present moment in L.A.’s Arts District: Four Hours”, Los Angeles Times • “Operations of Pleasure: the world of Nayland Blake” Frieze • “Creating a Census for LA Artists” Hyperallergic • “Feminists Arm Themselves with Art” New York Times • “Editor’s Picks: 13 virtual events this week” Artnet News • “Most Influential Living African American Artists” Artsy • “Art guide to October” Hyperallergic

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About ICA LA

The Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (ICA LA) is an epicenter of artistic experimentation and incubator of new ideas.

Founded in 1984 as the Santa Monica Museum of Art (SMMoA) and reestablished in 2017 with a new identity and home in Downtown Los Angeles, ICA LA builds upon a distinguished history of bold curatorial vision and innovative programming to illuminate the important untold stories and emerging voices in contemporary art and culture. The museum's 12,700 square-foot renovated industrial building—designed by wHY Architecture under the leadership of Kulapat Yantrasast—features ample space for exhibitions, public programs, retail pop-ups, integrated offices, and special projects.

ICA LA's mission is to support art that sparks the pleasure of discovery and challenges the way we see and experience the world, ourselves, and each other. ICA LA is committed to upending hierarchies of race, class, gender, and culture. Through exhibitions, education programs, and community partnerships, ICA LA fosters critique of the familiar and empathy with the different.

ICA LA is committed to making contemporary art relevant and accessible for all. Admission is always free.

Institute of Contemporary Art,
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