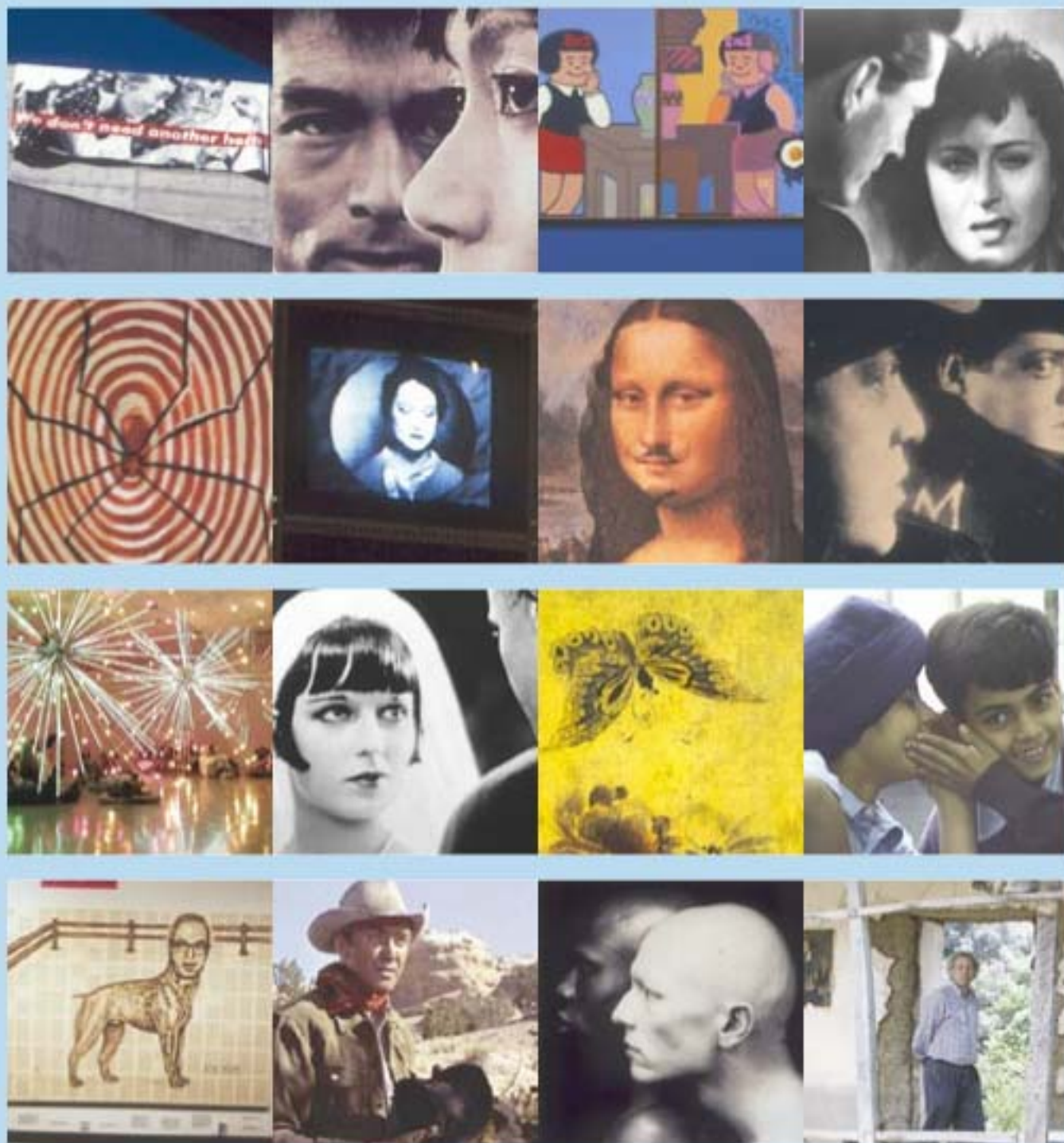


BAM/PFA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY ART MUSEUM & PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE



Three decades of accomplishment, leadership, and excellence in the visual arts.



ENCOUNTER CULTURE

University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive

Introduction

The mission of the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAM/PFA), the visual arts center of the University of California, Berkeley, is to inspire the imagination and ignite critical dialogue through art and film. One of the largest university art museums in the United States, in physical and budget size and in attendance, BAM/PFA has developed an international reputation for presenting one of the most active and ambitious exhibition programs anywhere as well as for the quality of its art and film collections and research resources. BAM/PFA is an institution with a stellar history and an exciting future.

History

The museum was founded in 1963 following the donation to the University by artist and teacher Hans Hofmann of forty-five paintings and \$250,000. An architectural competition for the new museum was announced in November 1964, and the following year San Francisco architect Mario Ciampi and associates Richard L. Jorasch and Ronald E. Wagner were declared the winners. Construction began in 1967 and the building opened on November 7, 1970. The Pacific Film Archive began showing films on the UC Berkeley campus in 1966, and in 1970 became a curatorial department of the museum dedicated to the preservation, study, and exhibition of cinema. Today BAM/PFA presents artists from around the world in a compelling program of more than twenty art exhibitions and six hundred film screenings each year.

Exhibitions and Programs

The art museum is recognized internationally as a center for excellence in the presentation of visual art. Exhibitions in the museum's eleven galleries, both temporary and collections-based, are adventurous, often exploring artists and artistic movements that in some way represent a divergence from the mainstream. Innovative and intellectually rigorous, the exhibition program presents new perspectives on historical and contemporary art and international artists, with a particular focus on Asia.

The museum's MATRIX Program for Contemporary Art, which celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 2003, is dedicated to cutting-edge art and ideas. In more than 210 exhibitions, MATRIX has featured important emerging artists, often in their first U.S. museum exhibition, many of whom have since become leading figures in the contemporary art world. These include John Baldessari, Brian Eno, Eva Hesse, Sol LeWitt, and Shirin Neshat.

The film archive is one of the world's most respected and comprehensive film exhibition, collection, and study centers. With more than six hundred public screenings each year, PFA presents the full spectrum of American and international film from cinema's earliest days to the present. Internationally recognized for its commitment to increasing the understanding and appreciation of the art of cinema, PFA's exhibition program surveys films in critical, cultural, and historical contexts, frequently including in-person conversations with filmmakers, authors, and scholars. A place to explore cinema from every film-producing country in the world, PFA screens rare and rediscovered prints, work by the world's great film directors, restored silent films with live musical accompaniment, and thematic series. Since its inception, PFA has been a premier showcase for experimental film and video.

Collections

Characterized by themes of artistic and intellectual exploration, the museum's collection of more than 14,000 objects includes exceptional examples of mid-twentieth-century painting, including important works by Hans Hofmann, Jackson Pollock, and Mark Rothko. Other significant

strengths include historical and contemporary Asian art; early American painting; Conceptual and contemporary international art; and California and Bay Area art.

First established with an eye toward the Pacific Rim, the PFA film and video collection now includes the largest group of Japanese films outside of Tokyo, as well as impressive holdings of Soviet silents, West Coast avant-garde cinema, seminal video art, rare animation, Central Asian productions, Eastern European cinema, and international classics. PFA is actively engaged in film preservation, with a focus on endangered works of experimental film and video.

Research Resources

BAM/PFA is home to the PFA Library and Film Study Center, an invaluable resource for film research and education that provides access to PFA's film and video collection as well as to thousands of books, periodicals, posters, and still photographs. The PFA Library maintains more than 80,000 files of documentation about individual films, personalities, and subjects. Almost 30,000 of these files are available through PFA's CineFiles, an online database.

www.bampfa.berkeley.edu – the BAM/PFA website – offers one of the most comprehensive online research resources available from any museum in the U.S. Visitors to the site can access an extraordinary range and wealth of material: approximately 20,000 individual records describing BAM/PFA's entire permanent collection of art, film, and video; 14,000 PFA Film Notes from BAM/PFA publications dating back to 1979; 6,000 records from the PFA Library and Film Study Center book catalog; and documentation including images of more than two hundred MATRIX exhibitions spanning twenty-five years. In addition, visitors can access CineFiles, the PFA Library and Film Study Center database; and Museums Online Archive California (MOAC), comprising 60,000 images of items from the collections of eleven California museums, representing one of the largest online cultural collaborations in the nation.

Community and Financial Support

Since opening its doors in 1970, BAM/PFA has developed an established audience and loyal membership base that continues to grow as a result of a significant long-term investment in marketing, public relations, visitor services, and community outreach. Approximately 200,000 visitors attend BAM/PFA exhibitions and education programs annually. Thirty percent of that audience is made up of UC Berkeley students, up from approximately 12 percent five years ago. The institution's extraordinary success in increasing the level of student and academic use of its resources is widely recognized and serves as a model for building youth audiences across the museum field. BAM/PFA has approximately 3,000 members from around the Bay Area who make up about 20 percent of annual attendance. The other half of the BAM/PFA audience is made up of the general art-going public and cultural tourists to the area.

Over the past decade, with the leadership of a dedicated and generous Board of Trustees, BAM/PFA has diversified and strengthened its fund-raising support, now generating more than 75 percent annually from non-University sources. The institution has greatly reduced its dependence upon University funding. BAM/PFA receives over \$1 million annually in foundation and government support, the highest level in the country for a university art museum. In addition, the museum exceeded its endowment goal in the campus's last Promise of Berkeley campaign, increasing our operating endowment by over \$15 million. The museum's well-established membership program and growing annual fund generates steadily growing revenue.

A New Art Museum at the Western Gateway to Campus

In 1997, BAM/PFA's building on Bancroft Way received a seismic rating of "very poor" in a campus survey. Since then, the Board of Trustees and staff have worked continuously with campus officials to address and remedy the serious hazards of the facility. As a result of a

thorough and careful examination of options, in 1999 the Trustees decided to construct a new architecturally distinguished visual arts center at a new location at the gates of campus, on the corner of Oxford and Center streets, rather than retrofit the current structure.

After the campus survey identified the museum as one of several buildings with a "very poor" seismic rating, the staff and Board, with the approval of and under the supervision of the Office of Capital Projects, immediately initiated discussions with campus and community stakeholders. From these discussions, a series of exploratory studies was commissioned to determine the best possible solution to the urgent seismic problem.

In spring 1999, a comparative study of costs to retrofit and provide a limited expansion of the current building versus construction of a new facility on an alternative site was conducted. Findings suggest comparative costs are roughly equivalent, but that a new building would enjoy greater seismic safety and functionality. With this information the Board of Trustees of BAM/PFA voted unanimously to express preference for relocating to the Oxford and Center streets site, in the belief that a new building at this location provides a compelling opportunity for synergy with the City of Berkeley's developing downtown arts district. This location also vastly improves access to parking and public transportation hubs. (Center Street sees four million "person trips" annually as students, faculty, staff, and visitors walk from the Berkeley BART station to campus.)

UC Berkeley's Physical and Environmental Planning Office has examined the feasibility of a new museum facility at Oxford and Center streets and determined that it offers a significantly better location and improves the way in which the campus relates as a whole to downtown Berkeley. In spring 2002, the Executive Campus Planning Committee designated the Oxford site as the preferred location for the museum and authorized continued planning. In 2003, the University initiated planning studies for a hotel and conference center to be located adjacent to the new museum on the same block. The local community has responded favorably to the plan, with particular support for the role the art museum and film archive will play in the cultural and economic renaissance of downtown Berkeley.

A Unique Opportunity

A new building on the new site represents an unparalleled opportunity to bridge the campus with the wider Berkeley and Bay Area communities. The building will allow BAM/PFA to consolidate the University and art museum's community service mission based on shared goals of research and teaching excellence. Thus, the project has emerged as a compelling feature of the campus' strategic master plan for facilities for the new century. A new center for the arts will function as a symbolic bridge, making available to the community the intellectual riches of the flagship campus of the University of California, as well as driving the expansion of the City of Berkeley's downtown arts district.

The comprehensive nature of the program on this site will enable BAM/PFA to more directly and efficiently achieve our goal of completely integrating our facility, collections, and programs with the academic mission of Cal. We envision BAM/PFA providing important space and resources for a wide range of University departments, including Film Studies, History of Art, Art Practice, Ethnic Studies, the College of Environmental Design, the Consortium for the Arts, the Townsend Center for the Humanities, and other partners. We intend to include exhibition space for the College of Environmental Design's Documents Collection, the School of Journalism's photojournalism collection, and Art Practice and the Bancroft Library's exhibition program. In addition, we plan displays dedicated to stylistic analysis and connoisseurship courses for the departments of the History of Art and Art Practice.

In addition, a new, world-class facility will enhance the leadership position of BAM/PFA as one of the nation's five leading university art museums (with Harvard, Michigan, Princeton, and Yale) and top three film archives (with The Museum of Modern Art in New York and UCLA). New galleries showcasing a world-renowned collection of Chinese paintings, a growing collection of work by the leading practitioners of contemporary art, and an important collection of works by modern masters will attract hundreds of thousands of visitors and scholars to the campus each year and serve as a laboratory for students and lifelong learners in the arts and humanities.

Multiple film theaters exhibiting international cinema year-round will enliven surrounding neighborhoods, raising the cultural level of downtown Berkeley in the evening. New and expanded spaces being planned include an art library, the PFA Library and Film Study Center, collection study rooms, screening rooms, and related amenities that will help alleviate the campus' serious shortage of instructional space. The new visual arts facility, with anticipated operating hours of 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., will help attract the best students and faculty, dramatically expand our services to the general public, and help revitalize downtown Berkeley.

Case for an Expanded Program

The projected building program for the new BAM/PFA is 88,000 assignable-square-feet (asf), contained within a 146,000-gross-square-foot structure. Both the 1964 program statement and initial design for the current art museum (the film archive did not exist at this time) called for 90,000 asf. At a late stage in the building design, approximately 30,000 asf – almost one-third of the space – was eliminated for budgetary reasons. The gallery area remained substantially intact, but exhibition support, classroom, and office spaces were severely cut, leading to the serious space shortage currently experienced at BAM/PFA.

Less than a year after the art museum opened, the Pacific Film Archive became part of the program, further compounding problems associated with insufficient support space. As BAM/PFA public programs developed, a further reduction in seminar and library space was necessary to house a growing staff. In 1997, when the BAM/PFA building was identified as structurally "very poor" in the event of a major seismic event on the Hayward fault, several efforts were made to keep BAM/PFA open by reducing the building occupancy load, including relocating the PFA Theater to a temporary home, and partially retrofitting the structure with exterior braces. The temporary partial retrofit, completed in 2001, has increased BAM/PFA's seismic rating to "poor," allowing our doors to remain open while planning for a new facility.

A new facility will provide an opportunity to correct existing functional and operational limitations, and to create structural improvements and efficiencies based on knowledge gained from thirty-five years of operation as a vital campus and community resource. The new building program provides additional flexible gallery space that can accommodate evolving contemporary art forms. Expanded galleries will make possible optimal exhibition of new acquisitions such as the Cahill Family Collections, the Theos C. Bernhard Tibetan Collection, and other collections currently under negotiation for acquisition. The new program also provides expanded study storage space for these valuable collections.

The greatest impact associated with an expanded program space is in the area of educational facilities. A series of seminar rooms and art study spaces will allow BAM/PFA to provide teaching and research space for the campus and community. Increased theater and lecture space will allow us to work closely with academic programs.

With the increased access and visibility provided by a location at the edge of the campus on a downtown site, BAM/PFA will attract greater public and campus attendance. Projecting larger numbers of visitors, the museum has the complementary goals of providing service through an

expanded bookstore and dining facility while creating an important source of operating revenues for our programs.

Conclusion

The relocation to a newly designed facility offers BAM/PFA, an international leader in the exhibition, interpretation, and preservation of art and film, a unique opportunity to create an innovative model for 21st-century university art museums. The new museum will be situated at the vibrant intersection of the campus and downtown Berkeley, next to the University's proposed hotel and conference center and one block from BART. At this location, the museum will be an architectural and cultural symbol of one of the world's finest public universities and most culturally diverse small cities, and of the vital role direct engagement with the visual arts plays in higher education and lifelong learning practices. The museum will be a flagship institution in Berkeley's Arts District and a compelling destination, stimulating the continuing economic and social renaissance of Berkeley's urban center and providing a beautiful and safe gathering place for cultural, educational, civic, and social activities. It will be a focal point for the Bay Area cultural community, functioning as a convener, connector, and catalyst for the world's leading artists and filmmakers, cultural leaders, students, and community residents. The new museum will be a nexus of intellectual and cultural energy, an inspiring place to view and learn about art and film, and to gather in an exciting environment. Embodying UC Berkeley's spirit of excellence and vision for the future, the new art museum and film archive will animate campus and community cultural and intellectual life for years to come.

Kevin E. Consey
Director