EXHIBITION CALENDAR
2019-20

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The following information is subject to change. Prior to publication, please confirm dates, titles, and other information with the Seattle Art Museum public relations office.
Zanele Muholi: Somnyama Ngonyama/Hail the Dark Lioness
Seattle Art Museum
July 10–November 3, 2019

This installation features photographs and large-scale photographic wallpapers from the South African visual activist’s ongoing self-portrait series. Organized by Autograph, London and curated by Renée Mussai, this international touring exhibition confronts the complex global politics of race, gender, and representation.

“I’m reclaiming my blackness, which I feel is continuously performed by the privileged ‘other,’” says Muholi. “My reality is that I do not mimic being black; it is my skin, and the experience of being black is deeply entrenched in me. Just like our ancestors, we live as black people 365 days a year, and we should speak without fear.”

From 2014–17, Muholi traveled around the world as part of an ongoing project, staging self-portraits loaded with symbols and moods derived from each location, primarily throughout Europe, North America, and Africa. In 76 self-portraits, the artist frames their face with ready-made objects and found materials that become transformed into evocative and historically loaded props. Scouring pads, clothespins, cowrie shells, and washing machine tubes signal associations with issues relating to race, gender, labor, global economies, ideas of beauty, and the environment.

A meaningful name for each portrait is given in Zulu, the first language of the artist. In each image, their direct and uncompromising gaze follows you wherever you go. Psychologically charged, these portraits pose critical questions about social justice, human rights, and contested representations of the black body.
John Grade: Middle Fork
Seattle Art Museum
February 10, 2017–ongoing

Middle Fork, a large-scale sculpture by Seattle-based artist John Grade, is presented in its largest iteration yet. More than doubling from its previous length of 50 feet to 105 feet, the tree sculpture dynamically spans the entire length of the Brotman Forum, the main entrance lobby that welcomes guests to the museum.

The highly detailed sculpture was created by Grade, his team, and a cadre of volunteers using a full plaster cast of a living old-growth western hemlock tree found in the Cascade Mountains east of Seattle. The cast was used as a mold to assemble a new tree from now nearly one million reclaimed cedar pieces. Suspended horizontally from the museum’s ceiling and above the viewer, Grade’s sculpture offers a mesmerizing new perspective on a familiar form.

With its exhibition at SAM, Middle Fork returns home to Washington State. The work was first conceived and built at MadArt Studio and had its Seattle debut there in January 2015. Following that, it was included in the WONDER exhibition at the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC (November 13, 2015–May 13, 2016) and was recently displayed at the 2017 Davos World Economic Forum in Switzerland.

With each iteration, Middle Fork has “grown” larger and added more branches. The artist plans over time to continue the sculpture’s growth to match the length of the living tree that it is based on, 140 feet. Eventually, he plans to bring the sculpture back to the forest, allowing it to decompose and return to the earth at the base of that original tree.
Big Picture: Art After 1945
Seattle Art Museum
July 23, 2016–ongoing

*Big Picture: Art After 1945* features significant works of abstract painting and sculpture from SAM's collection. Tracing landmark artistic developments in the decades following World War II, the installation reveals how abstraction established itself as a dominant force to be reckoned with.

*Big Picture* will highlight works from the Virginia and Bagley Wright Collection given to the museum, such as Mark Rothko’s *No. 10* (1952), Jasper Johns’ *Thermometer* (1959), and Eva Hesse’s *No Title* (1964). It will also feature key loans from other local collections, reflecting the depth and commitment of private collectors in Seattle.

Virginia and her husband, Bagley Wright, who passed away in 2011, are longtime visionary leaders and legendary arts patrons of SAM and Seattle. The Wrights have donated extraordinary works to the museum for decades but within the past two years, Virginia Wright gave a large part of her and her husband’s collection to the museum. These works have transformed SAM’s modern and contemporary collection, elevating it to national status.

In addition, *Big Picture* includes select contemporary works that point to the continuity and resonance of these ideas today, such as *X* (2015)—a painting recently acquired by the museum—by Gwendolyn Knight Jacob Lawrence Prize-winner Brenna Youngblood.
Natalie Ball: Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Snake
Seattle Art Museum
August 10–November 17, 2019

Multidisciplinary artist Natalie Ball is the winner of the 2018 Betty Bowen Award. The award, juried by the Betty Bowen Committee, comes with an unrestricted cash award of $15,000 and a solo exhibition at SAM. Founded in 1977 to continue the legacy of local arts advocate and supporter Betty Bowen, the annual award honors a Northwest artist for their original, exceptional, and compelling work.

Born and raised in Portland, Oregon, Natalie Ball is an MFA graduate from Yale University and recently relocated to Chiloquin, Oregon, which is part of her ancestral Klamath homelands. Working with textiles, found objects, photography, and sculpture, Ball’s work strives to dislodge dominant narratives and expectations surrounding Native American experience and history. She understands her practice as “offering objects as proposals of refusal to complicate an easily affirmed and consumed narrative identity.”
A Cultural Legacy: A Series of Paintings from the Paul G. Allen Family Collection
Seattle Art Museum
July 24, 2019–July 20, 2020

This iterative single-painting exhibition features works by Lucian Freud, Sandro Botticelli, and Georgia O’Keeffe from the Paul G. Allen Family Collection, one of the most significant private collections in the United States. On view one at a time, the paintings will connect thematically to other work at the museum.

Paul G. Allen, Microsoft co-founder and philanthropist, had a lifelong interest in the visual arts and stewarded the development of a collection that spans centuries, genres, and media. He was a frequent lender and donor to the Seattle Art Museum, including making a substantial financial contribution in support of the creation of SAM’s Olympic Sculpture Park.

In 2017, Allen lent 39 works from the collection for Seeing Nature: Landscape Masterworks from the Paul G. Allen Family Collection, an exhibition co-organized by SAM, the Portland Art Museum, and the Paul G. Allen Family Collection. The exhibition showcased key moments in the development of the landscape genre, which Allen hoped would “inspire people to renew their commitment to protecting Earth’s natural beauty for generations to come.”

A Cultural Legacy will be on view in the museum’s third floor galleries, adjacent to SAM’s significant collection of modern and contemporary art. Large Interior, Wil1 (after Watteau) (1981–1983) by Lucian Freud is on view July 24–November 18, 2019. Next is The Madonna of the Magnificat (c. 1480–1489) by Sandro Botticelli (November 27, 2019–March 23, 2020), on view concurrent with SAM’s major fall exhibition, Flesh and Blood: Italian Masterpieces from the Capodimonte Museum (October 17, 2019–January 26, 2020), featuring works from the High Renaissance and Baroque periods. Finally, White Rose with Larkspur No. 1 (1927) by Georgia O’Keeffe will be on view April 1–July 20, 2020, concurrent with Georgia O’Keeffe: Abstract Variations (March 5–June 28, 2020), focusing on O’Keeffe’s early drawings, paintings from the 1920s and 1930s, and photographs of the artist by Alfred Stieglitz.
Sound Affect
Seattle Art Museum
April 27–February 2, 2020

Music and sound offer a path for artists exploring personal and cultural histories and real and imagined spaces. The works here range from the documentary and deadpan to the lyrical, contrasting and harmonizing in unexpected ways.

Robert Morris’s influential 1963 object and recording, *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making*, created a new consideration of artistic process as the artist recorded himself while he made this work. Decades later we are still in the room with the artist, listening to him hammering, sawing, sanding, and taking breaks. The work’s importance is evident in Jonathan Monk’s homage, a vinyl audio record with the misleading title “The Sound of Music.” If you expect songs by the Trapp family, you will be disappointed. Monk’s record plays the sounds made when the record was manufactured.

Isaac Layman’s photograph of a furniture-sized stereo provides a physical connection to the music experience even though the speakers are turned away from us. Alyssa Phebus Mumtaz gives Leonard Cohen’s song lyrics a sensuous presence. Victoria Haven monumentalizes a mixed tape of personal significance. We can also contemplate the primordial personification of a scream, the suggestion of birdsong, and a range of topographies—from the suggestion of backyard aesthetics to more abstract ventures.

The photographs of a Nirvana performance take us back to a historic event, just as Ed Ruscha’s little book of records charts seismic shifts in the music scenes of the 1960s, from Otis Redding and Carla Thomas to Frank Zappa and the Velvet Underground.
YOU ARE ON INDIGENOUS LAND: places/displaces
Seattle Art Museum
April 6, 2019–June 28, 2020

For the major exhibition of summer 2018, Double Exposure: Edward S. Curtis, Marianne Nicolson, Tracy Rector, Will Wilson, SAM worked with contemporary artists whose powerful art stands as a strident reminder that Indigenous identity is inextricably linked to the land. Rebuking stereotypes and recitations of displacement so common in our politicized culture, First Peoples have never surrendered their knowledge of ways about being on the land, philosophies which includes a wide range of beliefs and protocols. Egregious policies that forced Native and First Nations communities to leave their traditional homes, or to survive on a small portion of them, or that sent them into Canadian and U.S. cities has not meant an abdication of responsibility to Mother Earth.

Using Tracy Rector’s project You are On Indigenous Land as an anchor work, this installation of approximately twenty works bear witness to such ideas as: the entwined issues of cultural survival and authority over tribal lands and waters; the spiritual dimension of land; the “storied landscape” and nature as place (not commodity); and the work being done to advocate for environmental integrity.
Gentleman Warrior: Art of the Samurai
Seattle Art Museum
March 16–December 1, 2019

*Gentleman Warrior* is the fourth and final installation in a series showcasing Japanese art from SAM’s collection at the downtown museum during the temporary closure of the Seattle Asian Art Museum. The previous installations focused on urban life, talents and beauty of women, and art of the aristocrats.

While the popular conception of samurai is a vision of martial might, the samurai also engaged in and sponsored cultural activities such as the tea ceremony, Noh theatre, and religious practices. This installation will explore the dual nature of the samurai as both military and cultural elite. On view are paintings, prints, Noh masks, arms and armor, clothing, and ceramics from SAM’s collection, as well as a special loan of samurai suits of armor from a local collection.
Material Difference: German Perspectives
Seattle Art Museum
March 1, 2019–April 26, 2020

In Europe, the physical and psychological devastation of World War II had a profound effect on artists’ subjects, methods, and use of materials far beyond the immediate post-war years. Photographs taken along the Russian front lines by the Soviet photojournalist Dmitry Baltermants show the tremendous suffering and loss of human life during the war. Presented alongside Anselm Kiefer’s large-scale allegorical and heavily layered works created in the 1980s and 90s and Katharina Fritsch’s surreal sculpture, Mann und Maus (1991–92), Material Difference offers perspectives across time as German artists, writers, and scholars contended with the trauma of the Jewish genocide and the failure of an entire generation.

As Germany divided into East and West, the country’s history remained front and central to artists well into the new millennium. These artists ask questions about the role and responsibility of the artist, questions that reverberate long past the immediate phase of reconstruction and into the present.
Claire Partington: Taking Tea
Seattle Art Museum
December 7, 2018–December 6, 2020

Get a new perspective on SAM’s popular Porcelain Room through the site-specific work of contemporary British ceramic artist Claire Partington. Taking Tea features an installation referencing Baroque painting and European porcelain factories, as well as a panel mounted with fragments from 17th- and 18th-century shipwrecks. The Porcelain Room is a favorite for visitors with over 1,000 European and Asian porcelain pieces from SAM’s collection grouped to evoke porcelain as a treasured commodity between the East and the West.

Claire Partington reappraises the narrative histories of the porcelain objects. Her figures engaged in the act of “taking tea” give a human face to the European craze for Chinese porcelain on display in the Porcelain Room. Partington’s installation suggests the often unintentional consequences of the porcelain trade during the expansion of international shipping routes. The figures in the installation are steeped in the rarified luxury and high-end fashion these items once conveyed, but they also expose the degrading aspects of trade—the reality of precarious ocean voyages and human exploitation.

Each character in the group is made in a particular style: The Man of the House is in the style of English Bow porcelain and other early European attempts to imitate Chinese and Japanese porcelain. He’s not really a high-end luxury item but a poor imitation. He is dressed in 17th-century costume and appears slightly passé in comparison to his wife. The Woman of the House is in the style of Sèvres, the pinnacle of European porcelain production in the 18th century. Like a modern trophy wife, she wears a wide panniered dress, designed to show off how much silk she can afford, which is decorated with luxury logos. The Boy is the prized possession, the genuine “luxury” exotic item on display, made in the style of Chinese Wan Li porcelain. The Maid is in the style of the red stoneware teapots that were the first Chinese ceramic items to arrive in Europe in the 17th century along with the main cargo of tea and spices. Two Sailors are celadon-glazed. One is washed up and presumed dead; the other clings for life. Both are ignored by the tea party group. Incised on the back of one figure is the shipwreck excerpt from Don Juan by Lord Byron (1788-1824).
Inspired by a single historical event, in this gallery we consider the notion that actions speak louder than words. In 1970, Chancellor Willy Brandt became the first German ruler to visit the country of Poland since Nazi Germany invaded in 1939. Rather than make a speech, Brandt laid a wreath on a monument to the thousands of Jewish people killed in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943. Then he knelt down and silently bowed his head. Photographs of this gesture circulated around the world. Over 40 years later, Seattle sculptor Akio Takamori memorialized Brandt’s mute apology as a moving expression of deference and humility rarely practiced by today’s leaders.

Brandt’s kneeling position recalls the submissive posture shown in a European religious painting he commissioned—look for the small figure gazing up in adoration in the painting *Virgin and Child with Donor* by Bernardo Daddi in the same gallery. Kneeling also reflects the attitude of a penitent saint humbled by his own sinfulness. But gestures can also be uplifting—a raised hand encourages elevated thoughts. And sometimes, collective love—whether joyful or grief-stricken—generates a flow of gestures and responses that unite the whole community.
Cosmic Beings in Mesoamerican and Andean Art
Seattle Art Museum
November 10, 2018–ongoing

Over vast geographical expanses and several millennia, a mosaic of cultures developed in ancient Mesoamerica and the Andean regions of South America. Some of these diverse cultures evolved from humble agricultural communities into complex cultural centers with spectacular cities and refined arts. Each had sophisticated belief systems about the origins of the universe and the roles of all the human and supernatural beings contained within. Ritual protocols—like shamanic transformations, human alliances with animal spirit companions, and the reenactment of myths—blurred the boundaries between the human and cosmic zones.

The arts in this gallery depict ancestors, humans, gods, supernatural animals, and monsters in ceramic, stone, shell, and animal. Visual symbols and narratives seen on ceremonial vessels, tomb sculptures, and personal adornment illuminate how early peoples grappled with the fundamental questions of existence, immortality, and the nature of the universe around them.
American Modernism
Seattle Art Museum
August 22, 2018–February 23, 2020

In the first decade of the 20th century, American photographer and gallerist Alfred Stieglitz offered a rousing alternative to the European artists then dominating the art world. He showcased the homegrown talents of four bold young painters: Georgia O’Keeffe, Marsden Hartley, Arthur Dove, and John Marin. Despite unmistakable individual styles, these artists shared a daring approach to color and created forms that evoked rather than described nature. Important examples of their work can be viewed in SAM’s new permanent collection installation American Modernism.

Georgia O’Keeffe’s Music—Pink and Blue No. 1 and Marsden Hartley’s Painting No. 49, Berlin are centerpieces of the installation. These two paintings were milestone gifts to the collection by renowned collector, philanthropist, and former SAM trustee, Barney A. Ebsworth, who passed away in April 2018.
On the Edge
Seattle Art Museum
August 16, 2018–ongoing

“The personal is political” became a rallying cry for the second-wave feminist movement in the late 1960s and ’70s, forcefully declaring that women’s personal experiences are intrinsically related to broader social and political issues. Embracing this premise, the artists in this gallery confront sociopolitical issues facing women today through the lens of personal lives and experiences.

They employ a diverse range of stylistic means to advance their objectives. Some, like Chicago-based artist Hollis Sigler, work with an intentionally simple, graphic style to position themselves outside of male-dominated artistic traditions and aesthetics. At the other end of the spectrum are artists like Clint Brown, who adopt pop art’s polished surfaces and reproductive processes to point to the underbelly of a slick corporate world. Other artists wield a wry and acerbic sense of humor to challenge gender stereotypes, such as in the tongue-in-cheek ceramics of Seattle-based artist Patti Warashina. Collectively, these artists push the limits on some of the most pressing issues of their time and today, including gender equity and sexual politics in the workplace, women’s health, and stereotypes of femininity and sexuality.
Walking sets a rhythm that adjusts to each landscape we cross. Translating that rhythm into paint became a goal for one artist who walked hundreds of miles across her homeland. Dorothy Napangardi was born in the Tanami Desert of Australia where a crystalline salt lake region played a powerful role in her life. She spoke of the unconditional happiness and freedom she felt when she traversed her family’s country and slept beside them with stars as a canopy. An entire gallery filled with her paintings from 2000-2013 take us to see a shimmering salt lake filled with stories and ancestral laws of the land. Her individual style of intricate dotting can suggest a vast aerial perspective, or a microscopic maze.
Lessons from the Institute of Empathy
Seattle Art Museum
March 31, 2018–ongoing

Contemporary artist Saya Woolfalk (b. 1979) is known for her multimedia explorations of hybridity, science, race, and sex. Now on view in SAM’s African art galleries is Woolfalk’s immersive installation *ChimaTEK: Virtual Chimeric Space*, which was part of the museum’s 2015 exhibition *Disguise: Masks and Global African Art* and was recently acquired for SAM’s permanent collection.

*Virtual Chimeric Space* imagines an entirely new virtual population, the Empathics, who chronicle their alternative view of the universe. Through their nonprofit research society, Institute of Empathy (IoE), the Empathics have founded ChimaTEK corporation, with a trademarked process for self-transformation that prepares individuals and organizations to engage more empathically with the posthumanist populace of our networked, globalized age.

Now, three Empathics have moved into the Seattle Art Museum and established a virtual space where visitors can step outside their normal, routine self and improve their ability to understand others. Also on view with their “showroom” is art from SAM’s African art collection that the Empathics selected to help awaken their empathy.
Pure Amusements: Wealth, Leisure, and Culture in Late Imperial China
Seattle Art Museum
December 24, 2016–ongoing

*Pure Amusements* features Chinese works ranging from prints to sculpture and furnishings to ceramics drawn from SAM’s collection and focused on objects created for, and enjoyed during, the intentional practice of leisure.

From the late Ming dynasty (1368–1644) onward, leisure had many rules. Gentlemanly pastimes, like drinking tea, viewing paintings, and planting bamboo in the garden, were pursuits of an elegant lifestyle. Such “pure amusements” (*qingwan*) were not frivolous—they helped establish one’s standing in society. Aspiring men thus collected objects like chessboards, books, paintings, calligraphy, ancient bronze vessels, and ink rubbings of antiquities. With greater social mobility, and broader literacy in the late-16th to early-17th century, knowledge and culture were accessible not only to scholars and aristocrats but also to the newly affluent.
Emblems of Encounter: Europe and Africa Over 500 Years
Seattle Art Museum
January 23, 2016–ongoing

Looking back 500 years, one can see the late 15th century as a major turning point in history. When Portuguese navigators first arrived on the shores of West Africa, the two continents of Europe and Africa began interacting in new ways. After a very brief period of mutual respect and commercial exchange, European traders quickly moved to exploit the region's natural resources—including human labor—which became the basis for the massive slave trade that eventually affected twenty million Africans.

The ten works of European and African art in this gallery, dating from the end of the 15th century to the end of the 20th, have been selected from SAM’s collection as examples of these interactions over time. Bringing them together in this context reminds us that works of art contain multiple meanings and associations that can be viewed through different perspectives. Even small works connect us with a long and complex history that has shaped many aspects of our world today.
Art and Life Along The Northwest Coast
Seattle Art Museum
November 26, 2014–ongoing

Over their long habitation of the Pacific Northwest, First Peoples have shaped their lifeways around the resources of the water, forests, valleys, and mountains. In tandem, they have developed rich oral traditions and ceremonies that link inextricably to this region.

With this installation of SAM’s collection of Northwest Coast art, visitors will encounter the creative expressions of generations of artists who created forms for daily life, for potlatch ceremonies, and for spiritual balance. The presence of contemporary arts, shown alongside historical forms, highlight the vitality of traditions that are being re-envisioned for present times.

The installation also includes a new acquisition: twelve masks representing supernatural creatures associated with the Animals Spirits Dance by Gwaysdams carver Sam Johnson. Originally commissioned for the opening celebration of the Pacific Science Center's Seamonster House in 1971, the masks were transferred to SAM in 2006 and are now on view for the first time.

The interpretation and context for the masks are being defined through a collaboration with community members. The colorful, boldly carved masks represent a modern interpretation of the principles of Kwakwaka’wakw art and the dramatic nature of the dance privilege associated with them. The twelve masks—representing mouse, raccoon, deer, wolf and others—and a commissioned button blanket to adorn one of the masks, will be installed in July, 2026, accompanied by a video of the masks being danced in 1971. This display compliments the interactive video component about the history of the houseposts that will be installed in an adjacent gallery.
Paintings and Drawings of the European Avant-Garde: The Rubinstein Bequest
Seattle Art Museum
April 23, 2014–ongoing

Gladys (1921–2014) and Sam Rubinstein (1917–2007) were driven by a desire “to make things better for Seattle,” as Gladys put it. Their passion for music and art led to generous support of the Seattle Art Museum, the Seattle Symphony, the Seattle Opera, and many other arts organizations in our region.

On their travels, they became interested in artists who lived and worked in Paris in the early 20th century. Exquisite examples of paintings and drawings from their collection, including works by Orphist painters Robert and Sonia Delaunay and Surrealists Joan Miró and Max Ernst, are on view in the third floor gallery dedicated to the Rubinstein’s memory.

The Rubinstein’s bequest, which also includes American and Japanese paintings not currently on view, will transform the Seattle Art Museum’s collection and inspire audiences now and in the future.
This installation of landscapes, domestic interiors, and decorative arts from the museum’s collection showcases stylistic developments in 19th-century French painting and design. It also invites us to think about the different worlds of men and women at that time.

Beginning in the middle of the century, male artists began to paint outside, capturing intimate landscape views near Paris, scenes of laborers in the fields, and dramatic coastline vistas. The sense of immediacy that permeates those landscapes can also be found when artists turned their attention indoors. Like Vermeer before them, they were fascinated by the unremarkable moments of daily life at home.

Images of women, somewhere between formal portrait and genre scene, give a limited picture of female lives toward the end of the century. The two women artists featured in this installation represent the beginning of broader opportunities for women, but even as they developed professional careers their subject matter was limited to family scenes, still lifes, and portraits.
Porcelain Room
Seattle Art Museum
May 5, 2007–ongoing

Vast quantities of translucent, elegantly decorated white-bodied porcelain from China and Japan, arriving in Europe in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, heightened Europeans’ fervor for these wondrous wares. In royal palaces, great houses of the aristocracy, and homes of the rising merchant class made wealthy by trade, specially designed rooms showcased porcelain from floor to ceiling as crowning jewels in an integrated architectural and decorative scheme.

Brimming with more than one thousand magnificent European and Asian pieces from SAM’s collection, the Porcelain Room has been conceived to blend visual excitement with an historical concept. Rather than the standard museum installation arranged by nationality, manufactory, and date, our porcelain is grouped by color and theme. Today, when porcelain is everywhere in our daily lives, this room evokes a time when it was a treasured trade commodity—sometimes rivaling the value of gold—that served as a cultural, technological, and artistic interchange between the East and the West.
Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas: Carpe Fin
Seattle Art Museum
November 1, 2019–November 1, 2020

Carpe Fin is a major commission for SAM’s collection by Haida artist Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas. This monumental work, created using six large sheets of Japanese mulberry paper, took eighteen months to complete and is the most ambitious work undertaken by the artist to date.

Created in graphic-novel style (what Yahgulanaas calls “Haida manga”), the complex work draws from several art histories and cultures for its inspiration. The story revealed in the mural derives from a Haida oral account about a sea mammal hunter who goes in pursuit of food to feed his starving community; his journey includes being taken underwater to the realm of a powerful spirit. Yahgulanaas chose to set the narrative in the modern day as a means of calling attention to issues of environmental degradation and the breakdown of traditional food procurement. The hunter, who is also a carpenter, has re-created a type of toggling spear to use to fish because, in this apocalyptic-like scenario, the community no longer has seiner boats, fuel, or guns with which to obtain food. This scene occupies the central part of the mural.

Yahgulanaas uses several artistic and cultural touchpoints—including Haida formline art, Japanese manga, Pop Art, and popular graphic novels—to create a large-scale innovative format that taps into the visual cultures of the Pacific Rim, a multiplicity of world views, and calls to political and environmental action. The story Yahgulanaas has chosen is linked to an iconic SAM object, a 19th-century headdress frontlet carved by Michael’s ancestor, Albert Edward Edenshaw. This frontlet, along with a Naaxin (Chilkat Robe) and Pattern Board, will be exhibited with the mural work as well as Michael’s sketches and artist’s notebooks that reveal his creative process.
Aaron Fowler: Into Existence
Seattle Art Museum
December 13, 2019–June 28, 2020

Mixed-media artist Aaron Fowler is the recipient of the 2019 Gwendolyn Knight and Jacob Lawrence Prize. Major funding for the prize is provided by the Jacob and Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence Foundation. Fowler will receive a $10,000 award to further his artistic practice, and his work will be featured in a solo exhibition in SAM’s Gwendolyn Knight & Jacob Lawrence Gallery.

Awarded bi-annually since 2009 to an early career Black artist, defined loosely as an artist in the first decade of their career, the Gwendolyn Knight and Jacob Lawrence Prize has become a platform for catapulting artists into the influential vanguard of contemporary artistic practice. Previous recipients of the prize are Titus Kaphar (2009), Theaster Gates (2011), LaToya Ruby Frazier (2013), Brenna Youngblood (2015), and Sondra Perry (2017).

Based in Harlem, Los Angeles, and St. Louis, Aaron Fowler makes large-scale sculptural assemblages composed of a wide range of found materials. With references to American history, Black culture, and real and imagined narratives, each work is densely layered with meaning and materiality. From ironing boards and car parts to hair weaves and videos, Fowler’s work is imbued with multivalent narratives that compel the viewer to take their time looking. Employing compositional approaches akin to 19th- and 20th-century American and European paintings, Fowler references family, friends, and himself in works that are at once universal and deeply personal.

Fowler’s fall 2019 solo exhibition at SAM will be curated by Sandra Jackson-Dumont, Frederick P. and Sandra P. Rose Chairman of Education at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and SAM’s former Deputy Director for Education and Public Programs/Adjunct Curator in Modern and Contemporary Art.
Exceptionally Ordinary: Mingei 1920–2020
Seattle Art Museum
December 14, 2019–July 11, 2020

Initiated in 1920s by the Japanese collector and connoisseur Yanagi Soetsu (1889–1961), the Mingei movement elevated functional, everyday crafts to art objects. While folk arts were important sources in the foundation of the movement, Mingei’s impact goes beyond Japanese folk crafts and even beyond the artists closely associated with the movement in the mid-twentieth century. Ranging from mid-century decorative arts to contemporary designs, the ceramics, textiles, sculptures, and prints in this exhibition are seen as exceptional art works in the broad applications of Mingei. Created by artists from Japan, Korea and the US, they all share characteristics of Mingei, such as the anonymity and honest labor of the maker as well as the simplicity and functionality of the objects. Positioning Mingei within a history of crafts and crafts-making, this exhibition celebrates the legacy of Mingei as its centennial approaches.
Flesh and Blood: Italian Masterpieces from the Capodimonte Museum
Seattle Art Museum
October 17, 2019–January 26, 2020

The Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte is the largest art museum in Italy and houses one of the finest collections of Italian and Spanish painting in the world. Now, these masterpieces head to Seattle, giving our visitors a rare opportunity to see paintings by Raphael, Titian, and Artemisia Gentileschi, among others.

The museum’s immense collection traces its origins to 1734, when the newly crowned king Charles III of Spain decided to find a suitable location to host the masterpieces inherited from his mother, Elisabetta Farnese. The collection was started in the 16th century by Pope Paul III, Alessandro Farnese, whose portraits by some of the greatest artists of his time, such as Titian and Raphael, are still in the Museum’s collection today. Earthy Italian and Spanish masterpieces of the baroque period, grounded in realism and produced in Naples, built on this foundation. The palace was built in 1738 while the museum itself was officially inaugurated in 1957.

The exhibition includes approximately 40 Renaissance and Baroque paintings, most centered on the human figure—portraits, mythological subjects, and religious scenes. While many (Parmigianino, Titian, Gentileschi) are true milestones of art history, the paintings also speak to the human condition in a timeless way.
John Akomfrah: Future History
Seattle Art Museum
March 5–May 3, 2020

Unusual film productions are John Akomfrah’s medium. In this solo exhibition, three of his works offer provocative visions of the past, present, and future. *Tropikos* is set in the 16th century and offers a careful look at how Africans and Europeans interacted at this time of extreme change in human history. *Vertigo Sea* is presented on multiple screens, creating an epic voyage around the world to witness both aquatic grandeur and tragedies at sea. Mixing archival and recent footage, graceful underwater scenes collide with traumatic moments of damage we do to other species and to ourselves. *The Last Angel of History* was conceived in the early days of the internet, and features a data thief who sets out to find keys to the future by interviewing visionary artists and space explorers.
This exhibition celebrates the recent acquisition of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *Music, Pink and Blue, No. 1*, a gift of former trustee Barney A. Ebsworth. One of O’Keeffe’s early triumphs, *Music, Pink and Blue, No. 1* is the first complete expression of her personal brand of modernism and the culmination of her journey from student to teacher to independent artist. The exhibition will bring SAM’s masterpiece together with loans from major museums including the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, and will comprise a tightly focused selection of O’Keeffe’s early drawings, paintings from the 1920s and 1930s, and photographs of the artist by Alfred Stieglitz.
The Allure of Matter: Material Art from China
Seattle Art Museum
June 25–September 13, 2020

Since the 1980s, Chinese contemporary artists have cultivated intimate relationships with their materials, establishing a framework of interpretation revolving around materiality. Their media range from the commonplace to the unconventional, the natural to the synthetic, the elemental to the composite: from plastic, water, and wood, to hair, gunpowder, and Coca-Cola. Artists continue to explore and develop this creative mode, with some devoting decades of their practice to experiments with a single material.

The Allure of Matter: Material Art from China brings together works from the past four decades in which conscious material choice has become a symbol of the artists’ expression, representing this unique trend throughout recent history. The Allure of Matter will premiere at LACMA before traveling to the Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago, the Seattle Art Museum, and finally the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts.

This exhibition is co-organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Smart Museum of Art with Wrightwood 659, the Seattle Art Museum, and the Peabody Essex Museum.

The exhibition is curated by Wu Hung, Smart Museum Adjunct Curator and Harrie A. Vanderstappen Distinguished Service Professor of Art History at the University of Chicago, with Orianna Cacchione, Smart Museum Curator of Global Contemporary Art.
SAM's Asian Art Museum closed its doors on Monday, February 27, 2017 to begin preparations for the renovation of the historic building.

For more than 80 years in Volunteer Park, SAM has served the community. The original home of SAM, the Asian Art Museum building has not been substantially restored or renovated since its inception in 1933. The structure is in need of seismic and climate control upgrades, and the museum's program and exhibition space is inadequate to meet educational and exhibition demands.

The renovation addresses critical infrastructure issues, increases ADA accessibility to the museum, and creates a better connection to Volunteer Park. The proposed expansion adds more than 12,500 square feet of usable space, but alters the building's footprint in Volunteer Park by less than 3,600 square feet. The expansion offsets space lost by the addition of new heating and cooling system equipment and will provide a much-needed education classroom, as well as gallery, conservation, and programming space. It will also restore historic Olmstedian paths, stretching east from the museum. These paths will better connect the elements within the park, including the museum.

The goal of the renovation is not only to restore a historic icon and to protect a major Asian art collection, but also to create a modern museum equipped to function as an important cultural resource for the community—all while enhancing and respecting the natural beauty of Volunteer Park.

The improved Asian Art Museum will reopen in early 2020 with a community celebration.

Additional information can be found at seattleartmuseum.org/inspire.
Regina Silveira: Octopus Wrap
Olympic Sculpture Park
May 11, 2019–March 8, 2020

Regina Silveira (b. 1939) is a celebrated artist who lives and works in Sao Paulo, Brazil. In the last decade, Silveira has become known for her installations of “magnetized space.” Early works in this series considered the shadow of art and history-art history with small objects casting long, distorted shadows on floors and walls. She subsequently became interested in the ways in which superimposed images change the meaning of an existing architecture or space.

“The political,” she says, “resides in the assault on perception, in the level of transformation that can be brought about by grafting something into a given space in a way that magically changes its relationship with the real; altering the experience and understanding of the space.”

Impermanence is a key aspect of her work as these interventions are temporary experiences for the viewer. Her mind-bending interventions can range from footprints on a wall to large-scale insects taking over the entirety of a space. Some of her interventions are minimal, while others have a maximalist and almost surreal flair.

For her installation at the Olympic Sculpture Park, Octopus Wrap, Regina Silveira will wrap the PACCAR Pavilion in an elaborate pattern of tire tracks, taking off from five toy motorcycles positioned on the interior mural wall. Drawing inspiration from the park’s location at the intersection of several busy thoroughfares, this will be one of several Octopus installations that the artist has realized around the world.
ABOUT SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

As the leading visual art institution in the Pacific Northwest, SAM draws on its global collections, powerful exhibitions, and dynamic programs to provide unique educational resources benefiting the Seattle region, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. SAM was founded in 1933 with a focus on Asian art. By the late 1980s the museum had outgrown its original home, and in 1991 a new 155,000-square-foot downtown building, designed by Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates, opened to the public. The 1933 building was renovated and reopened as the Asian Art Museum in 1994. The building is currently undergoing a renovation and expansion with a planned reopening in early 2020. SAM’s desire to further serve its community was realized in 2007 with the opening of two stunning new facilities: the nine-acre Olympic Sculpture Park (designed by Weiss/Manfredi Architects)—a “museum without walls,” free and open to all—and the Allied Works Architecture designed 118,000-square-foot expansion of its main, downtown location, including 232,000 square feet of additional space built for future expansion. The Olympic Sculpture Park and SAM’s downtown expansion celebrated their tenth anniversary in 2017.

From a strong foundation of Asian art to noteworthy collections of African and Oceanic art, Northwest Coast Native American art, European and American art, and modern and contemporary art, the strength of SAM’s collection of approximately 25,000 objects lies in its diversity of media, cultures and time periods.