

TACOMA ART MUSEUM

MEDIA RELEASE

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NW ART NOW @ TAM: SOCIAL REFLECTIONS WITHIN CONTEMPORARY ART



Tacoma, WA — [Tacoma Art Museum](#) (TAM) debuts new and recent works by 24 regional artists in [NW Art Now @ TAM](#), opening May 14. This exhibition highlights the current moment in Northwest visual arts with works that illuminate and respond to the social and environmental forces shaping our regional identity. Through their work, artists reveal tensions, provoke, delight, and inspire us to understand the challenging and urgent concerns

of today. See how those themes appear in contemporary art through this special exhibition, on view through September 4, 2016.

“For the past 40 years, TAM has conducted regular surveys of contemporary art in the Northwest. We are proud that TAM takes on this important role to survey the art of our time and of our region,” said Stephanie Stebich, Executive Director at TAM.

Although the frequency and titles of TAM’s regional survey exhibitions has varied, the focus has remained constant – showcasing the achievements and advances made by artists working in the Northwest. Artists, curators, collectors, arts instructors, students, and art fans eagerly look forward to the surveys. You’d need to visit 24 art studios from Boise to Walla Walla and Seattle to Portland to see all of the works that *NW Art Now @ TAM* brings together in one stop in Tacoma.

How does a regional visual arts survey come together? Last winter, TAM issued an open call to artists, inviting them to submit digital images along with written statements about their work. Nearly 300 artists responded. This is a juried exhibition, meaning that the applications were reviewed and narrowed based on how the artworks and practices reflected the themes and goals of the exhibition. The co-curators then visited the studios or conference called each of the semi-finalists. The resulting show includes 24 artists and 47 works in a wide range of media,

including painting, sculpture, craft-based work, as well as conceptual, performance, installation, and digital projects. Eleven of the original works will be on view for the very first time.

“It is fascinating to see how artists reach beyond the region and bring deep knowledge of contemporary art from around the world into their practices. They are raising the bar in really important ways,” observed Rock Hushka, Chief Curator and Curator of Contemporary and Northwest Art at Tacoma Art Museum. “These artists are changing our expectations about the role of art in shaping Northwest identity.”

The exhibition is co-curated by Hushka and Juan Roselione-Valadez, Director of the [Rubell Family Collection](#) (RFC), Contemporary Arts Foundation, in Miami, Florida. One of the world’s largest privately owned contemporary art collections, the RFC actively acquires and champions emerging artists working at the forefront of contemporary art. In addition to his work with the RFC, Roselione-Valadez has worked with some of the most prominent American and international artists, and is intimately familiar with the current trends of contemporary art, bringing broad and detailed background on current practices to this regional selection process. TAM frequently adds expertise and fresh perspectives from around the country, and has brought in art museum curators and scholars from New York City; Houston; Miami; Vancouver, BC; and other locations. Through this process the museum provides in-depth introductions to help specialists outside of our region become familiar with Northwest artists.

“I am extremely grateful for my time spent conversing with these compelling and generous artists in their studios and homes,” shared Roselione-Valadez. “Witnessing their process and listening to and seeing manifestations of their acute awareness of all that is working and all that is broken within the region, country, and world has left an indelible mark on me and the way I understand art, society, survival and our relationship to others and the environment.”

Visitors may recognize Seattle artist [Dylan Neuwirth](#)’s 2014 *Just Be Your Selfie*, a large-scale neon installation that TAM plans to hang under the canopy along Pacific Avenue, and which was much enjoyed during its previous installation in Seattle’s Pioneer Square. *Section of the I-705, on a Wednesday, for Electric Piano* is an audio and video projection project by Portland artist [Lou Watson](#), derived from the patterns of traffic along I-705 as filmed from the museum’s rooftop. Seattle’s [Joey Veltkamp](#) is crafting his largest work to date for this exhibition, a quilt project titled *Life is Beautiful*. Sculptor [Humaira Abid](#) from Renton will present a talk at the museum on June 1 at noon, as part of TAM’s free Lunch and Learn series. These are just a few of the artists whose work visitors will have the opportunity to see. (A complete list of artists in the exhibition follows.)

Hushka noted the remarkable number of Tacoma artists in the show who are creating notable work, including: [Oliver Doriss](#), [Christopher Paul Jordan](#), [Jeremy Mangan](#), [Asia Tail](#), [Jamie Marie Waelchli](#), and [John Sutton](#) of [SuttonBeresCuller](#) who was born in Tacoma and today lives in Seattle.

Hushka and Roselione-Valadez, along with many of the artists, will attend the exhibition's [Members' Opening Celebration](#) on Saturday, May 21, 7–10 pm. This special event is free for TAM members; non-members can buy [tickets](#) at www.TacomaArtMuseum.org.

The Members' Opening also offers a chance taste the latest innovation in local craft beer. TAM introduces its sixth collaboration with Tacoma's beloved [Harmon Brewing Company](#): *Northwest Nauhaus ESB*, crafted by Jeff Carlson, Head Brewer at Harmon. Nauhaus – pronounced “now house” – is a play on the German art school Bauhaus, a contemporary ground-breaker in 1919 that still influences art and design today. “We're excited about brewing a new ESB. This one will be full bodied and characterized by fruitiness with an accent on hop aromas,” said Carlson. “I'm using specialty malts from Skagit Valley Malting, along with Fuggle and Delta hops. Delta is one of the new kids on the block, having been released in 2009.” After the Members' Opening Celebration, *Nauhaus ESB* will be available at the TAM Cafe; [Harmon Restaurant](#), [The Hub](#), and [Harmon Tap Room](#) in Tacoma; and [The Hub at Gig Harbor](#).

NW Art Now @ TAM is an opportunity to see art history in the making, with fresh creative works inspired by regional artists' reactions to the considerations of identity, social justice, and environmental stewardship. For more information, call TAM at 253-272-4258 or visit www.TacomaArtMuseum.org.

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NOTE TO PRESS: A press tour will be held at TAM on Tuesday, May 17, 1 pm, led by exhibition co-curator Rock Hushka. Kindly notify Julianna Verboort, JVerboort@TacomaArtMuseum.org, if you are able to attend. Thank you.

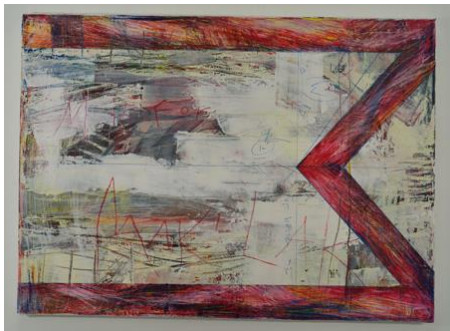


Image Credits:

Dylan Neuwirth, *Just Be Your Selfie*, 2014 (recreated 2015). Neon, argon, glass, nickel, acrylic, GTO, aluminum, and two transformers, 36 x 300 x 6 inches. Originally commissioned by the Seattle Office of Arts and Culture. Photo credit: Image by Nathaniel Willson © 2014. Courtesy of the artist.

Ka'ila Farrell-Smith, *M is for Mak'Lak, W is for White: Authentic NDN Design*, 2014. Oil on linen, 26 x 36 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Jeremy Mangan, *Pacific Northwest Desert Island*, 2016. Oil and acrylic on canvas, 84 x 108 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

Lily Martina Lee, *Jimmy "Bam Bam" Rodriguez, Pasco, Washington (Escape from community custody)*, 2012. Dodge Caravan hood, applied, carved, inlaid, and stenciled body filler, resin colorants, polyester resin, primer, cut vinyl, and chrome emblem, 36 x 60 x 7 inches. Collection of Redwood Campus of Rogue Community College in Grants Pass, Oregon. Courtesy of the artist.

Karen Hackenberg, *Holy Water*, 2016. Oil on canvas, 72 x 36 inches. Photo credit: Darryl Schmidt. Courtesy of the artist.

Artists featured in NW Art Now @ TAM:

- [Humaira Abid](#), Renton, Washington
- [Brad Adkins](#), Portland, Oregon
- [Juventino Aranda](#), Walla Walla, Washington
- [Oliver Doriss](#), Tacoma, Washington
- [Ka'ila Farrell-Smith](#), Portland, Oregon
- [Ben Gannon](#), Seattle, Washington
- [Dakota Gearhart](#), Seattle, Washington
- [Guestwork](#), Portland, Oregon
- [Karen Hackenberg](#), Port Townsend, Washington
- [C. Davida Ingram](#), Seattle, Washington
- [Eirik Johnson](#), Seattle, Washington
- [Christopher Paul Jordan](#), Tacoma, Washington
- [Paul Komada](#), Seattle, Washington
- [Lily Martina Lee](#), Boise, Idaho
- [Jeremy Mangan](#), Tacoma, Washington
- [Amanda Manitach](#), Seattle, Washington
- [Dylan Neuwirth](#), Seattle, Washington
- [SuttonBeresCuller](#), Seattle, Washington
- [Asia Tail](#), Tacoma, Washington
- [Rodrigo Valenzuela](#), Seattle, Washington
- [Joey Veltkamp](#), Seattle, Washington
- [Jamie Marie Waelchli](#), Tacoma, Washington
- [Lou Watson](#), Portland, Oregon

- [Robert Yoder](#), Seattle, Washington

Related Programs and Events:

Members' Opening Celebration, Saturday, May 21, 7 – 10 pm

Meet the artists and curators of the exhibition. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar, lively music, and a photo booth. Cost: Free for members, \$20 general, \$10 student with ID. [Tickets here](#). Members, email RSVP@TacomaArtMuseum.org by May 17. Members' opening in-kind support provided by Heritage Distilling Co.

Lunch and Learn: [Humaira Abid](#), Wednesday, June 1, noon

Hear from Humaira Abid as she shares about her work and artistic practices. Bring your own lunch or come early and pick up a delicious boxed lunch at TAM Cafe. Meet in the Events Space. FREE!

About Tacoma Art Museum

Celebrating 80 years, Tacoma Art Museum is an anchor in the city's downtown and a gathering space for connecting people through art. TAM's collection contains more than 4,700 works, with an emphasis on the art and artists of the Northwest and broader American west. The collection includes the largest retrospective museum collection of glass art by Tacoma native Dale Chihuly on continued view; the most significant collection of jewelry by Northwest artists; key holdings in 19th century European and 20th century American art; and one of the finest collections of Japanese woodblock prints on the West Coast. In 2014, TAM welcomed a gift of 295 works of western American art in the Haub Family Collection, one of the premier collections in the nation and the first major western American art museum collection in the Northwest. The Haub gift also included \$20 M for new galleries and endowed funds. In January 2016, TAM announced the gift of the Benaroya Collection, including 225 works of art. The Benaroya gift also includes nearly \$14 M in funding for new gallery space to showcase the collection and an endowment for a dedicated curator and care of the collection. The Haub Family Galleries opened in 2014; the Benaroya addition is expected to open in fall 2018.

HOURS – Tuesdays–Sundays 10 am–5 pm

ADMISSION – Adult \$14; Student, Military, Senior (65+) \$12; Family \$35 (2 adults and up to 4 children under 18). Children 5 and under free. **Third Thursdays free from 5–8 pm**. Members always free.

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