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On behalf of Tacoma Art Museum

Stitches and Pleats, Resilience and Rebuke: *Soft Power* Opens Oct. 14 at Tacoma Art Museum

TACOMA, WA (Sept. 26, 2023) – Textile-based art and artwork responsive to social change are simultaneously surging across the region and the country. To reflect this confluence, Tacoma Art Museum presents the work of 21 artists in *Soft Power*, featuring more than 40 textile-based works on view from Oct. 14, 2023, through Sept. 1, 2024.

Soft Power draws its name and inspiration from Joseph Nye’s theory of cultural heritage as a form of non-coercive power. Using traditional processes to create contemporary declarations of resistance, resilience, love, and rebuke, this work explores the dynamic contrast between soft materials and so-called “hard” ideas. Cultural stereotypes, humanity’s impact on the environment, and health care access are among the topics explored in this engaging and provocative exhibition. The artists on view express themselves in forms as varied as their ideas: A quilted call to action, meticulously knit abstraction, woven cenotaphs, a stuffed and stitched creature, a scattered gathering of embroidered ephemera.

“The energy created by the collision of material and immaterial elements amplifies the intention of the work. With stitches, purls, and pleats, these artists are creating an urgent and vital material language,” said Ellen Ito, curator.

The artists’ words accompany the artwork, sparking dialogue about making, process, and intention. “Softness is a strength when applied in the right situation,” said artist Tuan Nguyen. “For best results, view without expectations.”

As an opportunity to contribute to the exhibition, visitors are encouraged to join in creating a large-scale collaborative soft artwork within the gallery.

TAM Executive Director Andy Maus said, “TAM has always been and will continue to be dedicated to creating engaging exhibitions, programs, and community projects that reflect the impressive innovation and creativity of the Pacific Northwest. A visit to *Soft Power* will be an unforgettable experience, and we are so proud to recognize the contributions of everyone who participated in this exhibition and the associated programs.”

Soft Power is funded in part by Tacoma Creates, Propel Insurance, and the Guendolen Carkeek Plestcheeff Endowment, with generous support from Ann Gosch.

Soft Power continues TAM's history of exhibitions highlighting fiber and textiles, including *Gee's Bend: The Architecture of the Quilt*; *Threads that Bind: Works by Pacific Northwest African American Quilters*; *Marie Watt: Lodge*; and *Symphonic Poem: Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson*.

TAM invites the public to participate in a year filled with artist-led programs and events for makers and learners in connection with *Soft Power*.

The exhibition kicks off with an opening party for the community Oct. 13 from 6-8 p.m. For registration and more information, visit bit.ly/3t6xoMY.

Soft Power is generated by the work and words of 21 artists:

Alexis Lee Ortiz-Duarte	Marie Watt
Allyce Wood	Marita Dingus
Colleen Bratton	Monyee Chau
Erika Harada	Nina Vichayapai
Gail Tremblay	Paul Komada
Joey Veltkamp	Priscilla Dobler Dzul
Juventino Aranda	Ric'kisha Taylor
Kellz Moylan	Roquin-Jon Quichocho Siongco
Lily Martina Lee	Shannon Eakins
Maikoio Alley-Barnes	Tuan Nguyen
Marc Dombrosky	

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About Tacoma Art Museum

Celebrating over 85 years, Tacoma Art Museum is the leading resource for art of the Pacific Northwest and greater western region. TAM's mission is to transform our communities by sharing art that inspires broader perspectives and cultivates a compassionate future. TAM's collection contains more than 5,400 works, with an emphasis on the art and artists of the Northwest and broader Western region, 25% of which consists of studio glass. The collection includes the largest retrospective museum collection of glass art by Tacoma native Dale Chihuly on permanent view; the most significant collection of studio art 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. TAM is in the heart of Tacoma's vibrant Museum District, which consists of six museums, including the Museum of Glass, a leader, and frequent partner.

Hours: Wednesday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; FREE Neighborhood Nights every Thursday, 5-8 p.m.; Friday, Saturday, Sunday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Admission:

\$18 Adult \$15 Senior (65+) \$15 for Military (active duty or retired with ID)
\$10 (youth 6-18) Free for TAM Members

Contact: 253-272-4258 / www.tacomaartmuseum.org