

This hybrid symposium marks the culmination of two years of research in advance of the exhibition *Sea Change: Transformative Currents for Art and Action in the Pacific Ocean*, part of the forthcoming Getty Foundation's Pacific Standard Time: Art x Science x L.A. initiative. Curated by Cassandra Coblenz, the project examines art's potential to enact positive ecological change in the Pacific Ocean, while simultaneously addressing the ongoing effects and historical causes of cultural and environmental devastation. The symposium and exhibition are organized around a model of ocean currents, which traverse the entirety of the Pacific in a circuit of connectivity.

The Orange County Museum of Art has long been dedicated to presenting artworks that explore issues meaningful to its local community. Founded in 1962 on unceded Ajachmem and Tongva ancestral lands at Newport Harbor's Balboa Pavilion, OCMA's

proximity to the Pacific Ocean has always been an important backdrop for both the museum and the lives of the museum's constituency. The Pacific Ocean is a defining aspect of life in California and our connection to the rest of the world is largely predicated on this coastal position and the global orientation it engenders.

The Pacific Ocean is the largest delineated body of water in the world, covering nearly one-third of the earth's surface. It is home to the deepest point on earth, and its outer edges contain some of the most active volcanoes and tectonic movement. Oceania—containing thousands of islands, distinct and interconnected cultures, and traditions of expert wayfinding knowledge—shifts our understanding of the Pacific as not an empty space but, rather, a vast sea of islands, where the ocean continues to shape everyday life and bonds disparate communities with each other. Nonetheless, the Pacific has also been

a dumping ground, a “blank slate” for colonial endeavors, a testing arena for war, and a “lake” meant to be tamed. The multidirectional and multilayered currents that carry water throughout the Pacific now also transport nuclear waste, microplastics, and the detritus of industrial fishing. The Pacific is a receptacle of life itself, consisting of all these things and much more—and its islands, shorelines, peoples, and more-than-human life are now increasingly under threat due to intensifying climate change, the causes of which are well-known with effects that are all-encompassing.

To further elucidate the many issues and ideas at the core of the conversations over the past two years, the Sea Change symposium gathers international artists, art historians, curators, writers, scientists, and community organizations whose work revolves around the Pacific Ocean. In convening these various specialists the

project bridges artistic, scientific, and Indigenous knowledge systems across vast distances of time and space. An oceanic current model of fluidity, interconnectivity, inclusivity, and collaboration, provides the structure for organizing this dynamic and robust program of talks, panel discussions, and offsite programs planned over two days.

TRANSFORMATIVE  
CURRENTS FOR ACTION

# Sea Change Symposium

IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN

OCMA

Orange County Museum of Art  
3333 Avenue of the Arts  
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

November 11 & 12, 2022

## Sea Change Symposium Schedule November 11 & 12, 2022

The symposium is a hybrid in-person and online event. To RSVP for either in-person or online, please email Ziying Duan at [zduan@ocma.art](mailto:zduan@ocma.art).

The Zoom link for the symposium will be shared 24 hours in advance to those who RSVP

### November 11

**9:00–10:00 AM**  
**Breakfast Reception**  
**OCMA Café and Bar, Level 2**  
**(in-person only)**

**10:00–10:30 AM**  
**Welcome and Introductory Remarks:**  
**Courtenay Finn, OCMA Chief Curator and**  
**Cassandra Coblentz, Sea Change Curator**  
**OCMA Education Pavilion, Level 2**  
**(in-person and online)**

**10:30–11:30 AM**  
**Introduction to Place: L. Frank, Tongva,**  
**Ajachmem, and Rarámuri Elder and Artist**  
**OCMA Education Pavilion, Level 2**  
**(in-person and online)**  
Tongva, Ajachmem, and Rarámuri elder, artist and, activist L. Frank will begin the program with a blessing and introduce the audience to her ancestral homelands, where OCMA is located. She will share her own relationship to the ocean and lands as well as stories and knowledge about her ancestors' consideration of the ocean and its impact on their way of life.

**11:30 AM–12:30 PM**  
**Breakout Sessions: Connections to**  
**the Ocean**  
**OCMA Education Pavilion, Level 2**  
**(in-person and online)**  
Symposium participants will connect in smaller breakout groups for introductions, to learn about others participating in the program, and to share responses to specific questions about their own personal relationship to the ocean. This will take the form of both online and in-person sessions.

**12:30–2:00 PM**  
**Lunch Break**

**2:00–3:30 PM**  
**Futuring in the Present: Proposals for**  
**Eco-social Futurisms**  
**OCMA Education Pavilion, Level 2**  
**(in-person and online)**  
When we talk about futures, whose futures and what kinds of futures are we imagining? Techno- futurisms, for example, might provide quick fixes to pressing issues, while allowing the structural conditions causing such issues to remain in place. Speculative futurisms are often oriented toward the grandiose nature of what-could-be yet might be too removed from the present to effect meaningful change. This panel invites a discussion of other kinds of alternative or nonlinear temporalities of becoming, including many Indigenous cultures that view the past, present, and future as occurring simultaneously, one temporal moment existing in close relation with the others. How might a reorientation toward that which-has-been and that-which-is provide equal, if not more insightful, approaches toward considering just environmental futures for the Pacific Ocean? What new and ancestral insights can artistic and curatorial engagements with these questions produce?  
**Moderators: Jaimey Hamilton Faris,**  
**Stefanie Hessler**  
**Presenters: Liz Larner, Marcos Lutyens,**  
**Tiare Ribeaux**

**3:40–5:10 PM**  
**Research-based Practices: Scientific**  
**Methods and Ecologies of Knowledge**  
**OCMA Education Pavilion, Level 2**  
**(in-person and online)**  
The processes of research and ways it is represented and disseminated often draw on methods from other fields, thereby breaking disciplinary traditions. The research methods of artists and scientists sometimes productively overlap, revealing new insights in the process. This panel consists of those whose work engages a range of forms of doing research in which science is understood more as an accessible methodology than a privileged profession. Where, and by whom and how, can research take place? In a lab, within the archives, among a community, through one's lived experience? What constitutes a scientific or creative breakthrough or discovery? How can subsequent findings be presented in a manner that speaks to people across cultures, knowledge systems, and ideologies?

**Visit to Alguita with Activist and Non-profit leader Captain Charles Moore**  
Guests will be on a "voyage" to the Oceanographic Research Vessel Alguita. This vessel has crossed the vast Pacific and sailed over 150,000 miles sampling plastic pollution. Participants will see the equipment used and samples taken from the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. After being onboard, they will be invited for refreshments at the Captain's urban farm in the shade of his avocado and cherimoya trees.  
**Location: Long Beach, CA (full address given upon RSVP)**

**5:10–5:30 PM**  
**Break**

**5:30–7:00 PM**  
**Keynote Address by Elizabeth**  
**DeLoughrey: The Oceanic (Re)Turn: Diving**  
**Deep into Ecological Arts**  
**OCMA Education Pavilion, Level 2**  
**(in-person and online)**  
This talk examines the figure of the ocean as a site of origins, history, environmental thought, migration, militarism, climate change, extraction, and artistic practice. It engages a wide range of oceanic thinkers such as Rachel Carson and Sylvia Earle and places them in conversation with contemporary poets and artists who have plumbed the depths of the Pacific, helping shape the way in which we visualize—and fathom—our shared oceanic futures.

### November 12

**9:00 AM–11:30 PM**  
**Offsite Field Trips**  
**(in-person only)**  
Symposium guests can select one program to attend. Transportation to and from the sites not provided. Registration is required. To register please email Ziying Duan at [zduan@ocma.art](mailto:zduan@ocma.art) with your preferred selection of field trip. More details on each program will be emailed prior to the date.

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**Crystal Cove State Park Beach Walk with**  
**Tongva, Ajachmem, and Rarámuri Elder**  
**and Artist L. Frank and Ocean Engineer**  
**and Artist, Jane Chang Mi**  
Join L. Frank and Jane Chang Mi for a walk on the beach to share our relations with Crystal Cove and her surrounding waters. Participants will have the opportunity to re-indigenize their minds through sensory engagement and to consider the ocean as ancestor. The program will begin with coffee and a light breakfast at Crystal Cove State Park's Historic District.  
**Location: Crystal Cove State Park's**  
**Historic District, Newport Coast**  
**Presented in partnership with Crystal**  
**Cove Conservancy**

**Boat trip to Marine Protected Area to View**  
**Kelp Forests with Artist Maja Godlewska,**  
**Scientist Joleah Lamb, and Crystal Cove**  
**Conservancy Education Manager Erick Valdez,**  
Participants are invited on an excursion aboard a 70-foot catamaran to experience marine protected areas in coastal waters between Newport Harbor and Laguna Beach. They will have the opportunity to view giant kelp groves and hear stories about underwater kelp forests, and to learn about the role kelp plays as a foundational species. Experts onboard will discuss related scientific research, conservation efforts, and marine conservation education for the youngest members of the community. Coffee and a light breakfast will be offered onboard the boat.  
**Location: Boat will depart from Newport**  
**Landing, Newport Beach**  
**Presented in partnership with Crystal**  
**Cove Conservancy**

**1:30–3:00pm**  
**Sited Art Actions: Methodologies**  
**in Engaging Community and**  
**Pacific Environments**  
**OCMA Education Pavilion, Level 2**  
**(in-person and online)**  
Contemporary art in recent decades is undergoing what has been deemed a "social turn," in which collaboration and community participation are inherent to the production of work and/or its intended engagement. This panel asks what actions art can generate within a community; from the specificities of methodologies of practice that cross disciplines to approaches of social engagement in specific communities, and environmental contexts. Each presenter will provide a case study of their approaches to action that propose to address or remediate specific environmental conditions, both as part of Pacific Ocean ecosystems and in relation to particular communities. The panel will address questions concerning the potential of art as a form of activism, the application of aesthetic and symbolic capacities towards conservation, the role of the artist in relation to community, the viability of addressing the efficacy of such

efforts while noting their appropriation towards political ends.  
**Moderators: Bill Kelley, Jr., Lucía Sanromán**  
**Presenters: Martha Atienza and Jake**  
**Atienza, Maja Godlewska and Marek Ranis,**  
**Camila Marambio**

**3:00–4:30 PM**  
**Oceanic Reciprocity: Human and More-**  
**than-Human Relationships with the Ocean**  
**OCMA Education Pavilion, Level 2**  
**(in-person and online)**  
The ocean is home to hundreds of thousands of species, with millions more than likely remain unknown to humans. All are complex beings within the web of life. In many ways, our interactions with the ocean as humans are mediated through cultural, reciprocal, and protective relationships with more-than-human species, be it through food cultivation or the protection of symbolic species. This panel will further work toward formulating a multispecies understanding and conception of the Pacific. How does living in good relations with our oceanic non-human kin offer guidance to how we approach and address environmental issues in the ocean, which, in turn, might also shape our actions toward other humans?  
**Moderators: Matthew Bracken,**  
**Dina Gilio-Whitaker**  
**Presenters: Paul Rosero Contreras, L. Frank**  
**and Jane Chang Mi, Genevieve Robertson**

**4:30–4:50 PM**  
**Break**

**4:50–6:00 PM**  
**Concluding Remarks: Julie Decker in**  
**Conversation with Sea Change Curator**  
**Cassandra Coblentz**  
**OCMA Education Pavilion, Level 2**  
**(in-person and online)**

**6:00 PM**  
**Closing Reception**  
**OCMA Café and Bar, Level 2**  
**(in-person only)**