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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Come as You Are:

BMoA Celebrates Self Expression and Community During National Pride Month with Photography Exhibition and Art After Dark

June 6, 2023— Bakersfield Museum of Art (BMoA) celebrates creativity and self-expression during National Pride Month with a pop-up photography exhibition and its popular Art After Dark event.

The celebration begins Thursday, June 8 at 5 PM with the opening of *Faces of Pride: an LGBTQ+ Photography Project*. Inspired by a similar exhibition that premiered in Boston, photographer Jake Tovar, a Bakersfield native, captured portraits of members of the local queer and ally community. As part of the exhibition, each subject answers the question “What does Pride mean to you” in their own words.

“Portraiture has a rich tradition, from documentation in ancient Egypt to artistic expression in the 20th century through today. This exhibition documents the inherent freedom in and value of self-expression,” said BMoA Curator of Exhibitions and Collections Victor Gonzales.

“The BMoA community has at its core a passion for the visual arts, a pursuit that binds us all as human beings,” says Rogers Brandon, Chairperson of BMoA’s board of directors and president of American General Media. *Faces of Pride*, presented by Dignity Health Bakersfield, will be on view at BMoA through July 1.

Continuing the celebration is BMoA’s signature Art After Dark event on Thursday, June 29 from 7 PM to 10 PM at BMoA. Guests can enjoy live performances by artists from the LGBTQ+ community including sets by DJ Blaise and participate in a mural painting project led by local artist Jennifer Williams Cordova. Food will be available for purchase from local food trucks and artisanal cotton candy purveyor LUVSPUN. Moo Creamery will provide hand-crafted cocktails and mocktails throughout the evening.

Guests can also tour the exhibitions [Rotem Reshef: Vista](#), [The Circle of Sam Francis: Experimenting in California](#), [Saturation: Visual Arts Festival](#), [Nostalgia: Selections from the Students of the ArtWorks Program](#), and [Dynamic Surreal, Vibrant: Marion Osborne Cunningham](#).

Art After Dark: Pride is generously supported by Moneywise Wealth Management, Wolf Spirit Distillery, and Alta One Credit Union.

Capacity is limited at this very popular event. Guests should be 18 or older. Tickets are free for members, \$15 for non-members and are on sale now until sold out. Gates will open at 7 pm. For tickets and more information, visit bmoa.org/artafterdark. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) @thebmoa #bmoaartafterdark

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About Bakersfield Museum of Art

The Bakersfield Museum of Art's mission is to inspire and engage diverse audiences by providing a broad spectrum of creative visual arts experiences through the exhibition and preservation of fine art, educational programs, community outreach and special events. BMOA is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with free admission and extended hours until 8 p.m. every First Friday of the month. The Museum will be closed most major holidays. Visit bmoa.org or call 661-323-7219 for more information. Follow BMOA on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). @thebmoa #bmoaartafterdark

About Dignity Health Bakersfield

Dignity Health Mercy and Memorial Hospitals is Kern County's premier healthcare system with three acute care hospitals in Bakersfield and a growing number of medical facilities to meet the needs of our community. Nationally and locally recognized for excellence in patient care and safety, our family of services range from our beautiful birth and family care centers to specialized centers of excellence such as the Sarvanand Heart and Brain Center, Grossman Burn Center, the Lauren Small Children's Center including the Robert A. Grimm Children's Pavilion for Emergency Services, the S.A. Camp Companies Robotic Surgical Center, the Women's Center, and more.

Mercy and Memorial Hospitals are members of Dignity Health/CommonSpirit Health. Our three Bakersfield hospitals are recognized by the Human Rights Campaign as an LGBTQ+ Healthcare Equality Leader or Top Performer in the Healthcare Equality Index (HEI). The HEI is the nation's leading measure of equitable and inclusive care for LGBTQ+ patients, visitors, and employees. To learn more, visit dignityhealth.org/bakersfield.