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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bakersfield Museum of Art Debuts Fall 2023 Exhibitions

Bakersfield, CA – September 20, 2023: Four new exhibits premiere at the Bakersfield Museum of Art (BMoA) during its opening reception on Thursday, September 28, 2023, from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM. DJs Cat and Chuck 1 will play live throughout the opening reception. Admission to the opening reception is free for BMoA members, \$5 per person for students and seniors, or \$10 per person for non-members.

“This slate of exhibitions celebrates the work of five Asian American artists who, though their practices differ, explore concepts of identity and community in their work,” says BMoA curator Victor Gonzales. “Even though some of the work is highly influenced by an artist’s cultural heritages or experiences as an Asian American, their use of art to discuss the relationship between self and surroundings is universal.” This exhibition season marks the first time each of BMoA’s galleries exclusively feature Asian artists: Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Taiwanese.

Bryan Ida: Life of Change, A Retrospective charts the 30-year artistic journey of Bryan Ida, a Japanese American musician turned painter who learned from friend and artistic mentor, noted Abstract Expressionist Sam Francis, that music and the visual arts express the consciousness through different senses. Experimentation, discovery, and investigation form the foundation of each new series of Ida’s work. The exhibit includes 35 paintings from several series that explore light, dark, and color; memory, time, and identity; marginalized communities; and humankind’s relationship to the natural environment through figurative and abstract imagery. Ida’s work has been shown in museums and galleries worldwide, and in private collections including the Resnick Collection, Los Angeles, CA; the Microsoft Collection, Redmond, WA; and the Genencor Internatinal Collection, Palo Alto, CA.

Jun Yang: Blooming Journeys is the first solo museum exhibition of South Korean born, San Francisco based artist Jun Yang. A self-taught artist, Yang decided to pursue an art career full time with no formal training or connections. Drawing inspiration from the city’s cultural diversity, urban landscape, natural beauty and socially inclusive culture, Yang’s brightly colored canvases and murals of bright colors, bold shapes and floral motifs honor his Korean heritage and celebrate the freedom of queer and LGBTQ+ cultures through exaggerated figures, non-traditional portraiture, and non-gender conforming individuals.

The exhibit includes 15 works, along with a site-specific mural that Yang has created specifically for this exhibit. He has shown his work in several national and international exhibitions in San Francisco, as well as Kunsthaus Graz, Graz Austria, MOCA Taipei, Taiwan and Seoul, Korea.

Kacy Jung and Kieu Tran: Personal Archaeology is a duo exhibition featuring photography and sculptures by Kacy Jung and Kieu Tran, women who left their careers in STEM to commit themselves to their art.

Kacy Jung is a trained biomedical scientist who turned to photography as a personal escape after leaving her support system in Taiwan. Jung's work incorporates a variety of mediums with direct connection to her photography. Her work is an outlet to process and express her experience as an Asian immigrant and woman, while offering a safe space to initiate conversation and reflection. Jung's work has been featured in *Cultured* magazine, *Forbes* magazine, and *Inquire*, shown at several galleries and the Berkeley Art Museum and De Young Museum in San Francisco, and is included in private collections in the United States and Taiwan.

Kieu Tran, a former software engineer, initially used ceramic art as a form of therapy to cope with the challenges of her tech career. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Tran was reminded of the brevity of life and quit her job to dedicate herself to a creative life. She describes the creation of her work as that of an archaeologist diving into the caverns of her own soul, and while deeply personal, the work addresses universal emotions and experiences. Tran's work has been featured in *Interior Design* magazine, *Surface* magazine, *Sight Unseen, est living*, and *Design Anthology Asia*, and is included in several private collections.

Chiura Obata: Select Works features woodblock prints by Obata (1885 – 1975), one of the most significant Japanese-American artists working on the West Coast in the last century. An immigrant to the United States in 1903, Obata's seven-decade career as an artist is marked by his blending of traditional Japanese sumi-e brush painting with Modernist watercolor techniques, creating expressive renditions of the natural world. In 1927, Obata visited Yosemite National Park and the Sierra Nevada, resulting in approximately 100 drawings which he later translated into color woodblock prints. Six such prints are on display at BMOA, generously loaned by the Yosemite Museum. Obata has shown at several museums, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and the de Young museum in San Francisco. His work is included in permanent collections worldwide, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

These four exhibitions will be on view until January 6, 2024.

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ABOUT BMOA

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, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM with free admission and extended hours until 8 PM every first Friday of the month. BMOA is closed most major holidays. Visit bmoa.org or call (66) 323-7219 for more information. Follow the museum on Facebook and Instagram @thebmoa and on X / Twitter and YouTube @bmoa.