

March 5, 2021

Dear Nancy, MOCA Board and Staff,

We are writing to inform you of our official withdrawal from MOCA's planned exhibition, *Godzilla vs. The Art World: 1990-2001*. We do so after much soul-searching and exhaustive brain-storming. We hope by now you understand the reasons, which we have written and spoken of many times. But to reiterate:

1. MOCA's leadership has ignored our pleas to communicate openly and publicly with the community it claims to represent. The Museum's recent statement of being "unalterably opposed" to the jail in Chinatown grossly misrepresents its past and present position and how its leadership sought to actually benefit from the jail construction -- an initiative that has been documented on video, audio and in transcripts.
2. We cannot, in good conscience, entrust the legacy of *Godzilla* as an artist activist organization, to a cultural institution whose leadership ignores, and even seeks to silence critical voices from its community. Differing viewpoints serve to strengthen an organization and allow it to evolve in healthy and necessary ways. How can we exhibit our work within the walls of an institution when the values of its leadership betray our own founding principles?
3. In the context of global protests for racial justice, what do MOCA's claims of solidarity with Black Lives Matter and Indigenous sovereignty truly mean? The complicity of MOCA's leadership with the jail plan amounts to supporting the system of mass incarceration and policing that disproportionately affect Black and Brown lives.
3. This is a universal moment of reckoning when ALL our cultural institutions -- big and small, National Treasures or not -- their staff and Boards are rightfully being held to account. We must question the moral implications for MOCA to be connected to the construction of new jails through the actions of its leaders. If it is not appropriate for war profiteer Warren Kanders or the opiate-dealing Sackler family to sit on the Boards of our city's museums, how ethical is it for MOCA to receive \$35 million for its complicit support of an ever-expanding criminal justice system -- against the wishes of its community? We must also question the problems posed by the fact of MOCA's Board Co-Chair being a major property owner in Chinatown, a powerful landlord whose business interests profoundly affect the lives and livelihoods of community members -- including the employees of Jing Fong restaurant which has long been a hospitable venue for local arts events.

We Godzilla signatories are deeply disappointed that MOCA has not lived up to its reputation and responsibility as a “trusted community anchor” and National Treasure. We had fervently hoped the Museum's leaders might summon the will and courage to join with the Chinatown community, with those whose lives are most directly affected by the entire New York City Jail Plan, and with those who for decades helped build and shape the Museum's mission.

Yours truly,

Tomie Arai, Todd Ayoung, Shelly Bahl, Alexandra Chang, Sung Ho Choi, Allan deSouza, Skowmon Hastanan, Arlan Huang, Dorothy Imagire, Byron Kim, Franky Kong, Sowon Kwon, Yong Soon Min, Paul Pfeiffer, Athena Robles, Amy Sadao, Kerri Sakamoto, Chanika Svetvilas, Lynne Yamamoto