



Santa Cruz
 Museum of
 Art & History
 at the McPherson Center



2025

Annual Report

July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025



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Director's Letter

It's incredible to me that only nine months have passed since I took the Executive Director position at the MAH.

I feel like I've been a part of this community for much longer, and done so much for the museum, while simultaneously knowing that I've only just started scratching the surface. Santa Cruz, and the MAH in particular, felt like home to me as soon as I started. It's been such a welcoming, supportive community, both within the museum and across the County where our work can be felt in the diverse community partnerships we foster.

Since I've taken over as Executive Director, the MAH has secured three high-profile grants. One, for the restoration of the iconic Thomas Campbell mural in Abbott Square via the prestigious 2025 Abbey Mural Prize of the National Academy of Design. While initially designed to last for just five years, this funding will ensure that visitors to the museum can enjoy the vibrant images and messages of "Community Quiltage" for years to come.

The other two grants are for Operational Effectiveness, one from the Hewlett Foundation and one from the David & Lucile Packard Foundation. Totalling a combined \$140,000, these two grants will focus on board development and strategic communications leading up to the MAH's 30th Anniversary and will be the focus of a panel discussion at the 2026 California Association of Museums Conference in Los Angeles. Additionally, the MAH secured a critical \$40,000 grant from the Monterey Peninsula Foundation in 2025, the first time in over six years.

We all know that museums, universities, libraries, and cultural spaces have been struggling this year. Earlier in 2025, the MAH was faced with upwards of \$250,000 in guaranteed federal funding being cut. We were able to secure these grants and move forward with our work, but are looking for novel ways to replace these significant federal dollars in years to come.



This means leaning into earned revenue streams, fee for service programs, and diversifying funding efforts. It was clear to me the first time that I visited the MAH that the museum needed a gift shop that reflected the fun, artistic, and unique space that MAH holds in the community, and we're pleased to have successfully launched our Museum Shop in the first six months of my arrival. This vital revenue source not only helps fund general operations of the museum, but provides increased visibility and ways for people to engage with the museum. I'm happy to say that museum visitorship and membership is on the rise, and for the first time back to pre-COVID levels.

In addition to designing, building, and launching a museum store from scratch, we've also launched a number of new, critical initiatives at the museum, including:

- Open Archives, Thursdays from 12pm-4pm
- Guided Museum Tours, Fridays from 1pm-2pm
- Mondays at the MAH, 9am-1pm
- Drop in Drawing at the MAH, first Thursdays, 6pm-8pm
- Davenport Jail Open Studios, second Saturdays, 12pm-3pm

In addition to adding Mondays to the schedule, we've also extended our hours on Thursdays and Fridays until 8pm to create more accessible hours for people visiting the museum. Already Mondays at the MAH has become a popular day for visitors, with attendance on par to Thursdays. By lengthening the museum's hours of operation, we are able to target audiences who might otherwise have had a chance to visit.

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One of the more significant challenges I was facing at the MAH was pivoting the organization to focus on financial stability and sustainability. The organization is operating on an incredibly lean budget, but one that now creates a pathway for the museum to pay down all of its debt before the end of 2027.

That said, I tend to be forward thinking, focusing on all the positive things that the museum has to offer. We've just publicly announced our 30th Anniversary Red Ball Gala on April 11, 2026; I'm looking forward to the community coming out to support us during this milestone year. The town has truly been abuzz with talk of the MAH, particularly our current exhibition "Princes of Surf 2025: He'e Nalu Santa Cruz" which was recently covered and shared via NPR.

Perhaps one of the most critical projects I had the honor of assisting in coming to fruition was the London Nelson Legacy Initiative. Through this project, the research team identified twenty-two previously unknown Black individuals buried at Evergreen Cemetery, and was even able to connect them with living descendents. It is this important work that the museum does that is critical to bring to the forefront and make sure these previously untold stories are amplified throughout the community. With the unveiling of the stunning London Nelson portrait created by local artist Abi Mustafa in 2025 (currently on view in MAH's History Gallery), we will now be celebrating London Nelson day each May 5th at Evergreen Cemetery.

Alongside this work in the MAH's Archives, we are currently working on "Unearthed", a wide-ranging project to digitize nearly 20,000 images from the MAH's general photograph collection. Concurrently as part of this expansive initiative, the MAH is making its archives and special collections more publicly accessible via the website. Soon, our archives will be easily searchable via the homepage of the MAH website rather than hidden.

Perhaps equally if not more important than this work, is all the internal work we've been doing as a team, rethinking the mission, vision and values of the MAH so it feels authentically like the people here and now doing this critical work in the community. Each week we support each other with our program goals, work on team-building, and boost morale through staff-initiated projects.

Visitors to the MAH will soon see some physical changes to the building as well. Before the end of the year, Front Street will now have a large banner announcing the museum, much-needed signage and advertising that has been missing for over five years. Thanks to the City of Santa Cruz Storefront Beautification Program, we were able to reinstall this important wayfinding for visitors to Downtown.

A few initiatives that I'm personally excited about include our artist residency programs at Davenport Jail and at Evergreen Cemetery. Every Second Saturday through June 2026, visitors can visit our current artist-in-residence, Watsonville-based Joshua Moreno, and watch as he literally traces the movement of light through the space in graphite. This project will culminate after 365 days on the Summer Solstice, with a community celebration in Davenport in 2026. And, we just announced a new artist-in-residence opportunity at Evergreen Cemetery. By invitation only, the MAH is soliciting proposals from artists of all mediums to propose engaging programming that furthers the mission of Evergreen Cemetery.

Lastly, the MAH's 5 Minute Film Festival is up and running, accepting submissions from artists working in all genre of film and video who are living and/or working in Santa Cruz to submit short films, which will be judged and screened in January 2026.

And...these are just a FEW of the exciting things we've been working on at the MAH. I invite you to come down to the museum and REDISCOVER AWE AT THE MAH.

Ginger Shulick Porcella
Executive Director

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Vision, Mission & Values

Vision

The MAH is a cultural hub of Santa Cruz County—a place where people come together to celebrate art and history, discover themselves, and connect with one another through experiences and exhibitions that resonate locally and globally.

Mission

Our mission is to build community, connection, and belonging through sharing the art and history of Santa Cruz County and greater California.

Values

To achieve our vision and mission, we are guided by the following values:

- Creativity and Curiosity
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging
- Empathy, Kindness & Joy
- Leadership & Integrity
- Co-Creation, Collaboration & Credibility

About the MAH

The MAH actively works to remove all barriers for cultural participation

to ensure that everyone regardless of age, background, or ability can build a relationship with art and culture.

The MAH's exhibitions, curricula, and public programs bring together diverse audiences to engage more deeply with each other, fostering critical discourse about our past and present in fun, educational ways.

08 Founded in 1996 with federal funding after the Loma Prieta earthquake, the MAH began as a merger between the Santa Cruz Historical Society and the Art Museum of Santa Cruz County. Today, the MAH's exhibitions and programs focus on the hidden and untold stories of the region. We use our platform to amplify the voices of those in our community, ensuring the museum is by and for the artists and audiences we serve, who truly see themselves and their values reflected in our mission and programs.

The MAH achieves its mission by:

- Presenting art and history exhibitions that are educational, inspiring, engaging and highlight the rich and vibrant cultures that live in our community
- Collaborating with community partners to further our reach across the California Central Coast and Greater Bay Area

- Maintaining a permanent collection and archives of contemporary art and historical artifacts and making these assets more accessible to visitors, educators, and students
- Stewarding the land and programs and hosting daily school groups and tours around Davenport Jail, Evergreen Cemetery, and the McPherson Center
- Stewarding the Kincentricity Garden in partnership with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band
- Serving as the cornerstone of Downtown Santa Cruz through our Abbott Square location and ensuring this space is a vibrant town square

The MAH is also Santa Cruz County's primary educational resource for both art and history and maintains a full exhibition and educational program. We create programming that is ambitious, innovative, and that is responsive to the wants and needs of our community.

A pioneering museum in the community, the MAH currently hosts rotating exhibitions by locally, nationally, and internationally renowned artists and researchers—critical exhibitions that spur dialogue and that foster empathy between artists and audiences.



"In addition to being a Senator, I am my family's historian - and I treasure local historical archives and centers across the country that contain gems I can't get anywhere else. The Museum of Art and History very ably serves that purpose for Santa Cruz County, and I have participated in oral histories for exhibits there. We are lucky to have it."

—State Senator John Laird



Assets & Spaces

Facility & Sites

The MAH is widely considered the jewel of Downtown Santa Cruz. The MAH boasts 8,000 square feet of exhibition space and 2,750 square feet housing the museum's permanent art collection and historical archives. The MAH also manages three historic sites: Evergreen Cemetery, Davenport Jail, and the Octagon Building. Additionally, the MAH oversees the adjacent McPherson Center office building, which includes Abbott Square Market.

Collections

The MAH maintains a research library, archives, and a significant curatorial collection. The art collection has more than 300 sculpture, paintings, and prints by California and greater Monterey Bay area artists, including a significant collection by Los Angeles Minimalist artists including Ed Ruscha, Larry Bell, and John McCracken. The MAH's history collection has more than 7,000 items, most of which are from the early 1900s with historical significance to Santa Cruz County.

Exhibition Spaces

The MAH has four dedicated exhibition spaces: the History Gallery, the rooftop Blanchard Sculpture Garden, Art Forum, and Solari. All of these spaces showcase the MAH's permanent collection as well as rotating exhibitions of contemporary and historical works. The MAH also presents pop-up exhibitions in the Atrium and Stairwell, as well as our outdoor Kincentricity Garden in collaboration with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band.

Programming Framework

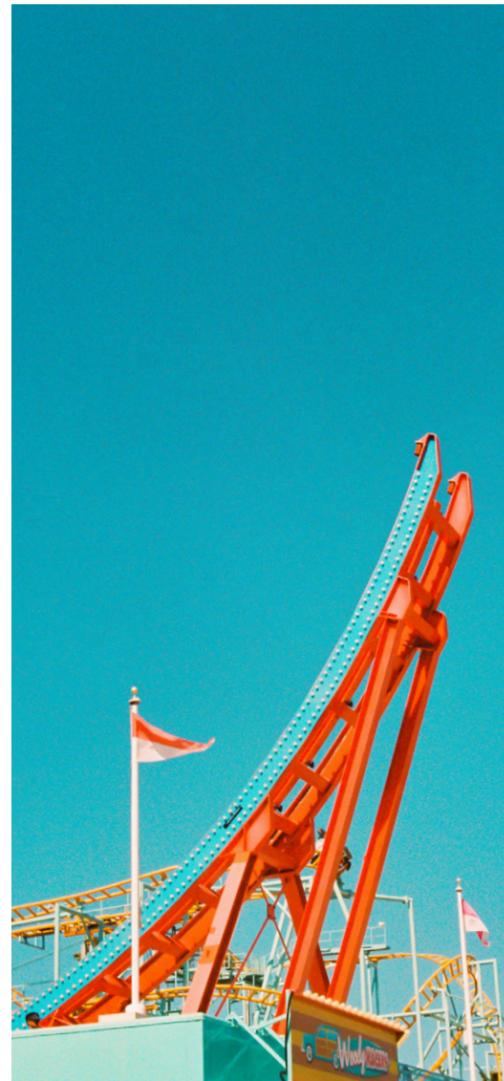
The MAH offers a wide array of programs and activities for the community. To clarify and guide our programming, we developed the following framework:

Exhibitions

include rotating exhibitions of work by local, national, and international artists, including commissioned work, loaned work, and artwork and/or objects from our permanent collection. Exhibitions may be organized in-house by our Curatorial Department, organized by outside curators or institutions, or a collaboration with the MAH and community partners. This includes both on-site exhibitions, satellite/pop-up exhibitions, and online/digital exhibitions.

Public Programs

include a wide range of lectures, film screenings, music, performance art and other events both at the MAH and at our satellite locations in Evergreen Cemetery and Davenport Jail. These included ticketed, fee-based events as well as free programming



Historic Resources

includes the creation of original publications, detailed history journals, and fascinating podcasts, all while managing an expansive archive to uncover the rich history of Santa Cruz County. We host weekly Open Archives for the public and oversee the Historic Landmark/Blue Plaques program for the County.

Community Celebrations

acknowledge the museum's deep dedication to history, culture, and the diverse communities we serve. These annual events such as QingMing Festival, Santa Cruz Pride, Juneteenth, London Nelson Day, Dia de los Muertos, MMIWG Day, and our annual Memorial Day Celebration celebrate Santa Cruz's rich local culture, heritage, and tradition.

Event Rentals

range from intimate meetings to large-scale parties and weddings. The MAH is the perfect venue for hosting a truly memorable event.

Youth & Adult Education

include a variety of learning opportunities for students of all ages. These fee-for-service programs include youth field trips, guided tours of exhibitions for the public, summer camps for youth, and hands-on multigenerational artmaking workshops. These educational offerings are designed to enhance visitors' experience of current exhibitions.

Outreach & Partnership

includes several collaborative engagement opportunities, often outside the physical museum space. These may include pop-up events, mobile exhibitions, and offsite community activations.

Special Events & Fundraisers

are hosted throughout the year to raise money and awareness for the museum. Events may include adult travel programs, donor cultivation events, VIP openings and tours, or our annual Red Ball gala.

Governance & Structure

The MAH is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees who are committed to the museum's legacy and its vision for the future. The board is composed of a diverse group of local professionals, civic leaders, and community advocates whose primary responsibilities are to define strategic vision, develop policy, and ensure the financial viability of the museum.

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Board of Trustees

FY25 Roster

Jasmine Alinder
Chair

Jorian Wilkins
Vice Chair

Rob Darrow
Secretary

Aliyah Nance
Treasurer

Mercedes Lewis
At-large

Jessica Carrasco
Terence Concannon
Bill Kempf
Kim Luke
Roxanne Olson, Esq.
Ann Osterman
Martin Rizzo-Martinez
Christina Waters

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MAH Staff

Staff (as of 12/2025)

Ginger Shulick
Porcella
Executive Director

Kevin Coullahan
*Director of Operations
& Facilities*

Marla Novo
Deputy Director

Hans
Wuerfmannsdobler
*Director of Finance
& Administration*

Miles Backer
*Media &
Communications
Coordinator*

Jessi Bond
*Membership & Events
Manager*

Erin Brookey
*Museum Experience
Supervisor*

Jessie Durant
Archives Specialist

Bronwyn Eyre
*Guest Services
Representative*

Yvonne Feistman
*Guest Services
Representative*

Tahnee Henningsen
Programs Coordinator

Coury Jones
Guest Services Assistant

Charlotte Magee
Guest Services Assistant

Litzy Mozqueda-
Franyutti
*Guest Services
Representative*

Shanti Nagwani
Exhibitions Manager

Oscar Paz
*Education & Outreach
Manager*

Rebecca Snyder
Archives Coordinator

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The MAH also recognizes and thanks the important contributions of our THI Excel Fellows
Leo Coletta, Daniella De La Cruz, Kian Hladky and Morgan Woodley



2024-25 Highlights



Exhibitions

Watermarks of the Last Chinatown
May 10–Sep 22, 2024
Downtown Santa Cruz

Of Love and Revelation: Learning Photography from the Land
May 24–Sep 29, 2024
Art Forum Gallery

Sowing Seeds: Filipino American Stories from the Pajaro Valley
Apr 12–Aug 14, 2024
Solari Gallery

CommonGround: A Festival of Place-Inspired, Outdoor Artworks
Sep 13–27, 2024
Santa Cruz County

Young, Gifted & Black: The Lumpkin-Boccuzzi Family Collection of Contemporary Art
Aug 23–Dec 29, 2024
Solari Gallery

Recollect: Remember your Cosmic Roots
Oct 18–Mar 2, 2025
Art Forum Gallery

Feasting on the World: Paintings by Gene Holtan and Poems by Gary Young
Dec 6–8, 2024
Atrium

Toy Trains
Dec 2024
Atrium

Accidentally Wes Anderson: Adventures in Santa Cruz
Jan 24–May 8, 2025
Solari Gallery

HOWL: The Art & History of Pets
Mar 21–Aug 3, 2025
Art Forum Gallery

Honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
May 2–16, 2025
Atrium

Michael Whiting: Wave & Sailboat
May 15–Mar 15, 2026
Blanchard Sculpture Garden

Out of the Closet and Into the Streets: 50 Years of Santa Cruz Pride
May 30–Jun 29, 2025
Solari Gallery

Threads of Love: The AIDS Memorial Quilt
May 30–Jun 29, 2025
Solari Gallery

Amending Worlds
Jun 5–15, 2025
Museum-wide

FUN FACTS

20,834 VISITORS

REDISCOVERED AWE @ THE MAH

83,336 Individuals Reached

THROUGH OFF-SITE PARTNERSHIPS
& PROGRAMS

835 ACTIVE MEMBERSHIPS

ENJOYING THE MAH MONTHLY

15,000 STUDENTS

REACHED THROUGH OUR EDUCATION AND TOURS
PROGRAMS

2000 HISTORIC PHOTOS

OF SANTA CRUZ SCANNED WITH
METADATA

80 FIELD TRIPS

VISITED THE MAH IN PERSON

3 BILINGUAL TOURS

OF THE ENTIRE MUSEUM

2 JUNCO FAMILIES

NESTED IN THE
KINCENTRICITY GARDEN



Financial Health

The MAH's operating expenses for FY25 were \$1,742,216, a \$300,000 reduction from the previous fiscal year. The MAH continues to monitor the gap between our expenses and income, and for the first time in the current fiscal year has created a pathway to paying down debt accrued since the COVID-19 pandemic, with \$20,000/month going toward debt reduction. In FY25 and in previous years, the MAH had been heavily reliant on federal funding. We are reassessing our current funding model to ensure that the museum can remain stable and sustainable without relying on volatile federal funds.

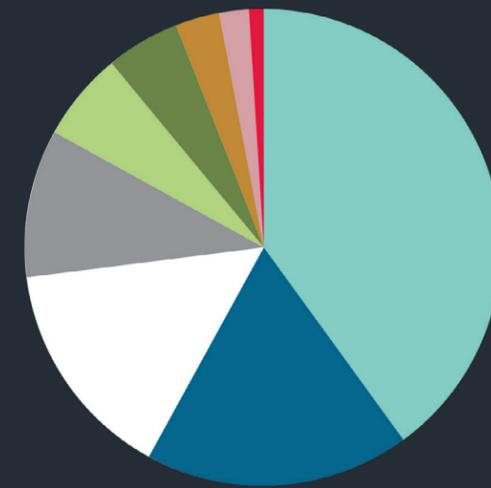
As we come into our 30th Anniversary year, we recognize that in Santa Cruz County, the MAH is one of the few places designed to provide **awe-inspiring** experiences. In our politically divisive moment, when those most vulnerable in our society are under threat, creativity and culture help us to imagine a different, more inclusive, future. **Creativity and culture sustain us** and are essential for our community's well-being. The MAH works alongside our partners to support the greater Santa Cruz community in both body and soul.

Each exhibition, program, and community gathering is an **invitation to wonder**, to see our neighbors in a new light, and to remember what binds us together in this diverse, creative place we call home.

FISCAL YEAR 2025

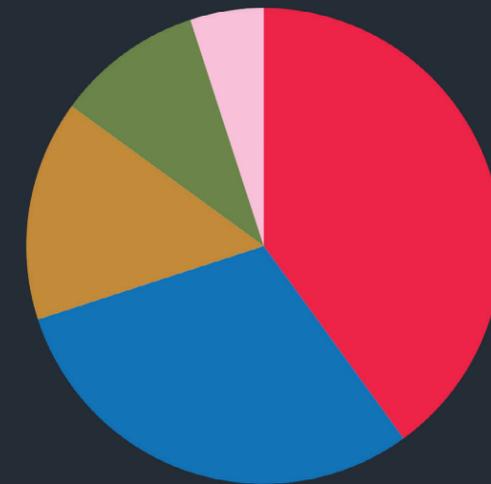
Jul 2024–Jun 2025 (Unaudited)

Revenue



Federal Grants	40%
Individuals	18%
Local Contracts	15%
Private Foundations	10%
Memberships	6%
Admissions	5%
Corporate Sponsors	3%
Fee-for-Service Programs	2%
Gift Shop	1%

Expenses



Staffing & Admin	40%
Exhibitions	30%
Education & Engagement	15%
Facilities Maintenance -MAH, Davenport, Evergreen, Archives	10%
Fundraising	5%



MAH SUPPORTERS

We want to thank all of our supporters this year; your donations were instrumental in creating these moments of awe-bringing stories to life for schoolchildren, supporting artists and storytellers, and inspiring empathy and understanding. **THANK YOU!**

\$50,000+

County of Santa Cruz
Institute of Museum and Library Services
National Endowment for the Arts
Anonymous

\$25,000+

Alec & Claudia Webster
Monterey Peninsula Foundation
Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
California Humanities

\$10,000+

Andrea London
Terese Bacica
Association of Arts Administration Educators
West Coast Community Bank

\$5,000+

King's Plaza Shopping Center
Santa Cruz County Bank
Arts Council of Santa Cruz County
UCSC Humanities Institute

\$1,000+

Jasmine Alinder & Aims McGuinness
Dr. Rebecca Hernandez
Josh Stogner
History Forum
Frank & Anne Hayden
William Kempf & Suna Lock
Garrett & Tara Neier
Greg Larson & Eileen Beaudry
Jon & Margie Sisk
Joanna Miler
Justin Walker & Gretchen Riley O'Hearn
Susan & Peter Canepa
Jenny & John Bost
Karen & Walter Loewenstern
George Newell
Elio & Joy Rodoni
Steph Jacobs
Rob Darrow

Linda Wilshusen & Rock Pfothenhauer
Chip Chapin & Kayla Rose
Yvette Lopez Brooks
Eta & Sasson Somekh
Debra Dunn & Randy Komisar
John & Patty Brissenden
Artisans & Agency
Gina Athena Ulysse
Anna Marie Gotti
W. Todd & Corinne Wipke
Cloy & Bill Codiga
Mary James
Katheleen Hilger
Katie & Forest Monsen
Cynthia Mathews
Patricia & David Schwartz
Vance Landis
Wayne Palmer & Earleen Overend
Carol & Frank Saveria
Sara Lively & Doug Hopkinson
Peter Weng
Carla & Patrick Carstens
Linda & John Burroughs
Erik & Judy Johnson
United Way of Santa Cruz County

Cliff Maas
David Yule
Dave & Tracy Hansen
Annette Marines
Lisa Mazzei
Johnson & Johnson

\$500+

Lucia Orlando
Matthew Swinnerton
Golden State Toy Trains Operators
Assemblymember Gail L. Pellerin
City of Santa Cruz
Elizabeth Schilling & Ken Thomas
Yvette Contois
Mr. Carl Haverl & Dr. Susanna Blackwell
Westside Animal Hospital
Bay Federal Credit Union
Bruce & Linda Nicholson
Brian & Shelley Strehlke
Karen Bush
Marian Zeidler
Jasmine Berke & Scott Roseman
Marty & Martha McAllister

\$250+

Marguerite Cook & Jim Peters
Kevin Desmond & Michelle Close
Emma Ledvina
Meghan Arnold & Sam Pederson
Susan Douglass & Carl Hild
Apple, Inc.
Brenna & Sarah Candelaria
Coeleen Kiebert
Carole & Henry Klyce
Robert Nelson
Don & Cathy Iglesias
Bruce & Mary McPherson
Matt Farrell & Connie Croker
Nina Koocher & Bernard

Elbaum
William Harmon
Gregory Gilbert & Ingrid Parker
Cathleen & Terry Eckhardt
Terry & Roxana Rudy
Keith Holtaway
Roxanne & Ehren Olson
Rebecca Unitt
Christina Alberti
Rebecca Carlson
Christine Tran
Isabel Corser
Andrea Gamble
Tia Mahannah
Russell Rogers
Kim & Corinne Tyler
Kathleen & Keith Frost
Karla Yunuen Ballesteros
Viviana Zuniga
Myers-Thompson Fund
Mary Fran Archer
Evelyn Siguenza
Bettina Apthecker



Acknowledgments

Funder Recognition

It is through the generous support of members, corporate sponsors, foundations, and government partners that the MAH is able to be a community resource and economic asset. To learn more about how to get involved with the institution's work, please visit the MAH's website to see our various engagement and philanthropic opportunities.

We thank our donors, volunteers, and collaborators for their tremendous support, and look forward to working with new friends as we continue to pursue new horizons.

Land Acknowledgment

The land on which we gather is the unceded territory of the Awaswas-speaking Uypi Tribe. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, comprised of the descendants of indigenous people taken to missions Santa Cruz and San Juan Bautista during Spanish colonization of the Central Coast, is today working hard to restore traditional stewardship practices on these lands and heal from historical trauma.

Photo Credits

The majority of images featured in this publication were sourced from the MAH's portfolio and archives. Special thanks to photographers Rose Calucchia and Daris Jasper.

In Memoriam

The MAH wishes to acknowledge the many important individuals that have helped shape the museum that have passed this year. Your memory and contributions will forever be cherished.

Frank Hayden
Elizabeth Schilling
Judith Steen
Cloy Codiga
Rose Filicetti

Nancy Mazzei Mory
Mary and Harry Blanchard
Alverda Orlando
Bruce Bratton
Richard Mayhew





Santa Cruz
Museum of
Art & History
at the McPherson Center

Get into touch

Please contact the **MAH** at **831.429.1964**, if you have any questions.
For more information about the MAH, please visit santacruzmah.org.