

ASIAN ART MUSEUM
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for Asian Art & Culture
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Asian

News



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PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Gorgeous **June 20–Sept. 14, 2014**

SAN FRANCISCO, June 16, 2014—The Asian Art Museum presents a range of insightful public programs to accompany the exhibition *Gorgeous* on view June 20–Sept. 14, 2014. The museum will open the exhibition with the Grit & Glamour party, featuring fierce voguing performances by the International Haus of Nu Benetton and a nail art salon hosted by TopCoat Nail Studio. DJs Dr. Sleep, Robot Hustle (Honey Soundsystem), Natalie Nuxx and davO (Double Duchess) will mix bottom-shakin' beats. Light shows, cash bars and a photo booth complete the night. Throughout the run of the exhibition, the museum will host gallery talks, with speakers including *Gorgeous* co-curator Forrest McGill and Nicole Archer of the San Francisco Art Institute; evening events; a performance by New Century Chamber Orchestra; and family and art activities, including a Family Fun Day with the Alphabet Rockers.

A selection of 72 stunning artworks drawn from the collections of the Asian Art Museum and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), *Gorgeous* challenges visitors to confront the extremes and ambiguities of beauty. On view at the Asian Art Museum, this special exhibition features an extraordinary mix of objects, spanning more than 2,200 years and dozens of cultures to bring together artworks that, in a variety of ways, extend beyond conventional notions of beauty. Presenting these paintings, sculptures, photographs, design objects and drawings in new and unexpected contexts using an experimental approach, the exhibition aims to stimulate viewers to examine their ideas of what it means for something to be gorgeous. The exhibition is organized by the Asian Art Museum in partnership with SFMOMA as part of SFMOMA's [On the Go](#) program.

TALKS

Gorgeous Idea: Hips Don't Lie with Nicole Archer

Thursday, July 10, 7 PM

Meet near the information desk, free with museum admission

Complicated cultural histories are inscribed in the postures and the poses that we strike, and few gestures speak as loudly about the ways gender, sexuality and power culturally

MORE

intersect than the angle of the hip. This in-gallery conversation is a prelude to a night of critical strutting, an invitation to seriously contemplate the challenge that a jutted hip makes to more straight and narrow forms of embodiment. Together, we'll consider the kind of imperfect balance that's created when our weights and perspectives shift from one leg to another, when we work to sway.

Gorgeous Idea talks are informal, impromptu in-gallery conversations facilitated by scholars, artists, filmmakers and writers who explore ideas arising from the artwork on view in the exhibition *Gorgeous*. Each facilitator will present an idea that piques his or her curiosity and host a session to investigate it through two or three artworks.

Nicole Archer researches contemporary art and material culture, with an emphasis on modern textile and garment histories. She concentrates on critical and psychoanalytic theory, corporeal feminism and performance studies. Nicole serves as chair of the BA department at the San Francisco Art Institute, where her teaching explores the relations of politics and aesthetics through critical examinations of style, embodiment and desire. Her work has appeared in *Textile: The Journal of Cloth and Culture* and *Working for Justice: The L.A. Model of Organizing and Advocacy*.

In-Gallery Talk with Curator Forrest McGill

Friday, July 11, 3:30–4:15 PM

Meet at the information desk, free with museum admission

Explore the exhibition *Gorgeous* with curator Forrest McGill and discover what it takes to present an exhibition from the inside.

Gorgeous Idea: I prefer “both/and” to “either/or” with Forrest McGill

Thursday, July 17, 7 PM

Meet near the information desk, free with museum admission

How can an artwork be seductive and repulsive, pure and profane, grotesque and gorgeous all at the same time? How do we deal with seemingly contradictory ideas communicated through an artwork? Forrest McGill unpacks a few of these mixed messages presented in *Gorgeous* to see how a “both/and” approach opens up a world of possibility.

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Forrest McGill is a co-curator of *Gorgeous*. Though he specializes in the arts of South and Southeast Asian art, and has been a curator at the Asian Art Museum for many years, he is also deeply interested in Western art. In the past decade he has co-curated two

major exhibitions of the arts of Thailand spanning six centuries, and edited their substantial catalogues. He has also taught everything from seventh-grade geography to graduate seminars in art history. McGill holds a PhD from the University of Michigan.

Gorgeous Idea: Skins and Surfaces—Unpacking the Color Line with Sampada Aranke

Thursday, July 31, 7 PM

Meet near the information desk, free with museum admission

Can a spoon be racialized? How do surfaces become colored and transform into skins? In this session, we'll discuss the politics of color in *Gorgeous* as these pieces either invite or foreclose engagement with histories of dispossession and possibilities for liberation.

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Sampada Aranke received her PhD in performance studies from UC Davis, and her research interests include performance theories of embodiment, corpses and corporeality, histories of dispossession, flesh in visual culture, and black cultural theory. Her dissertation analyzes three spectacular deaths of Black Panthers between 1968 and 1971, and how those deaths were reimagined toward revolutionary ends. She suggests that these ways of dying are multiple and incoherent, and yet they fit too neatly into an understanding of black death against that which is commonly understood as living, embodiment, and corporeality. Aranke has taught in various departments at UC Davis, San Francisco State University and the San Francisco Art Institute. Her work has been published in *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies* and *Trans-Scripts: An Interdisciplinary Online Journal in the Humanities and Social Sciences* at UC Irvine.

Gorgeous Idea: Gold Rush: The Aura of an Ore with Jeff Durham

Thursday, August 7, 7 PM

Meet near the information desk, free with museum admission

Gold is both physical and metaphysical. This conversation provides powerful insights into seemingly contradictory properties that find their fusion in this magical metal. From a physical point of view, gold's ductility and malleability means that it can readily be divided and recombined at will without altering its nature—essential to the development of a reliable currency. From a metaphysical point of view, gold does not tarnish, and it embodies the abstract concept of immortality. Gold seen in this light takes on both material and mental value—an "aura" (Latin for gold) that transforms a concrete object into an abstract "fetish."

Jeff Durham is assistant curator of Himalayan art and a scholar of Sanskrit and Tibetan. Formerly a professor of religious studies, Jeff holds a PhD from the University of Virginia and specializes in esoteric art and visualization traditions across cultures. His exhibition *Enter the Mandala: Mental Maps and Cosmic Centers of Himalayan Buddhism* is on display at the Asian Art Museum through Oct. 26.

Gorgeous Idea: Sex, Chocolate and Kimonos with Tina Takemoto

Thursday, August 14, 7 PM

Meet near the information desk, free with museum admission

How do artists use food, sex, physicality and clothing to seduce and deceive the viewer? Tina Takemoto explores how race and sexuality are deployed in artworks presented in *Gorgeous* that engage with cross-dressing, masquerade, embodiment and ethnic drag.

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Tina Takemoto is an artist and associate professor of visual studies at California College of the Arts in San Francisco. Her research explores the hidden dimensions of same-sex intimacy and queer sexuality for Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II. She has presented artwork and performances internationally and has received grants funded by Art Matters, James Irvine Foundation and San Francisco Arts Commission. Her film *Looking for Jiro* received Best Experimental Film Jury Award at the Austin Gay and Lesbian International Film Festival.

Takemoto's articles appear in *Afterimage*, *Art Journal*, *GLQ*, *Performance Research*, *Radical Teacher*, *Theatre Survey*, *Women and Performance* and the anthology *Thinking Through the Skin*. Takemoto is board president of the Queer Cultural Center and co-founder of Queer Conversations on Culture and the Arts. On occasion, she makes guerrilla appearances as Michael Jackson and Bjork-Geisha.

Gorgeous Idea: The Skin/Skein I'm In with Việt Lê

Thursday, Sept. 4, 7 PM

Meet near the information desk, free with museum admission

If beauty is in the eye of the beholder, where are the lines between art, kitsch and pornography? If beauty is only skin deep, is race skin deep as well? Explore the controversial politics of looking—and the gorges of looking gorgeous—through the lenses of camp, desire, loss and capital gains.

Việt Lê is an artist, writer and curator whose work has been exhibited in Asia, Europe and the United States. He has been published in *Amerasia Journal*, *American Quarterly*, and

positions: asia critique, among others. Lê curated *Miss Saigon with the Wind* at Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica (2005) and *Charlie Don't Surf!* at Centre A in Vancouver (2005). He co-curated *humor us* at Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (2007); *transPOP: Korea Viet Nam Remix*, which appeared in Seoul, Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City), Irvine and San Francisco (2008); and the Kuandu Biennale (2012) in Taipei. Lê received his MFA from the University of California, Irvine, and his doctorate from the University of Southern California. Lê has received fellowships from Civitella Ranieri Foundation (Italy), Fulbright-Hays (Vietnam), Art Matters Foundation (U.S.), Center for Khmer Studies (Cambodia), International Institute for Asian Studies (the Netherlands), and PEN Center USA. Dr. Lê is an assistant professor in the Visual Studies program at California College of the Arts. www.vietle.net.

Gorgeous Idea: Behind Closed Doors with Michael Stabile

Thursday, Sept. 11, 7 PM

Meet near the information desk, free with museum admission

What is so powerful about the erotic image? How does the erotic inspire, transform and politicize the viewer? From an ancient phallic sculpture and sexualized deities in *Gorgeous* to vintage physique photography and modern fetish websites, we'll discuss the unique ability of the erotic to challenge cultural assumptions.

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Michael Stabile is a journalist and documentary filmmaker best known for his work about gay history, sex and pornography. His written work has appeared in *Playboy*, *The Daily Beast*, *Buzzfeed* and Salon.com.

Stabile is the director of *Seed Money*, a documentary about Falcon Studios's founder and GLBT philanthropist Chuck Holmes, and *Smut Capital of America*, about the rise of the porn industry in the late '60s. Stabile is at work on a documentary about transgender Warhol superstar Holly Woodlawn.

ASIAALIVE

AsiaAlive: Luster

Saturdays, August 2, 9, 16 and 23, Noon–4 PM

North Court, free with admission

Mugwumpin, a risk-taking, award-winning theater and performance ensemble in San Francisco, joins forces with acclaimed photographer Pak Han to bring visions of lush beauty to life. Through a series of interactions with Mugwumpin, audiences are invited to

delve into an appetite for the ravishing and sublime. The performance will result in a presentation of photographic images that becomes part of an ever-growing mosaic of beauty and grit.

PERFORMANCES, DEMONSTRATIONS & ACTIVITIES

First Thursdays

F*ck Gorgeous

Thursday, July 10, 6–9 PM

Museum-wide, free with admission (\$5 after 5 PM)

Obsessed with gorgeousness, experimental performance-art band Nicole Kidman Is F*cking Gorgeous (NKIFG) takes over the Asian Art Museum for one night, activating spaces with dance, performance, music and artistic happenings that play into and destroy notions of what gorgeousness can be. Everything is Gorgeous all the time. NKIFG is joined by Phatima Rude, La Chica Boom, Fauxnique (Monique Jenkinson) and DJ Hoku Mama Swamp for site-specific and art-specific GORGEOUSNESS. TopCoat Nail Studio adorns nails with fresh designs inspired by the stunning artwork in *Gorgeous*. Visit our realm of gorgeousness and be gorgeous, no matter how pretty the rest of the world thinks you are.

Please be advised that this event features performances that may include nudity.

Intimate Encounter with Music

Saturday, July 26, 1–3 PM

North Court or first-floor galleries, free with admission

Experience the contagious energy and joy of the New Century Chamber Orchestra with a string-quartet performance during the museum's special exhibition *Gorgeous*. The New Century Chamber Orchestra is a conductorless ensemble that finds fresh, exciting ways to present classical music in the Bay Area. After the performance, quartet members will discuss inspiration for the music selection and parallels in visual art.

The orchestra's musical decisions are made collaboratively by the 19-member string ensemble. Violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg was appointed music director and concertmaster in 2008, bringing with her "a new sense of vitality and determination, as well as an audacious swagger that is an unmistakable fingerprint of its leader" (*Gramophone* magazine). In addition to performing classic pieces of chamber orchestra repertoire, New Century breathes life into rarely heard songs of the past.

First Thursdays**My Gorgeous Fetish**

Thursday, August 7, 6–9 PM

Museum-wide, free with admission (\$5 after 5 PM)

Get wrapped up in the performance artwork *Evoco*, artist Midori's contribution to *My Gorgeous Fetish*, a night exploring the meanings and possibilities of the word “fetish.”

Midori's performance will erode and generate boundaries in equal measure, combining flowers (ikebana), Japanese rope bondage, flesh and sumi ink to transform a moving body into a series of restrained sculptures and residual prints. Audience members will be invited to respond to this arrestingly beautiful and one-of-a-kind event by creating artwork of their own with materials provided by the museum.

My Gorgeous Fetish will include a gallery talk by Jeff Durham, assistant curator of Himalayan art at the Asian Art Museum, titled *Gold Rush: The Aura of an Ore* as a part of the Gorgeous Idea talk series. Another highlight of the event is TopCoat Nail Studio, adorning nails with fresh designs inspired by the stunning artwork in *Gorgeous*. Music along with a cash bar, will loosen us up as we take our understandings of “fetish” to an all-new level.

Please be advised that this event features performances that may include nudity.

Korea Day

Sunday, August 24, 11 AM–4 PM

Museum-wide, free admission

Join us for a celebration of Korean art and culture on Korea Day at the Asian Art Museum to explore and challenge notions of beauty in traditional and contemporary Korea. Enjoy the feature performance of Korean music and dance, which has become a beloved staple of Korea Day festivities for the past five years. There will be an abundance of food, art and talks, and plenty of interactive activities.

This program is presented in conjunction with the special exhibition *Gorgeous* and is co-organized with and made possible by the Korea Foundation.

FAMILY PROGRAMS**Family Fun Day**

First and Third Sundays, July 6, 20, August 3, 17, September 7, 10:30 AM–2:30 PM (10:30–11 AM stART Tour for kids ages 3–6; 11 AM–2 PM art making and self-guided activities; special performance by the Alphabet Rockers from 1–2 PM on July 20)

North Court, free with museum admission

Explore art and ideas through immersive storytelling, fun gallery activities, creative art making and more during Family Fun Day, designed for preschool and kinder families.

Themes and projects change regularly. July through September, make the ordinary extraordinary with projects inspired by the special exhibition *Gorgeous*. Explore elements of art through texture books, mixed-media portrait boxes and reusable pattern bags.

On July 20, Alphabet Rockers host a special Family Fun Day filled with art, music and dance, featuring a special performance from 1–2 PM in Samsung Hall. Alphabet Rockers provide a dance party of learning through beats, rhymes and movement. Blast off with Alphabet Rockers through hiphop grooves, rhymes and “super-positive messages for kids,” as Common Sense Media describes it.

Kids’ Tours

Saturdays and Sundays, June 21–September 14, 11:30 AM (30 minutes)
Meet near the information desk; suggested for families with children ages 7–10
Free with museum admission (kids 12 and younger always get in free)

Kids’ Tours provide children and parents the tools and vocabulary to look at and talk about art. Explore the galleries with a docent on a search for artwork with amazing animals, creepy creatures and beautiful beings.

Storytelling! The Wicked, the Wily, the Wise

Sundays, 1–1:45 PM (suggested for ages 7 and up); First Sundays stART Tour, 10:30–11 AM (for ages 3–6) and 3–3:45 PM (suggested for ages 7 and up)
Meet near the information desk, free with museum admission (kids 12 and under always get in free)

Want to hear stories about heroic girls and boys, animal legends and tales about dynamic deities? Join a storytelling tour and listen to myths and folktales from Asia. While family friendly, these stories are not just for kids!

SCHOOL PROGRAM

Summer School Tours

Tuesdays–Fridays, June 17–Sept. 26, 10:30 AM, tours last about one hour
Free, up to 60 students; pre-registration required at education.asianart.org

Engage with art, history and culture on a storytelling or inquiry-based tour, or bring your students to our special exhibition *Gorgeous*, presented in partnership with SFMOMA. Tours are FREE with pre-registration.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION DOCENT-LED TOURS

Tuesdays–Sundays at 10:30 AM and 2 PM. Approximately 45 minutes.
Thursdays include a 6:30 PM tour. Approximately 45 minutes.
Saturdays, Sundays at 11:30 AM are tours designed for families. Approximately 30 minutes.
Meet at the information desk for all tours.

ABOUT THE ASIAN ART MUSEUM

The Asian Art Museum—Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture is one of San Francisco's premier arts institutions and home to a world-renowned collection of more than 18,000 Asian art treasures spanning 6,000 years of history. Through rich art experiences, centered on historic and contemporary artworks, the Asian Art Museum unlocks the past for visitors, bringing it to life while serving as a catalyst for new art, new creativity and new thinking.

Information: 415.581.3500 or www.asianart.org

Location: 200 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

Hours: The museum is open Tuesdays through Sundays from 10 AM to 5 PM. From Feb. 6 through Sept. 11, 2014, hours are extended on Thursdays until 9 PM. Closed Mondays, as well as New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

General Admission: FREE for museum members, \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors (65+), college students with ID, and youths (13–17). FREE for children under 12 and SFUSD students with ID. General admission on Thursdays after 5 PM is \$5 for all visitors (except those under 12, SFUSD students, and museum members, who are always admitted FREE). General admission is FREE to all on Target First Free Sundays (the first Sunday of every month). A surcharge may apply for admission to special exhibitions.

Access: The Asian Art Museum is wheelchair accessible. For more information regarding access: 415.581.3598; TDD: 415.861.2035.

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