

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **NEW SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF MODERN ART NOW OPEN**

***Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi and Mayor Edwin Lee Joined SFMOMA Director Neal Benezra, Board Chairman Charles Schwab and Board President Bob Fisher to Inaugurate Expanded Museum***

***More than 5,000 Visitors Welcomed to Museum For Free Today***



SAN FRANCISCO, CA (May 14, 2016)—With a blizzard of red confetti, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) opened its doors to the public today, May 14. Opening Day festivities were attended by local dignitaries, members of the Bay Area arts community and the general public. After the program, the first visitors were welcomed to the new museum by SFMOMA staff and leadership.

The program included remarks by Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, Mayor Edwin Lee, SFMOMA Board Chairman Charles Schwab, SFMOMA Board President Bob Fisher and SFMOMA's Helen and Charles Schwab Director Neal Benezra. The museum distributed more than 5,000 free timed tickets for Opening Day to the public. Surrounding cultural institutions including the Museum of the African Diaspora, the Contemporary Jewish Museum, the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the Children's Creativity Museum and many more throughout the Yerba Buena Cultural District also offered free admission and programming to celebrate the return of SFMOMA to the neighborhood.

“After years of planning and construction, it feels terrific to welcome visitors back to the museum,” said Neal Benezra. “With our goal of providing more art to more people, now and for generations to come, we are excited to share the new museum experience we have created that features the distinguished Doris and Donald Fisher Collection, new works gifted or promised to us by 230 generous donors and the Pritzker Center for Photography which deepens our commitment to the medium.”

SFMOMA, which opened today with 19 inaugural exhibitions, underwent a three-year transformation to add a 10-story expansion designed by international architecture firm Snøhetta that nearly triples its gallery space, allowing the museum to show more of its exceptional collection of modern and contemporary art. With free admission for guests ages 18 and younger and 45,000 square feet of free public space, SFMOMA is more open to the community than ever before.

“Today, with the opening of this gorgeous museum expansion, San Francisco affirms our city’s place as a global leader of art and culture,” said Congresswoman Pelosi. “The new SFMOMA is a manifestation of our city’s deep respect for creativity, and it embodies the spirit and the generosity of the entire Bay Area Community. For that, we are very proud, and very thankful indeed.”

"San Francisco is a city of big ideas, and SFMOMA is a really big idea—and now, a big reality," said Mayor Lee. "Not only is the new SFMOMA a place to showcase innovative art, culture and education initiatives, but it is a piece of art itself in the Yerba Buena Art District. The museum is a major draw for visitors, residents, families and youth from around the world, and its contribution to the Bay Area economy will now grow significantly with its new expansion."

#### **SFMOMA OPENING DAY EVENTS**

SFMOMA’s Opening Day began with street performers on Howard Street including entertainment by the Circus Center, SFJAZZ High School All Stars, the San Francisco Youth Ballet Ribbon Dancers and We Talk Chalk.

After remarks, at the museum’s new entrance on Howard Street, the speakers and architect Craig Dykers, founding partner of Snøhetta, ceremonially opened the museum by pressing a large red button with the new SFMOMA logo on it, releasing a blizzard of red confetti from the roof of the new museum and adjacent buildings. The Golden State Warriors Aftershock Drumline played while SFMOMA staff members in red shirts paraded with large red balloons. Ribbon dancers from the San Francisco Youth Ballet led the first visitors into the building.

Free admission on Opening Day was made possible in part by PG&E, a partner in making the new SFMOMA a model for energy efficiency for art museums through participation in the *Step Up and Power Down* and *Savings by Design* programs, The Yerba Buena Community Benefits District and the museum’s Premier Sponsors Bank of America and Cadillac.

#### **SFMOMA HOURS AND ADMISSION**

SFMOMA is open to the public seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Labor Day. Free public spaces open at 9 a.m. daily. The museum hosts extended hours on Thursdays until 9 p.m., giving visitors the opportunity to enjoy exhibitions and programs in the evening.

Annual membership begins at \$100, and members enjoy unlimited free admission (with advance reservation). Adult admission to SFMOMA is \$25 and admission for seniors 65 years and older is \$22. Admission for visitors ages 19 through 24 is \$19. SFMOMA provides free admission to all visitors 18

and younger, furthering its goal of building the next generation of art lovers.

**San Francisco Museum of Modern Art**

151 Third Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Founded in 1935 as the first West Coast museum devoted to modern and contemporary art, a thoroughly transformed SFMOMA features significantly enhanced gallery, education and public spaces. With six art-filled terraces, a new sculptural staircase and Roman steps where the public can gather, access to 45,000 square feet of free art-filled public space and free admission for visitors age 18 and younger, SFMOMA is more welcoming and more connected to San Francisco than ever before.

Visit [sfmoma.org](http://sfmoma.org) or call 415.357.4000 for more information.

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Image Captions:

Charles Schwab, Robert Fisher, Neal Benezra and Nancy Pelosi, Edwin Lee and Craig Dykers; photo by Drew Altizer, courtesy Drew Altizer Photography

The new SFMOMA from Howard Street; photo by Devlin Shand, courtesy Drew Altizer Photography