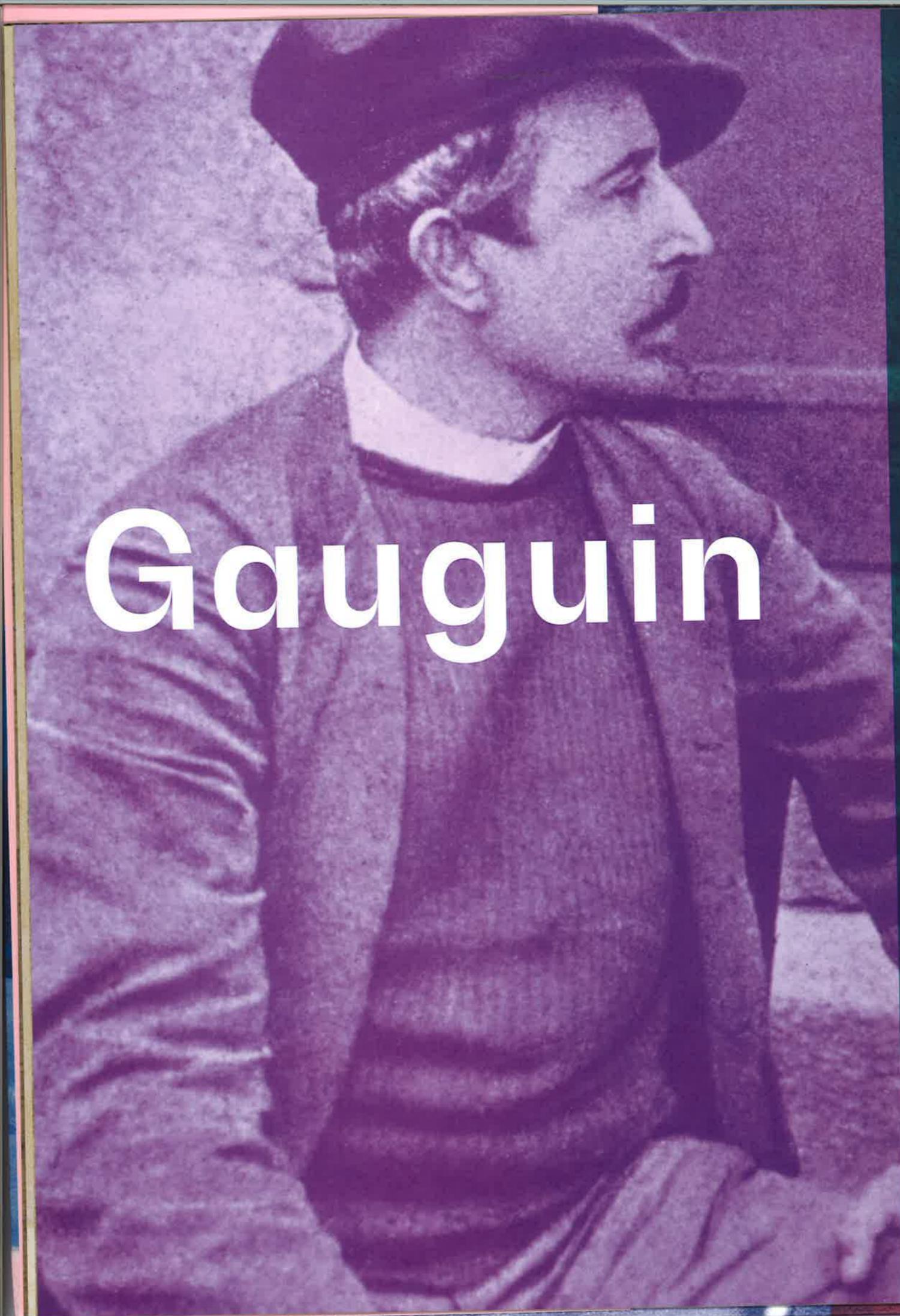


Gauguin

A Spiritual Journey

de Young |
Legion of Honor
fine arts museums
of san francisco

DELMONICO BOOKS
PRESTEL



Gauguin

de Young |
Legion of Honor
fine arts museum
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DELMONICO BOOKS
PRESTEL
Munich, London, New York

CHRISTINA HELLMICH &
LINE CLAUSEN PEDERSEN

WITH

ELIZABETH C. CHILDS
CAROL S. IVORY
THÉANO JAILLET
YUKI KIHARA
PHILIPPE PELTIER
AGNÈS PENOT
LÉA SAINT-RAYMOND &
BELINDA THOMSON

A Spiritual Journey

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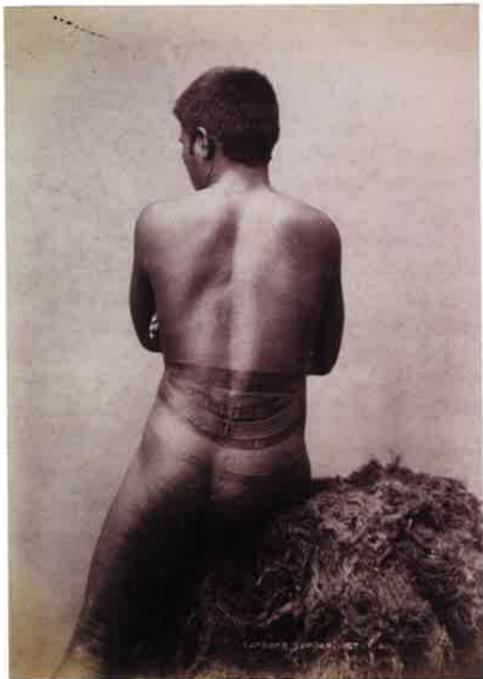
First Impressions: Paul Gauguin

YUKI KIHARA

"The Pacific is no longer untouched." —Charlize Leo, Miss Sāmoa Fa'afafine, 2017–2018 (from *First Impressions: Paul Gauguin*)

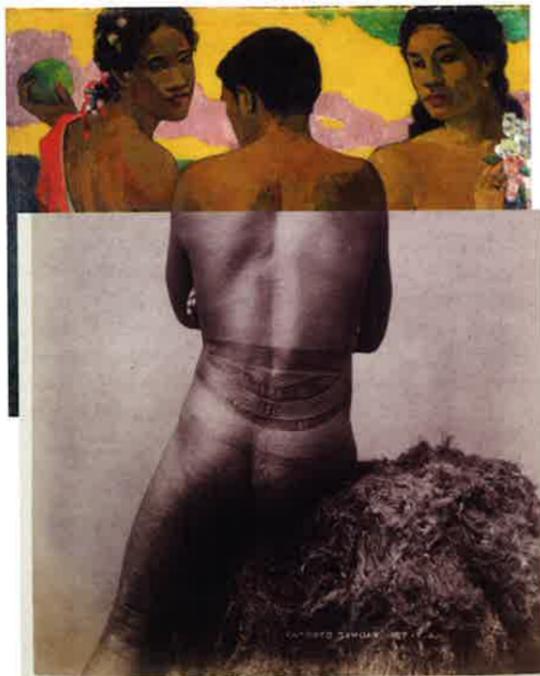
This year marks the 123rd anniversary of artist Paul Gauguin's arrival in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland), Aotearoa (New Zealand), in August 1895, where he spent ten days en route to Tahiti for the second and final time. During his brief time in the city, Gauguin observed and made detailed sketches of Māori and Moana Pacific treasures held at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki and the Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. He also took a small but vital collection of new images when he left Tāmaki Makaurau, several of which later appeared in his major paintings. One of these paintings, *Three Tahitians* (1899), which features a male figure in the middle with his back facing toward the viewer, directly references a nineteenth-century photograph depicting an unnamed Sāmoan man with the *pe'a*, a tattoo customary for Sāmoan men, taken by photographer Thomas Andrew (fig. 44). Andrew's photograph could have been one of the items Gauguin collected during his time in Tāmaki Makaurau. My collage work *Three Tahiti (Sāmo)ans [After Gauguin]* (fig. 45) seamlessly merges two male figures, depicted by Gauguin and Andrew, both as a way to observe their similarities and to critique Gauguin's intent behind his paintings and the context of the social and political climate he was part of. Although Gauguin never set foot in Sāmoa, there have been a number of artists from Western countries who have arrived in Sāmoa and produced paintings that, like Gauguin's works, envision a romantic life in a timeless village untouched by Western colonization and Christianity.

Gauguin posing as a "noble savage" as a form of "ethnic drag" in response to his time spent in Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands resonates with a work I produced, titled *Der Papālagi (The White Man)* (fig. 46).¹ The title is lifted from a book by Erich Scheurmann, a German national who lived in Sāmoa during the German colonial administration of the country from 1900 to 1914. Published in 1920, the book contains descriptions of European life seen through the eyes of Tuiavii, a Sāmoa chief. It was widely criticized, however, after it was discovered that Scheurmann had invented the character of Tuiavii and that the descriptions were in fact his own social commentary. It is believed that Scheurmann was trying to get his German readers to aspire to be like Tuiavii—a Sāmoan "noble savage"—by returning to nature at a time when the Naturalism movement was taking form in Europe. I responded to Scheurmann's book by orchestrating a public performance presented as a social experiment in which Christian and Barbara Durst—German migrants who have lived in Sāmoa for more than twenty-four years—"go native" to fulfill Scheurmann's deep desire to be a Sāmoan. Dressed in full indigenous Sāmoan regalia, Christian and Barbara made public appearances in five locations in and around the capital city of Apia. The varied reactions of the public to the German couple are captured in videos and photographs that depict these Papālagi as the "other" while also exploring the ethical boundaries between cultural appreciation and cultural appropriation. The term *Papālagi* is used to describe non-Sāmoans,



especially European Caucasians. In Sāmoa it is also used to describe foreigners or anything considered not indigenous to Sāmoa or Sāmoan culture. *Pālagi* is derived from the Polynesian root words *pā* (meaning “gates”) and *lagi* (meaning “sky” or “heaven”), hence the standard translation “gates of heaven.” Some say this was based on the reaction of the Sāmoan people upon seeing European explorers for the first time: the different color of their skin suggested to the Sāmoan people that the explorers were people who came from another universe. This myth faded under the influences of ongoing colonization and the introduction of Christianity to Sāmoa. Today, White people, who make up four percent of the population of Sāmoa, are increasingly adopting the Indigenous concept of *Papālagi* as a cultural identity to differentiate themselves from other Whites in Western countries. Similar contexts exist across the Moana Pacific, including *Pākehā* in Aotearoa, *Papa’ā* in the Cook Islands, and *Haole* in the Kingdom of Hawai’i, to name a few.

FIG. 44
Thomas Andrew
Back view of tattooed Sāmoan man, ca. 1890
Photographic print
National Library New Zealand, Stephenson Percy Smith album 3,
PAColl-3089, PA1-o-469-67



I used to see Gauguin’s work featured in tourism paraphernalia like coffee mugs, postcards, T-shirts, posters, and cruise ship advertisements outside of Sāmoa. However, I never took notice of it until I first came across his actual paintings in 2008, when I presented my solo exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Mannahatta (Manhattan), New York. I remember thinking how strange it was to be in front of his paintings, as if time and space had collapsed. Here we were as artists from two different parts of the world having a dialogue in two different moments in history. I also remember seeing Gauguin’s paintings at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the Museum of Modern Art and noticing how I was the only *Tagata Moana* Pacific Islander in the gallery filled with people, with hardly any *Tagata Māo’i* Indigenous peoples in sight. For centuries, *Papālagi* and other non-Indigenous artists, anthropologists, and museum curators have represented—and exoticized—*Tagata Māo’i* to non-Indigenous audiences.

FIG. 45
Yuki Kihara
Three Tahiti (Sāmo)ans [After Gauguin], from the series
Coconuts that grew from concrete, 2017
Courtesy of Yuki Kihara and Milford Galleries Dunedin

During the same time in Mannahatta, I met a handful of Tagata Moana who shared with me their experiences of living as an ethnic minority in Turtle Island (North America), being kept from accessing a variety of social services while being ignored by government policies due to their low population count. Similar factors led the United States and France to treat the Moana *motu* Pacific Islands as a military “playground”—“remote” islands far removed from the populated Western metropolitan centers—leading them to conduct more than 190 nuclear tests in the region in the 1960s and 1970s. This continues today, with the Moana situated in the midst of the threat of nuclear war between the United States and North Korea, all in a region well known for tourism. Pacific scholar Teresia Teaiwa described the symbolic relationship between military forces and tourism as “militourism,” which “ensures the smooth running of a tourism industry, and that same tourist industry masks the military force behind it.”²

As Teaiwa stated, tourism in the Moana is riddled with layers of contradiction. Tourism in Sāmoa, in particular, offers escape and much-needed replenishment and relaxation, provided inside the walls of luxury resorts, to exhausted tourists from developed countries. Outside the walls, local Sāmoans desperately cling to their lives while being ravaged by natural disasters and cyclones (such as the recent Cyclone Gita) and sea-level rise fueled by climate change, mostly caused by carbon emissions from the very developed countries from which the tourists originate. Sāmoa continues to grapple with the idea of sustainable development: finding a balance between maintaining and preserving culture and natural resources while responding to the needs of the local economy that relies on tourism. This tourism not only serves to commodify the culture, but also to extract natural resources and further the impact of climate change, including ocean acidification, coral bleaching, and sea-level rise up to 4mm a year (and rising). I remember during the 1990s, the majority of tourists in Sāmoa were coming from Europe, but these days an increasing number is made up of the Sāmoan diaspora that visits the islands to reconnect with their families; to undertake cultural obligations such as *matai* chief bestowment; and to have a holiday at the same time before returning to Aotearoa, Australia, and Turtle Island, where Sāmoa is linked through the history of colonialism. The remittances from the Sāmoan diaspora contribute to more than twenty percent of Sāmoa’s local economy. These ideas are also explored in my photographic series *Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?* (2013), named after Gauguin’s largest painting, which he produced in 1897–1898, shortly before he died (fig. 43). I use Gauguin’s questions to frame my examination of Sāmoan culture and society following the 2009 tsunami; the 2012 celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Sāmoa’s independence; and the destruction caused by Cyclone Evan, also in 2012.³

I have also felt Gauguin’s legacy in the Moana indirectly when I’ve been approached by friends to consider applying to sail with Paul Gauguin Cruises—a luxury cruise line to Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands. Though popular with visitors

from around the globe, the experience is financially out of reach for many Tagata Moana. I’ve always wanted to travel to Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands but have never been able to afford it, so perhaps joining the cruise ship is one way to experience the islands and to visit several sites, including Gauguin’s grave, located in the Marquesan island of Hiva Oa, and Taputapuātea *marae* complex, a ceremonial center located on the island of Raiatea, where Tautai Indigenous navigators across the Moana continue to gather, forge links, and strengthen the practice of Fōlauga Indigenous navigation. As a Sāmoan, however, I have to be mindful that I’m stepping onto another Moana *motu* and to respect the ancestral and cultural ties Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands have with Sāmoa, which have undergone a similar history of colonialism, missionization, and cultural revitalization.

Gauguin’s life in Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands was experienced from a position of privilege at a time when Sāmoans and other Tagata Māo’i were being exhibited, exoticized, and dehumanized in human zoos in world expositions and performances across Europe and Turtle Island, including the California Midwinter International Exposition of 1894 held in Golden Gate Park—where the de Young museum is located—where Sāmoan performers were imaged in ways that, similar to Gauguin’s work, created stereotypes of Pacific Islanders.⁴ Gauguin was inspired to travel outside of Europe after visiting a human zoo in Paris, and human zoos and museums worked collaboratively to exhibit Tagata Māo’i regardless of whether they were dead or alive. Tagata Māo’i today can’t be expected to live in peace when their ancestral remains are held in museums and they do not have a voice in the interpretation of their visual culture.

My single-channel video work *First Impressions: Paul Gauguin* (fig. 47), filmed in Upolu Island, Sāmoa, captures the candid interviews with selected members of the Fa’afafine and Fa’atama community about their first impressions of selected figurative paintings created by Gauguin during his time in Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands. Some of these paintings are believed to depict Māhū, the Tahitian “third gender.” This video work literally returns the colonial gaze that has been imposed upon the Fa’afafine community, which Gauguin has been a part of, while questioning the Western value system placed upon Gauguin’s work.

Fa’afafine are an Indigenous queer minority in Sāmoan culture known to be gifted in the spirit of more than one gender, or “third gender”; the term is also used broadly to describe those who are, in the Western context, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexed, or queer. *Fa’afafine* also translates as “in the manner of a woman,” and is often applied to biological males with feminine characteristics; *Fa’atama*, on the

FIG. 46
Yuki Kihara
Still from *Der Papālagi: The White Man*, 2016
Single-channel video
Courtesy of Yuki Kihara and Milford Galleries Dunedin
Funded by Creative New Zealand, Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa, and the Government of New Zealand



other hand, translates as “in a manner of a man,” and is often applied to biological females with masculine characteristics. It’s my belief that the terms *Fa’afafine* and *Fa’atama* were developed in response to Western contact and colonialism as a method to categorize and differentiate those outside of Western cisgender binary and heteronormativity seen as the status quo. Prior to Western contact, there was no need among Sāmoans to mark people for their “difference.” What did and continues to matter for most Sāmoans are one’s contributions to the family and community, not who one appears as or is attracted to. When I was growing up in Sāmoa, the term *Fa’afafine* had negative connotations, partly fueled by media and religious groups. Today, many *Fa’afafine* are empowering themselves by giving the word a positive meaning, and the term *Fa’afafine* is now used broadly to describe the Sāmoan LGBTIQ community.

The *Fa’afafine* who took part in the interviews for *First Impressions* were encountering Gauguin’s work for the first time, and their reactions are as varied as the individuals themselves. The success behind this work lies in the witty, vivacious, and big personalities of those who took part, who naturally camped it up during the interview. The video is intended to be humorous, as a way to subvert Gauguin as a

symbol of Western patriarchy. The interview features some of the cast members questioning Gauguin’s fixation with nudity, while others appreciated the use of color and composition; some are interested in whether the paintings sold or not. In addition, Gauguin’s paintings became an impetus for the cast members to talk about political subject matters relevant to Sāmoa, including Christianity, gender, and sexuality, while openly flirting with the talk-show assistant. The concept of the video work is inspired by the essay “He Tangi Mo Ha’apuani: Gauguin’s Models—A Māori Perspective,” by Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, which was presented to the Gauguin Symposium in September 1992 at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki. In her essay, Awekotuku describes how Gauguin deliberately painted his models to appear androgynous and exotic as a reflection of his personal fascination with the *Māhū*—the Tahitian equivalent of *Fa’afafine*—which Gauguin described in his journal *Noa Noa*. Awekotuku makes similar observations about the androgyny in the models found in Gauguin’s paintings who looked similar to members of her *whānau* who are *Takatāpui*—also the equivalent to *Fa’afafine* in Māori culture in Aotearoa.

One of the paintings featured in my video work, Gauguin’s *Reclining Tahitian Women* (1894; pl. 65)—which Awekotuku



describes as featuring Māhū—is also noted by legal and public policy scholar Siobhan McDonnell as a painting featured in real estate signs used to sell customary land in Vanuatu. McDonnell describes how Gauguin's painting reinforces "the long established cultural motifs associated with Pacific landscapes, evoking both heterosexual masculine desire as well as an established cultural authenticity through which foreign ideas are transposed onto customary land in Vanuatu."⁵ This also contributes to the growing problem of anti-blackness in the Moana, where businesses in Melanesia and across the Moana favor romantic portrayals of light-skinned Polynesians in their marketing.

My initial criteria for selecting the Gauguin paintings featured in the video work was to choose those I felt resembled Fa'afafine, but I ended up including paintings that portray a variety of natives, because almost all the natives portrayed by Gauguin are fictitious.

Gauguin's romantic fascination with Māhū points to his fantasy of an exotic racial "other." This fascination continues to echo in the works of many contemporary Western documentary filmmakers, anthropologists, and travel writers who travel to Sāmoa in search of Fa'afafine, whom they assume possess a "primitive" gender and sexuality and are living close

to "nature" as measured against the "civilized" Western patriarchy. In her book *Sexual Encounters: Pacific Texts, Modern Sexualities*, scholar Lee Wallace argues that sexual encounters between colonialists and natives in the Moana have shaped the Western notion of gender and sexuality, including homosexuality and transgenderism.⁶ In fact, this very terminology is based on the Western medical disease model, where the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)*—the American psychiatric disorder guidebook—classified homosexuality as a mental illness until 1987; further, the *DSM* classified transgender identity as a mental illness in 1980 and still does to this day.

First Impressions is part of a larger new body of work that I'm currently developing that focuses on Indigenous queer lives in Sāmoa, but this is not the first time I have made work addressing this topic. One of these earlier works was the photographic series titled *Fa'afafine: In the Manner of a Woman* (2005),⁷ for which I used my body as the medium in order to masquerade as a variety of characters and to pay homage to unnamed Sāmoans featured in colonial photographs taken by Papālagi photographers. What triggered me to return to the topic in my art practice is my experience having participated in a number of Fa'afafine documentaries over the years



directed by well-meaning cisgender people who often ask to film me applying make-up while looking at myself in the mirror, as if to insinuate that Fa'afafine's lives are driven by Western forms of vanity. I have become all too familiar with these and other routine narratives that perpetuate damaging clichés. And having to rely on such materials, which too often distort or sensationalize Fa'afafine life, as a resource for Fa'afafine empowerment has prompted me to produce works that "take back" what has been taken by people like Gauguin and other symbols of Western patriarchy in the Pacific by subverting the colonial gaze through the lens of Fa'afafine—a topic that is well-known to me and my art practice, as I also consider myself to be a Fa'afafine.

Gauguin's vision of a "genderless" Moana paradise is an ideal far removed from the reality of what many Fa'afafine in Sāmoa face today. On June 27, 2016, an early morning candlelight procession was held in Apia, the capital of Sāmoa, in Upolu Island, led by members of the Sāmoa Fa'afafine Association (SFA). They were holding banners with messages such as "End Media Violation of Fa'afafine," "Social Justice and Peace," and "End Violence and Discrimination of Fa'afafine." The banners were in response to a controversy over the reporting of the death of Jeanine Tuivaiki, a twenty-year-old student and Fa'afafine who died of a suspected suicide, in the *Sunday Sāmoan*, a local newspaper. The paper published on its front page an unblurred photograph of Tuivaiki's dead body and also referred to Tuivaiki as male throughout the story. The reporting sent shockwaves across Sāmoa, especially given that the Fa'afafine community had recently celebrated the replacing of the Crimes Ordinance of 1961, a law enforced during Aotearoa's Pākehā colonial administration of Sāmoa, which criminalized "the impersonation of a female" by any male in Sāmoa. The law was used to persecute Fa'afafine with fines or imprisonment, although it had effectively stopped being enforced by police in the early 1980s. The SFA said the repeal of the law was "a huge celebration for the Fa'afafine community and vindication for families who have lost members to acts of violence." While the repeal felt like a victory, the insensitive media coverage of this tragedy shows that there are still many social struggles for Fa'afafine in Sāmoa.

Aotearoa's milestones in queer history, including appointing the world's first openly Māori Takatāpui postoperative transsexual woman, Georgina Beyer, as a member of parliament (1999–2007); passing the Homosexual Law Reform Act (1986) and Marriage (Definition of Marriage) Amendment Act (2013); and the government formally apologizing to men convicted

of homosexual crimes under old laws (2017), are unfortunately not the same for those in Sāmoa, where Fa'afafine today continue to struggle to reform laws introduced by Aotearoa's Pākehā colonialism.

Today, the social equilibrium that had long existed across the gender spectrum prior to the arrival of missionaries has been greatly disturbed by, among other things, visual representations of Fa'afafine by the media and an inflammatory televangelism channel in Sāmoa run by religious conservatives. Recently, Fa'afafine have increasingly been used as scapegoats by religious and political leaders who blame them as the cause of homosexuality, HIV/AIDS, climate change, and other social problems whenever the Sāmoan society is under social, political, cultural, and economic pressure from the West.

I hope my work can contribute to local and global dialogues on how gender identity can be a catalyst to question how one's society is organized and structured under Western patriarchy. We must find ways to decolonize from institutional structures that retain a stronghold in Sāmoa, the Moana, and its diverse groups of people, and that keep all of them from fully realizing their freedom and sovereignty. My thoughts are echoed in what Tahitian poet, playwright, and activist Henri Hiro once said: "I would like today's culture to look back to its roots, to its source, which is Polynesian culture. From this encounter between the past and the present, something new will be born."⁸

Sāmoa, March 2018

I acknowledge the Indigenous custodians of the unceded and occupied territories of the Ramaytush Ohlone where my work is being presented.

FIG. 47

Yuki Kihara

Still from *First Impressions: Paul Gauguin*, 2018

Single-channel video

Commissioned by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen

Courtesy of Yuki Kihara; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen; and Milford Galleries Dunedin



'First Impressions: Paul Gauguin' (2018) by Yuki Kihara; Still; HD video; 16:9; 13min duration. 5-part episodic talk-show series. Commissioned by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen. Courtesy of Yuki Kihara, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen and Milford Galleries Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand.

***'First Impressions: Paul Gauguin'* (2018)**
Written and directed by Yuki Kihara

(English version)

Apia, Sāmoa - ***'First Impressions: Paul Gauguin'***, written and directed by Yuki Kihara, is a 5-part episodic talk-show series capturing candid responses of a panel of members of Sāmoa's fa'afafine community to select paintings by famed French artist Paul Gauguin.

Paul Gauguin (7 June 1848 – 8 May 1903) was a leading French post-Impressionist painter who was posthumously recognized for his experimental use of color and style, which stood apart from his contemporaries. His work was influential among the French avant-garde, and influenced later artists such as Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse. Gauguin gave up his family and life in France to move to Tahiti in 1891, where he lived and worked for several years as an artist. He eventually relocated to Marquesas where he died in 1903. Gauguin's art became even more popular after his death and some of the paintings created during his time in the Pacific, are believed to feature Māhu – the Tahitian 'third gender'. ***'First Impressions: Paul Gauguin'*** features 5 of the works painted during Gauguin's time in French Polynesia.

This series was moderated by Anastasia Fantasia Vancouver Stanley (aka Queen Hera), and features panelists Charlizé Leo, Vanila Heather, Keli Tuatagaloa Laban, Dallas Siatini and Saunoa Poai (aka Sandora), who were only introduced to the paintings at the time of filming, in an attempt to capture as authentic and immediate a reaction as possible. The responses towards each painting vary and reflect the myriad opinions of individuals born and raised in Sāmoa, and are expressed in either Sāmoan or English. The fa'afafine cast express their varied views on Gauguin's paintings which are believed to represent the artist's Western perceptions of Indigenous Pacific/Tahitian culture, women and possibly fa'afafine.

'First Impressions: Paul Gauguin' (2018) was commissioned by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen presented in conjunction with a major exhibition

entitled ‘Gauguin: A Spiritual Journey’ at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco opening 17th November 2018 till 7th April 2019. The exhibition will tour the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in 2020.

In addition, ‘**First Impressions: Paul Gauguin**’ (2018) has received local support in Sāmoa, from Sāmoa Stationary and Books, Frankies Supermarkets, Matniuel Screen Printing & Signs and the Centre for Sāmoan Studies at The National University of Sāmoa.

The filming of ‘**First Impressions: Paul Gauguin**’ (2018) which involved a total of 27 people including cast and production crew were conducted at the National University of Sāmoa. Plans are currently underway to air each of the 5 episodes of ‘**First Impressions: Paul Gauguin**’ (2018) weekly on local television station in Sāmoa. Each episode is 13-minutes in duration.

2 of the 5 episodes will be presented during the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) Oceania Conference held from 29th till 31st August 2018 at Taumeasina Island Resort. Yuki Kihara will be present to introduce the episodes.

Yuki Kihara biography:

A native of Sāmoa, Yuki Kihara (b. 1975) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work engages with a variety of social, political, and cultural issues. Her interdisciplinary approach seeks to challenge dominant and singular historical narratives through visual arts, dance, and curatorial practice, engaging with Pacific colonial history and representation as they intersect with race, gender, spirituality, and sexual politics.

In 2008, The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York presented a solo exhibition of Kihara’s work entitled *Living Photographs* featuring highlights of her interdisciplinary art practice, followed by an acquisition of her works by the museum for their permanent collection. Her works are in the collections, among others, at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the British Museum and Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand to name a few.

Kihara currently lives and works in Sāmoa.

(Gagana Sāmoa)

‘*Mua’i Va’aiga Faamāfaufau: Paul Gauguin*’ (2018) Tūsia ma Faatonu e Yuki Kihara

Apia, Samoa - O le ‘***Mua’i Va’aiga Faamāfaufau: Paul Gauguin***’, na tūsia ma faatonuina e Yuki Kihara. O se ata- tala faasolo e lima ona vāega o loo ‘apo ma tapu’e ai ni tali atu faasamasamanoa a se paneli o sui faapitoa mai le ao a fa’afafine o Samoa, i ni ata na tusia e le ‘ātisi Falani ta’uta’ua o Paul Gauguin.

O Paul Gauguin (7 Iuni, 1848 – Me 8, 1903), o se ‘ātisi ta’imua lea o Falani ile taimi o le Post-Impressionist. O lona tomai i le faaaogāina ma le tuufaatasia o lanu faapea ai ma le faatinoga o ona lava lagona i ana ata tusi(style) na lauiloa tū’ese ai lava ia mai nisi ona uso faa- ‘ātisi i lea vaitaimi. O ana galuega sa tusaafia i totonu o le l’o o tagata ta’iala vaai mamao o Falani, ma na a’afia ai māfaufauga o ‘ātisi mulimai e iai Pablo Picasso ma Matisse. Na tu’ua e Gauguin lona aiga ma lona olaga i Falani mo Tahiti i le 1891. Sa galue faa-‘ātisi i Tahiti mo ni nai tausaga, ona sitia lea i le atu Marquesas ma nofo ai se’ia o’o ina maliu i le 1903. Na sili atu ona lauiloa ata a Gauguin i na ua maliu, ma e iai le talitonuga o isi o ana ata na tūsia i lona taimi ile Pasefika, o loo iai ni Mahu – o le “faavasegaga faaletagata” (gender) lona tolu lea a Tahiti. O le ‘***Mua’i Va’aiga Faamāfaufau: Paul Gauguin***’, e faalia ai ni ata se 5 sa valiina e Gaugin i lona taimi i Falani Polenisia.

O lenei ata-tala faasolo na faafoeina e Anastatia Fantasia Vancouver Stanley (aka Queen Hera), ma o sui o le paneli o Charlize Leo, Vanila Heather, Keli Tuatagaloa Laban, Dallas Siatini, ma Saunua Poai (aka Sandora). O i latou nei na faato'ā mua'i faaalua iai ata (a Gauguin) i le taimi na 'āmata ai le pu'eina o le ata-tala faasolo, ina ia maua lelei ai le uiga moni o ō latou mua'i manatu faaalua. O tali atu i ata ta'itasi e 'ese'ese, ma e faaali mai ai le tele nauna'i o manatu o nei tagata ta'ito'atasi, o ē na fananau ma ola a'e i Samoa, ma sa faasoa fo'i i le gagana Samoa ma le faaperetania. O manatu na faaalua e fa'afafine sa patino tonu i uiga o ata a Gauguin ma le mautinoa, o ia ata na valia i le malamalama'aga faapapalagi o le 'ātisi ma lana va'aiga i tagatā nu'u ma aganuu a tagata Pasefika ma Tahiti, faapea ai ma tama'ita'i ma fa'afafine.

O le **'Mua'i Va'aiga Faamāfaufau: Paul Gauguin'** (2018), na faatupeina e le Fine Arts Museum o San Francisco ma le Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, ma e tuufaatasia ma le faaaliga ata ua ta'ua o le "Gauguin, A Spiritual Journey" e faia i le Fine Arts Museum o San Francisco i le aso 17 o Novema 2018, se'ia oo ia Aperila 7, 2019. O le faaaliga fo'i lenei o le a oo atu i le Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek i le 2020.

O le pu'ega o le **'Mua'i Va'aiga Faamāfaufau: Paul Gauguin'** (2018) e aofia ai le aofa'i o tagata e 27 e aofia ai le lafoina ma le gaosiga o auva'a na pu'eina i le National University of Samoa. Fuafuaga o lo'o i ai nei i luga o le ea i mea ta'itasi i vaiaso taitasi i luga o le televise i totonu o Samoa. O vāega ta'itasi o lenei ata –tala faasolo e 13-minute lona 'umi.

'Mua'i Va'aiga Faamāfaufau: Paul Gauguin' (2018) e aofia ai le aofa'i o tagata e 27 e aofia ai le lafoina ma le gaosiga o auva'a na pu'eina i le National University of Samoa. Fuafuaga o lo'o i ai nei i luga o le ea i mea ta'itasi i vaiaso taitasi i luga o le televise i totonu o Samoa. O vāega ta'itasi o lenei ata –tala faasolo e 13-minute lona 'umi.

O vāega ta'itasi o lenei ata –tala faasolo e 13-minute lona 'umi. E lua vāega o le a faaalua i le ILGA Oceania Conference i Taumeasina Island Resort mai le 29 -31 o Aokuso. O le a iai Yuki Kihara na te faamatala faafeiloa'i atu nei vāega.

Tala'aga o Yuki Kihara

O Yuki Kihara o se alo o Samoa (f. 1975) ma o ia o se 'ātisi e su'ifefiloi ana matātā ma ana va'aiga i le faatinoga o ana galuega. O nei faatinoga e a'afia ai le taga'i i le vā fealofa'i o tagata, politiki, ma tū ma aganuu. O galuega a Yuki e taumafai ina ia lu'i faalemāfaufau ogaoga sa tula'i mai i tala faasolopito o faa-Kolone i le Pasefika, ma le fetai'a'i ai ma tagatā-nu'u, faavasegaga o tagata (gender), itū faaleagaga, ma politiki tau feusua'iga; ma e na te faatinoa uma nei lagona i ata vali/ata tifaga, faatinoga ma siva, ma lona tomā faaali ata (curatorial).

I le 2008, na faaalua ai e le Metropolitan Museum of Art i New York se faaaliga ata a Kihara ua faaigoaina o le "*Living Photographs*" o loo faaalua ai uiga tāua o ana faatinoga faa-ātisi ma na mulimuli ane ai le 'avea e lenei fale mata'aga o ana galuega mo le latou faaaliga tumau. O galuega a Yuki o loo i fale mata'aga o le lalolagi e iai le Los Angeles County Museum of Art, le British Museum, ma le Te Papa Tongarewa Museum i Niusila.

O Kihara o loo aumau ma galue i Samoa.

Links:

Teaser to '*First Impressions: Paul Gauguin*' (2018):

<https://vimeo.com/284486148>

'Gauguin: A Spiritual Journey' presented at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco:

<https://deyoung.famsf.org/exhibitions/gauguin-spiritual-journey>

<https://legionofhonor.famsf.org/press-room/fine-arts-museums-san-francisco-announce-exploration-paul-gauguin-s-inspirations>

'Making-of '*First Impressions: Paul Gauguin*' (2018)':

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10156620022034207&type=1&l=4a00d74839>

ILGA Oceania Conference:

<http://ilgaoceania.life/conference>

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Production stills from 'First Impressions: Paul Gauguin' (Images available upon request)



First Impressions: Paul Gauguin, by Yuki Kihara

NOVEMBER 17, 2018–APRIL 7, 2019
DE YOUNG · UPPER-LEVEL EXHIBITION
GALLERIES

Among Paul Gauguin's figurative paintings, some subjects are believed to depict Indigenous Māhu, or Tahitian "third gender" individuals. In Sāmoa, the equivalent of Māhu is a Fa'afafine—an Indigenous queer minority in Sāmoan culture known to be gifted in the spirit of more than one gender or "third gender"; the term is also used broadly to describe those who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex, or nonbinary (genderqueer) in the Western context.

Sāmoa-based guest artist Yuki Kihara, who identifies as a Fa'afafine, has been commissioned by the de Young and the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek to create a new video work presented in conjunction with the de Young's presentation of *Gauguin: A Spiritual Journey*, which features Fa'afafine returning the colonial gaze back upon the Western culture that Gauguin represented. *First Impressions: Paul Gauguin*, filmed in

Sāmoa, features Kihara's Fa'afafine friends sharing their initial "first impressions" of selected Gauguin works created during his time in the Pacific. For many Fa'afafine who have never visited European art museums before, this is their first time encountering Gauguin's work, and their varied reactions reflect the unique and witty perspectives of each participant.

A native of Sāmoa, Kihara is an interdisciplinary artist whose work engages with a variety of social, political, and cultural issues. Her interdisciplinary approach seeks to challenge dominant and singular historical narratives through visual arts, dance, and curatorial practice, engaging with Pacific colonial history and representation as they intersect with race, gender, spirituality, and sexual politics. Christina Hellmich, curator in charge, arts of Oceania, Africa, and the Americas, spoke with her further about her project:

I hope my work can contribute to local and global dialogue on how gender and sexual identities can be a catalyst to question how one's society is organized and structured under Western patriarchy.

—Yuki Kihara



Christina Hellmich: Why were you interested in creating a work that addresses artist Paul Gauguin's intersections with Pacific culture?

Yuki Kihara: Although Gauguin never set foot in Sāmoa, there have been a number of artists who arrived in Sāmoa from Western countries who produced a variety of paintings that, like Gauguin's works, envision a romantic life in a timeless village untouched by Western colonization. Gauguin's life in Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands—posing as a "noble savage" as a form of ethnic drag—was experienced from a position of privilege at a time when Tagata Māo'i (Indigenous peoples) were being exhibited, exoticized, and dehumanized in human zoos and world expositions across Europe and North America, including the California Midwinter International Exposition of 1894 held at the Golden Gate Park—where the de Young is located—which exhibited Sāmoans and perpetuated many of the stereotypes Gauguin was portraying in his work. Gauguin's legacy is intrinsically linked to the global art market being a beneficiary of colonialism in the Moana (Pacific).

CH: Can you explain how your project relates to some of Paul Gauguin's portrayals of Indigenous Tahitians?

YK: The concept of the video work is inspired by an essay entitled by leading Māori scholar Dr. Ngahua Te Awakotuku, presented to the Gauguin Symposium in 1992 at Auckland City Art Gallery. In her essay, Awakotuku describes how Gauguin had deliberately painted his models to appear androgynous and exotic as a reflection of his personal and sexual fascination with the Māhu. This fascination echoes the fantasy of an exotic racial "other"—something for the West to juxtapose its own identity against. It continues to mirror in the works of many contemporary Western filmmakers,



anthropologists, and travel writers who go to Sāmoa in search of Fa'afafine, a "primitive" gender and sexuality living close to "nature" and measured against "civilized" Western society.

CH: Can you elaborate on how this colonial thinking has informed notions of gender in Sāmoa?

YK: It's my belief that the term Fa'afafine was developed in response to Western contact and colonialism as a method to categorize and differentiate those outside of Western cisgender binary and heteronormativity seen as the status quo. Prior to Western contact, there was no need among Sāmoans to mark people for their "difference." What did and continues to matter for most Sāmoans are one's contributions to the family and community, not how one appears, who one is attracted to, or what's between your legs. When I was growing up in Sāmoa, the term Fa'afafine had negative connotations partly fueled by media and religious groups. Today, many Fa'afafine are empowering themselves by giving the word a positive meaning.

CH: What does this history mean for Fa'afafine today?

YK: Gauguin's vision of a "genderless" Moana paradise is an ideal far removed from the reality of what many Fa'afafine in Sāmoa face today, as the social equilibrium that had long existed across the gender spectrum prior to the arrival of missionaries has been greatly disturbed. Fa'afafine have increasingly been used as scapegoats, among others, by religious and political leaders who blame the cause of homosexuality, HIV/AIDS, climate change, and other social problems on Fa'afafine. I hope my work can contribute to local and global dialogue on how gender and sexual identities can be a catalyst to question how one's society is organized and structured under Western patriarchy.

Save the Date: Panel Discussion

Sunday, February 10, 1 pm
Conversation on Gauguin from three perspectives with Yuki Kihara; Elizabeth Childs, Department Chair, Etta and Mark Steinberg Professor of Art History, Washington University; and Belinda Thompson, curator and scholar of late nineteenth-century French art; moderated by Christina Hellmich

Opposite and above: Yuki Kihara, video stills from *First Impressions: Paul Gauguin*, 2018. Commissioned by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen. Photograph by Alna Pavitt, courtesy of Yuki Kihara; the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen; and Milford Galleries Dunedin



**The Fine Arts
Museums of
San Francisco
Announce
an Exploration of
Paul Gauguin's
Inspirations**

NOV 17, 2018 – APR 7, 2019

Gauguin: A Spiritual Journey

SAN FRANCISCO – The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (FAMSF) are proud to announce [*Gauguin: A Spiritual Journey*](#), debuting at the de Young museum on November 17. The first exhibition at FAMSF dedicated to the work of Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) will explore two themes central to his career: the relationships that shaped his life and work, and his quest to understand spirituality, both his own and that of other cultures he encountered. Through an exceptional partnership with the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, more than sixty Gauguin works will be on view—ranging from oil paintings and works on paper to wood carvings and ceramics—alongside art of the Pacific Islands from the FAMSF collection. Combined, these works encompass distinctive phases of Gauguin's career to show the development of his ideas, the scope of his oeuvre, and the inspiration he found in New Zealand, the Marquesas Islands, and Tahiti.

“The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco have the largest repository of works on paper in the western United States, including numerous works by Gauguin—among them, *The Woman from Arles*, one of his most important drawings,” says Melissa Buron, Director of the Art Division at FAMSF.

“Putting these works on view with Gauguin's stunning oil paintings provides an unprecedented opportunity for our collection to shine and take its place in the larger historical narrative.”

Gauguin: A Spiritual Journey will feature works showing the deep influence that other artists, places, and relationships had on the arc of his career. Embarking on a profession in painting with no formal training, Gauguin was mentored by Impressionists including Camille Pissarro and Edgar Degas. (In fact, as an avid collector himself, Gauguin originally owned two of the Pissarro paintings on view in the exhibition.) Later collaborations with Vincent van Gogh and Émile Bernard show experiments with Symbolism as Gauguin developed his own distinctive style of painting, using flat fields of bold color and dark outlines that in turn influenced artists including Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse.

The exhibition will take visitors on a journey through the progression and scope of Gauguin's work, from an early drawing of his wife, Mette Gad (ca. 1873), to better-known paintings inspired by his travels to Tahiti, such as *Tahitian Woman with a Flower (Vahine no te tiare)*, from 1891. Although Gauguin is best known as a painter and printmaker, the exhibition will also feature fifteen experimental ceramics and intricate wood carvings interspersed with period photography and excerpts from his own letters and writings.

Gauguin was greatly influenced by Pacific art and culture, from his time spent in the region en route to Tahiti in 1895. Corresponding to this period of Gauguin's travel and work in the Pacific, carvings and images from New Zealand, the Marquesas Islands, and Tahiti will be on view from FAMSF's own extensive holdings in Oceanic arts. Works such as the striking Māori gable figure of Tūwhakairiora, purchased by founder M. H. de Young from the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition in Golden Gate Park, will add to visitors' understanding of the Pacific histories, beliefs, and art that inspired Gauguin and captured his imagination. (Tūwhakairiora was an ancestor who avenged the death of his grandfather and became a leader of all the peoples of New Zealand's northeast coast of North Island in the seventeenth century.)

"It is exciting to bring so many Gauguin works to San Francisco," says exhibition curator Christina Hellmich, curator in charge of the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. "I am pleased that we can highlight some lesser-known aspects of his life, including his wife's critical role in his career, and offer contemporary perspectives through a new video installation. The striking

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works of Māori, Marquesan, and Tahitian art from our own collection will allow visitors to learn about Gauguin's fervent interest in the art and spirituality of Oceania."



Among many of Gauguin's paintings are subjects believed to depict Indigenous Māhu, or Tahitian "third gender" individuals. In Sāmoa, the equivalent is known as a Fa'afafine, an indigenous queer minority considered to be gifted in the spirit of more than one gender. Sāmoa-based interdisciplinary artist Yuki Kihara has been commissioned to create a new video work that will debut with this exhibition. Filmed in Upolu Island Sāmoa, her piece, entitled *First Impressions: Paul Gauguin*, shows a group of Fa'afafine friends discussing works that Gauguin created during his time in the Pacific.

"The Glyptotek contains one of the world's finest collections of Gauguin's works," adds Christine Buhl Andersen, Director of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. "For us it is of crucial significance that the collection is put into new contexts and thus remains vital and relevant. This is the case here where two museums have combined their potential and worked together curatorially, thus creating an original exhibition. We at the Glyptotek have enjoyed an excellent collaboration with the de Young museum and we look forward to experiencing the public's reception of the exhibition when it opens in San Francisco."

Gauguin: A Spiritual Journey is organized by Christina Hellmich, curator in charge of the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, and co-organized by Line Clausen Pedersen, curator at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.

The exhibition will be on view at the de Young museum from November 17, 2018, through April 7, 2019, and then travel to the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.

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Visiting | de Young

Golden Gate Park, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive, San Francisco. Open 9:30 a.m.–5:15 p.m. Tuesdays–Sundays. Open select holidays; closed most Mondays.

Tickets

For adults, tickets are \$28. Discounts for students, youth, and seniors are available. Members and children five and under receive free admission. More information regarding tickets can be found at deyoungmuseum.org/visit-us.

Exhibition Organization

This exhibition is co-organized by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen. Presenting Sponsors are John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn, Diane B. Wilsey, and the Donald L. Wyler Trust. Significant Support is provided by Janet Barnes and Thomas W. Weisel Family, and United Airlines. Generous Support is provided by Mark Blackburn, Alec and Gail Merriam.



Image credits (first page l-r):

Paul Gauguin (French, 1848–1903), "Tahitian Woman with a Flower," 1891, Oil on canvas, 27 3/4 x 18 1/4 in. (70.5 x 46.5 cm), Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, 1828, Photograph by Ole Haupt © Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen; Paul Gauguin (French, 1848–1903), "Reclining Tahitian Women," 1894, Oil on canvas, 23 5/8 x 19 1/4 in. (60 x 49 cm), Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, 1832, Photograph by Ole Haupt © Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen; Tiki ke'a (figure), late 19th century, Marquesas Islands, Stone (black basalt), 5 3/4 x 3 3/8 x 2 1/4 in. (14.61 x 8.59 x 5.72 cm), Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Museum purchase, Wattis Fund, 1985.46; Paul Gauguin, French, 1848–1903, L'arlésienne, Mme. Ginoux (The Woman from Arles, Madame Ginoux), 1888, Beige chalk under charcoal with stumping, with salmon-colored pastel, heightened with white chalk on beige wove paper Sheet: 22 1/16 x 19 3/8 in. (56.1 x 49.2 cm); Frame: 33 5/8 x 29 5/16 x 1 3/4 in. (85.4 x 74.4 x 4.4 cm), Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Memorial gift from Dr. T. Edward and Tullah Hanley, Bradford, Pennsylvania, 69.30.78

About the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco oversee the de Young, located in Golden Gate Park, and the Legion of Honor, in Lincoln Park. It is the largest public arts institution in San Francisco, and one of the most visited arts institutions in the United States.

The de Young originated from the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition in Golden Gate Park and was established as the Memorial Museum in 1895. It was later renamed in honor of Michael H. de Young, who spearheaded its creation. The present copper-clad landmark building, designed by Herzog & de Meuron, opened in October 2005. It holds the institution's significant collections of American painting, sculpture, and decorative arts from the 17th to the 21st centuries; art from Africa, Oceania, and the Americas; costume and textile arts; and international modern and contemporary art.

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