

SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF ART

San José Museum of Art Announces 2026 Gala + Auction Honoring Artist Alison Saar and The Adobe Foundation and Welcoming Director Jeremiah Matthew Davis

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San José, CA (March 11, 2026) — The San José Museum of Art (SJMA) will host its 2026 Gala + Auction on April 25. The annual celebration will feature an elegant dinner under the stars on the Circle of Palms Plaza, a live auction of cutting-edge contemporary art, and late-night dancing and drinks throughout the Museum. DJ Chale Brown and DJ Cutso will create the vibe during the cocktail hour and return with a surprise guest artist for the After-Party, where guests can enjoy specialty cocktails and late-night bites among the Museum's stunning galleries.

"At its heart, the San José Museum of Art is where artists and community come together, reflecting the creativity that defines Silicon Valley," said Nadia Ahmad, Trustee and Gala Chair. "This year we honor Alison Saar and The Adobe Foundation, representing the vision and impact that shape our cultural landscape. The Gala celebrates the transformative power of art and the extraordinary community that continues to support and inspire this work."

This year's Gala will formally welcome SJMA's Oshman Director and CEO Jeremiah Matthew Davis, who joined the Museum in October of 2025. A dynamic cultural leader with a strong record of deepening community engagement and championing contemporary artists, Davis brings a bold and collaborative vision to SJMA. Since his arrival, he has prioritized strengthening relationships with cultural partners across the Bay Area and beyond, advancing inclusive programming, and positioning the Museum as a vibrant civic space where art and community dialogue intersect. Under his leadership, SJMA is continuing to build on its reputation as a forward-looking institution dedicated to artistic excellence, equity, and innovation.

"I am honored to celebrate my first San José Museum of Art Gala with our community," said Jeremiah Matthew Davis, Oshman Director and CEO. "The warmth, creativity, and vibrant spirit of this place have been a constant source of inspiration since I arrived here a few months ago. I am grateful to our Trustees, supporters, sponsors, staff, and volunteers whose belief in the Museum makes our work possible. Together, we will continue to expand access to contemporary art experiences, and education opportunities, ensuring we cement our place as the people's art museum of San José and Silicon Valley. We hope you'll join us to party with a purpose on April 25th."

The evening will also honor The Adobe Foundation with the SJMA Visionary Award. The Adobe Foundation creates positive change through support for creative and digital literacy, social equity and opportunity, and active engagement in the local communities. A private foundation created and funded by Adobe Inc., it has been instrumental in strengthening the cultural ecosystem of the region and expanding access to creative tools and education.

Artist Alison Saar will be celebrated as the 2026 artist honoree. Best known for her sculpture and printmaking, Saar uses found materials to recontextualize histories, mythologies, and folklore,

particularly those connected to the African diaspora and Indigenous communities. Her work explores themes of race and identity, womanhood and motherhood, and spirituality through the human figure.

Saar's work is held in major museum collections worldwide, and she has received numerous honors, including the 2025 David C. Driskell Prize. In 2024, she was selected by the International Olympic Committee and the City of Paris to create a sculpture honoring the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and she is currently developing a major commission for the Obama Presidential Center, opening this Spring.

This year, Nadia Ahmad will serve as the Gala Chair; Daniela Barone and Geraldine Magarelli will Co-Chair the Auction; and Robbie Gordy will once again act as the live auctioneer. The Auction will feature 11 important contemporary works by internationally acclaimed artists including Rina Banerjee, Ala Ebtekar, Keka Enriquez, Gauri Gill, David Huffman, Hung Liu, Alicia McCarthy, Lordy Rodriguez, Analia Saban, Alison Saar, and Wanxin Zhang

A limited number of sponsorships are still available at the \$10,000 to \$50,000 level, and single tickets are available at \$1,500 each. Gala After-Party tickets will be available for purchase online and at the door on the night-of for \$125 (\$100 for SJMA members) starting April 1, 2026.

The live auction will accept absentee and in-person bids. To cap off the Gala program, a dynamic Paddle Raise will invite guests to contribute critical funds in support of SJMA's education programs, exhibitions, community initiatives, and essential operations.

The al fresco dinner will be created by Signia by Hilton. The After-Party will feature late-night bites from restaurant partners Mezcal Restaurant, The Club on Post, Casino M8trix, and Scott's Seafood, and 10th St. Distillery will serve as the event's beverage partner. We are grateful to this year's After-Party presenting sponsor, Casino M8trix, for its generous support.

For information on sponsorship opportunities, tickets, or to make a fully tax-deductible contribution, contact Natalie Sánchez Lewin at nsanchez@sjmusart.org.

Gala Committee

Toby Fernald
Lys House
Tammy Kiely
Robert S. Lindo
Suzette Mahr
Yvonne Nevens
Damon Richardson

Auction Committee

Daniela Barone, Co-Chair
Geraldine Magarelli, Co-Chair
Kimberly Lin

Honorees

Alison Saar, Artist
The Adobe Foundation

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The San José Museum of Art (SJMA) is a modern and contemporary art museum dedicated to inclusivity, new thinking, and visionary ideas. Founded in 1969 by artists and community leaders, SJMA's exhibitions, collection, and programs reflect the defining characteristics of San José and Silicon Valley—from its rich cultural diversity to its innovative spirit. The Museum offers lifelong learning opportunities for schoolchildren and educators, multigenerational families, creative adults, university students and faculty, and community groups. SJMA is committed to being a museum without borders, essential to creative life throughout the diverse communities of San José and beyond.

SJMA is located at 110 South Market Street in downtown San José, California. The Museum is open Thursday 4–9pm; Friday 11am–9pm; and Saturday–Sunday 11am–6pm. Admission is \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors, and free for members, college students, youth and children ages 17 and under, and school teachers with valid ID. Admission is free from 6–9pm on the first Friday of every month. For up-to-date information, call 408.271.6840 or visit SanJoseMuseumofArt.org.

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