

**The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and Snap Inc. launch *LACMA × Snapchat: Monumental Perspectives***

**Artists and technologists collaborate to create five new augmented reality monuments exploring history and representation across Los Angeles**

**Initiative rolls out with dynamic schedule of programs including panels, podcasts, and a docuseries**

(Los Angeles, CA—April 13, 2021) The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), in collaboration with Snap Inc., today introduces the first collection of *LACMA × Snapchat: Monumental Perspectives* projects. This multi-year initiative brings together local artists and technologists to create virtual monuments that explore just some of the histories of Los Angeles communities in an effort to highlight perspectives from across the region. These augmented reality monuments were built using Snapchat's technology and are available to experience starting today.

The five virtual monuments and murals include Mercedes Dorame's immersive portal between past, present, and future worlds for Indigenous presence in contemporary Tovaangar (Los Angeles), I.R. Bach's animations designed to inspire self-reflection, Glenn Kaino's path of generational stories of connectedness along the 1932 L.A. Olympic marathon route, Ruben Ochoa's homage to the shared history of street vendors in L.A., and Ada Pinkston's memorial series paying tribute to Bidly Mason.

They were designed to be experienced at locations across Los Angeles through the Snapchat Camera, including at LACMA, MacArthur Park, Earvin "Magic" Johnson Park, and Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. Those in the area can discover the virtual monuments easily by looking for their markers on the Map in Snapchat, which will pinpoint their locations and more details about each work. The monuments can also be viewed by anyone around the world, wherever they are by visiting [lacma.org/monumental](https://lacma.org/monumental) on mobile devices.

"LACMA and our partners at Snapchat are fundamentally interested in storytelling, but in new and innovative ways, and that's what many artists are interested in as well," said Michael Govan, LACMA CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director. "The resulting monuments visualized by Mercedes Dorame, I.R. Bach, Glenn Kaino, Ruben Ochoa, and Ada Pinkston are not only relevant to issues of today—Los Angeles, civic space, community—but also to the medium of art, opening doors to new ways of thinking about art in both physical and virtual spaces."

"Through this collaboration with LACMA, Snap Inc.'s augmented reality technology has become an immersive medium for advocacy and representation. We're thrilled to empower these artists and Lens Creators, and support their desire to share untold

stories through a new perspective,” said Bobby Murphy, co-founder and CTO at Snap Inc.

The launch coincides with the International Day for Monuments and Sites and includes a robust schedule of related programming starting on Sunday, April 18. Additional programs related to each project, including podcasts, a docuseries, and art kits, will be presented throughout the year.

Last year, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the largest funder of the arts, culture, and humanities in the U.S., announced “The Monuments Project,” a five-year, \$250 million commitment to transform the way our country’s histories are told in public spaces. The Mellon Foundation will support the expansion of Monumental Perspectives to include additional artists in the coming years. The Foundation is also providing financial support for other critical elements of the initiative including the curation, community engagement, and related public programming.

“The virtual monuments and murals that these five artists have created illuminate how we can reimagine and rebuild commemorative spaces across the country, and embodies the visionary work we aim to support through The Monuments Project,” said Elizabeth Alexander, President of the Mellon Foundation. “Like these immersive commemorations, we’re excited to see more artists using innovative means—beyond bronze and stone—to memorialize historical figures, ideas, and movements, and to recontextualize existing monuments that teach too little of our collective history in public spaces.”

This new project is a continuation of LACMA’s and Snap’s commitment to innovation and the exciting possibilities that result when artists and technologists are brought together. In 2019, LACMA and Snap collaborated on the Los Angeles presentation of Christian Marclay’s *Sound Stories*. In 2018, Snap joined LACMA’s Art + Technology Lab Advisory Board, a group composed of leading innovators across a variety of technological industries. Advisory board members lend their experience and expertise to help drive the conversation around how museums will use new technology in the future and serve as advisors to artists who receive grants from the lab.

### **About the Monuments**

#### **Mercedes Dorame**

##### ***Portal for Tovaangar, 2021***

*Portal for Tovaangar* may be experienced at LACMA (5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036) or from anywhere at [lacma.org/dorame](https://lacma.org/dorame).

Working in landscapes she feels anchored to, Mercedes Dorame reclaims connection to the land and ancestral knowledge by exploring what it means to exist as a Native inhabitant of contemporary Tovaangar (Los Angeles). *Portal for Tovaangar* creates an immersive portal that links past, present, and potential future worlds. Viewers engage

with what continues to inspire many Native people: the sky, the land, indigenous plant life, celestial bodies, and the infinite ability to connect to these entities and with each other. This work proposes a community healing opportunity, an exploration of truth in understanding Indigenous intrinsic knowledge, and reconciliation. *Portal for Tovaangar* shifts away from memorializing heroes and singular events to engage the continued and future presence of Native people in this city. The song included in the piece is inspired by a 1918 wax cylinder recording of Tongva singing.

### **I.R. Bach**

#### ***Think Big, 2021***

*Think Big* may be experienced at Earvin “Magic” Johnson Park (905 E. El Segundo Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90059), or from anywhere at [lacma.org/irbach](http://lacma.org/irbach).

I.R. Bach’s approach to what constitutes a monument differs from its conventional definition. A simple action such as moving through the park may turn into an experience worth memorializing. Through larger-than-life animations, a whimsical soundtrack, and a guiding basketball, *Think Big* crafts an experience designed to inspire self-reflection as you proceed. “The aspiration is to collectively build an invisible monument of thought.” I.R. Bach encourages users to playfully consider the phrase, “See yourself in others and others in you.” *Think Big* is ideally enjoyed in the park but is available everywhere on a smaller scale with fewer stops. The original soundtrack was composed by the artist and features special guest Dwight Trible.

### **Glenn Kaino**

#### ***No Finish Line, 2021***

*No Finish Line* may be experienced at Christmas Tree Lane Park (within Exposition Park) near the entrance of the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum (3911 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles, CA 90037), Earvin “Magic” Johnson Park (905 E. El Segundo Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90059), or from anywhere at [lacma.org/kaino](http://lacma.org/kaino).

*No Finish Line* centers generational stories from the communities, businesses, and organizations along the 1932 L.A. Olympic marathon route, which started and ended at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. This conceptual project highlights how the stories of daily life come together to make history. A narrative thread connects generations of people, businesses, and organizations along the route. The symbolism of a marathon reminds the viewer that the path of history is long, and that making positive change and building an equitable world requires stamina. The memories of the people and places therefore become perpetual and not forgotten: the path of history is a marathon with no finish line. In 2028, Los Angeles will become the only city in the United States to host the Olympic Games three times, invoking memories of Games past and contributing new narratives to the future. Original music composition created in collaboration with DJ Melo-D of the World Famous Beat Junkies.

LACMA's Education Department will produce art kits to help young artists understand how stories fit together to accompany *No Finish Line*. With a set of large gear stencils, colored pencils, sidewalk chalk, and dowels, families will be prompted to consider what a monument can be. The art kits will be distributed every weekend in June 2021 through the food distribution initiative Summaeverythang in South Central Los Angeles founded by artist Lauren Halsey. Learn more about that initiative at [summaeverythang.org](http://summaeverythang.org). A digital version of the art kits will be available to download at [lacma.org/kaino](http://lacma.org/kaino) starting on April 13.

### **Ruben Ochoa**

#### ***¡Vendedores, Presente!, 2021***

*¡Vendedores, Presente!* may be experienced at MacArthur Park (2230 W. 6th St., Los Angeles, CA 90057) or from anywhere at [lacma.org/ochoa](http://lacma.org/ochoa).

*¡Vendedores, Presente!* responds to L.A.'s complex history with street vendors. Ruben Ochoa draws from his family history—his mother pioneered a mobile tortilla delivery system in San Diego County—to pay homage to the critical role of street vendors in L.A.'s culture and economy. Referencing familiar forms of street vending, *¡Vendedores, Presente!* serves as a multilingual resource for on-the-ground entrepreneurs and a call for advocacy. After a decade-long fight to legalize street vending in L.A., the pandemic has impacted its progress and potential growth, with many street vendors left more vulnerable than ever. *¡Vendedores, Presente!* invites participants to learn more about the plight of street vendors and provides options to assist through non-profit organizations Community Power Collective (CPC) and Inclusive Action for the City.

### **Ada Pinkston**

#### ***The Open Hand is Blessed, 2021***

*The Open Hand is Blessed* may be experienced at Earvin "Magic" Johnson Park (905 E. El Segundo Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90059) or from anywhere at [lacma.org/pinkston](http://lacma.org/pinkston).

"If you hold your hand closed, nothing good can come in. The open hand is blessed, for it gives in abundance, even as it receives."—Biddy Mason (1818–1891)

*The Open Hand is Blessed* is a memorial series that pays tribute to the voice and spiritual philosophy of Biddy Mason. The story of Mason is one of resilience. In 1851, Mason arrived in San Bernardino, California, after traveling thousands of miles by foot as an enslaved person. After this arduous journey, she settled in Los Angeles and worked as a nurse and midwife. She died a free person and one of the wealthiest Black women in the country. In *The Open Hand is Blessed*, Ada Pinkston draws from archival images of African American residents in 19th century Los Angeles.

## **Related Programming**

### **Art & Conversation: Making Monumental Perspectives**

**Sunday, April 18 | 3–4:30 pm**

In celebration of the International Day for Monuments and Sites, join artists Mercedes Dorame, I. R. Bach, Glenn Kaino, Ruben Ochoa, and Ada Pinkston as they discuss their practice and creative process of making monuments using augmented reality for *LACMA × Snapchat: Monumental Perspectives*. The conversation will be moderated by Liz Andrews, Executive Administrator and Project Curator at LACMA, and introduced by Sophia Dominguez, Head of Camera Platform Partnerships at Snap Inc. This program will take place via Zoom.

### **In Conversation: Michael Govan, Evan Spiegel, Elizabeth Alexander, and Mayor Eric Garcetti**

**Tuesday, April 20 | 12 pm**

Join us for a conversation with Michael Govan, LACMA CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director, Evan Spiegel, CEO and Co-Founder of Snap Inc., Elizabeth Alexander, President of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and Eric Garcetti, Mayor of Los Angeles, as they discuss the future of monuments with an eye toward the ways in which artists can create bold and interactive virtual memorials. The conversation will be moderated by Naima J. Keith, Vice President of Education and Public Programs at LACMA. This program will take place via Zoom.

### **The Politics of Street Vendors in Los Angeles**

**Saturday, May 1 | 12 pm**

**Saturday, May 22 | 12 pm**

**Saturday, June 12 | 12 pm**

In celebration of Ruben Ochoa's project, view a short documentary series that follows street vendors as they unpack the history of the vending economy in Los Angeles, their efforts to organize and build sustainable businesses, the challenges and threats they face in this work environment, and the great impact the pandemic has had on this community. This event will be presented on LACMA's YouTube channel.

### **Mercedes Dorame: Tovaangar Story Portal Podcast**

**Monday, June 28 | 10 am**

Inspired by an artwork by Mercedes Dorame for *LACMA × Snapchat: Monumental Perspectives*, LACMA presents a self-guided podcast and AR experience. Hear from artists, Tongva culture bearers, and archeologists as they discuss the immense depth of our individual and collective relationship to place. Anywhere podcasts are available.

**Credit**

This initiative is made possible by Snapchat. Additional support is provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

**About LACMA**

Located on the Pacific Rim, LACMA is the largest art museum in the western United States, with a collection of more than 142,000 objects that illuminate 6,000 years of artistic expression across the globe. Committed to showcasing a multitude of art histories, LACMA exhibits and interprets works of art from new and unexpected points of view that are informed by the region's rich cultural heritage and diverse population. LACMA's spirit of experimentation is reflected in its work with artists, technologists, and thought leaders as well as in its regional, national, and global partnerships to share collections and programs, create pioneering initiatives, and engage new audiences.

**Location:** 5905 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA, 90036. [lacma.org](http://lacma.org)

**LACMA press contact:** [press@lacma.org](mailto:press@lacma.org), 323 857-6522

**Connect with LACMA**

@lacma

**About Snap Inc.**

Snap Inc. is a camera company. We believe that reinventing the camera represents our greatest opportunity to improve the way people live and communicate. We contribute to human progress by empowering people to express themselves, live in the moment, learn about the world, and have fun together.

**About The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is the nation's largest supporter of the arts and humanities. Since 1969, the Foundation has been guided by its core belief that the humanities and arts are essential to human understanding. The Foundation believes that the arts and humanities are where we express our complex humanity and that everyone deserves the beauty, transcendence, and freedom that can be found there. Through grantmaking, the Foundation seeks to build just communities enriched by meaning and empowered by critical thinking, where ideas and imagination can thrive.