

# Honolulu Museum of Art

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## PLASTICS

*How did that great future turn out? A new exhibition allows viewers to decide for themselves, through art and diverse public programs*

**WHAT:** Plastic Fantastic?

**WHEN:** Feb. 3–July 10, 2016

**WHERE:** Honolulu Museum of Art Spalding House, 2411 Makiki Heights Dr. Honolulu

**INFO:** 532-8700, [www.honolulumuseum.org](http://www.honolulumuseum.org) (publishable)

*High-res images available on request.*

**HONOLULU, HAWAI‘I (Jan. 22, 2016)**—Opening Feb. 3 at Honolulu Museum of Art Spalding House is the exhibition *Plastic Fantastic?*, a look at plastic through art—from the concept of “plasticity” to contemporary art made of discarded single-use plastic. At the heart of the show is work by contemporary artists Dianna Cohen, Swaantje Guntzel, Chris Jordan, Aurora Robson, and Maika‘i Tubbs.

The exhibition concept was born when Kim Johnson, co-founder of the Kōkua Hawaii Foundation and the Johnson Ohana Charitable Foundation, approached the museum about doing an exhibition that looked at plastic pollution. At the same time, Spalding House director and curator Aaron Padilla was looking for a subject for a multidisciplinary exhibition.

“Plastic, for better or worse, is a huge, global issue,” says Padilla, “I realized it was an ideal topic for an exhibition that can be used as a lens for all school subjects, whether as a way for science teachers to illustrate scientific advancements or a biology teacher to make the ecological connections between plastic and pollution. And with artists using plastic for decades, it makes for an engaging exhibition of contemporary art.”

To reveal the complexities of plastic—and the human behavior that causes plastic to have dire repercussions on human life—*Plastic Fantastic?* is divided into three sections:

- **THE PAST:** The idea of “plasticity” and the history of plastic is visually narrated through works from the museum’s collection. A classic LCW chair by Charles and Ray

Honolulu Museum of Art  
900 S Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96814  
808-532-8700

[www.honolulumuseum.org](http://www.honolulumuseum.org)

Honolulu Museum of Art  
Spalding House  
2411 Makiki Heights Drive

Honolulu Museum of Art  
First Hawaiian Center  
999 Bishop Street

Honolulu Museum of Art  
School  
1111 Victoria Street

Honolulu Museum of Art  
Doris Duke Theatre  
Entrance on Kinau Street

Eames foretells the molded plastic furniture to come. Neatly juxtaposed are a 19th-century Meissen porcelain sculpture of Freemasons and a 21st-century decorative plastic work by Japanese art star Takashi Murakami, framing a conversation on multiples and mimesis. Three wood vessels—from early Hawai‘i, Edo Japan, and contemporary America—portray the evolution of plastics in regards to surface treatments and durability.

• **THE PRESENT:** Work by five artists makes tangible the current state of plastic as a waste material.

Dianna Cohen: The Los Angeles-based artist uses that ultimate signifier of contemporary consumer culture—the plastic bag—to create cheerily hued collages that speak to our throwaway ways born out of the ubiquity and proliferation of plastics.

Aurora Robson: Plastic debris such as bottles and tubes become fantastic assemblages that look like they belong in an Indonesian coral reef. Her work intercepts the waste stream and references recurring nightmares she had as a child growing up in Maui.

Maika‘i Tubbs: Born and raised on O‘ahu, Maika‘i Tubbs now lives in New York City, where his current work finds him walking the city street gathering trash and putting it in his grandmother’s old rice bag. In the studio he washes and sorts his finds. He uses wet cardboard, plastic bags and containers to create cores bound by yarn, videocassette tape or rope spun from plastic bags. He then pulverizes discarded paper and applies it around the core. The result is a “stone,” which he burnishes to a smooth finish. His stone installations reference a new plastic-driven world formed and created with man-made material.

Swaantje Guntzel: The conceptual embroidery series, titled *Anthropocene*, of German artist Swaantje Guntzel reveals the global reach of plastic pollution through visual mapping. She embroiders the ocean routes of things such as the Great Pacific Garbage Path on tidy fabric squares—alarming messages packaged as daintily as a doily. Based in Hamburg, Guntzel has been working on Anthropocene since 2009.

Chris Jordan: The stark photographs from Seattle-based artist Chris Jordan’s series *Midway: Message from the Gyre* are at a glance colorful constructions akin to Dianna Cohen’s work. Closer inspection reveals the plastic clusters were ingested by albatrosses and are returning to the environment as their bodies decompose. There’s no escaping the visual proof of what plastic pollution ultimately does to living creatures.

• **THE FUTURE:** *Plastic Fantastic?* concludes with an interactive space that invites viewers to consider the exhibition and the pros and cons of plastic, as well as to make art—visitors can construct assemblages using one ounce of plastic debris fragments. These plastic assemblages created by exhibition visitors will be used to create a large public art installation to be unveiled in September 2016, during the IUCN World Conservation Congress being held in Honolulu at the Hawai‘i Convention Center. Sustainable Coastlines Hawaii has collected two tons of plastic debris from beaches throughout the Hawaiian Island chain over the last year for this art-making component of *Plastic Fantastic?*

## **Public programs**

### **Bank of Hawaii Family Sunday: Plastic Fantastic**

April 17 • 11 a.m.-3 p.m. • Honolulu Museum of Art • Free

Every third Sunday of the month, Bank of Hawaii sponsors a free day of art projects and entertainment. Visitors will use materials collected from O‘ahu beaches to make wind chimes and jewelry. Kōkua Hawai‘i Foundation’s Plastic Free Hawai‘i program will be on hand with their water refill station, activities and giveaways. Honolulu Theater for Youth will perform a scene from its production *H20: The Story of Water and Hawai‘i*. Then everyone can hop on the free shuttle up to Spalding House for more plastic exploration.

### **Spalding House Family Sunday: Plastic Fantastic**

April 17 • 11 a.m.-3 p.m. • Free

Every third Sunday of the month, the museum offers a free day of art projects and entertainment at Spalding House. In April, the free day focuses on Plastic Fantastic? Visitors can check out the exhibition then make art out of... plastic!

### ***Plastic Fantastic?* Beach Cleanup**

April 24 • Magic Island • check-in 9:30am • cleanup 10am-noon

The Honolulu Museum of Art and Kōkua Hawai‘i Foundation and its Plastic Free Hawai‘i Program invite the public to help clean up Magic Island at Ala Moana Beach Park. This busy urban beach gets its fair share of plastic waste—it needs a lot of help. Participants should bring a reusable water bottle, hat and sunscreen. Refreshments will be served at the end of the cleanup. Check-in is at Picnic Site 30.

### **ARTafterDARK: Plastic Fantastic?**

April 29 • 6-9 p.m. • Honolulu Museum of Art • \$25

The museum’s monthly art party focuses on Plastic Fantastic. Guests can help create a community installation with marine plastic debris and screenprint reusable tote bags.

### **Origomu Bag Workshop**

May 14 • 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Spalding House • \$25 • Free for museum members

Reservations: [skramer@honolulumuseum.org](mailto:skramer@honolulumuseum.org)

Artist Nicole Higa shows participants how to give new meaning to the phrase “reduce, reuse, recycle” by transforming plastic ring tops from beverage six-packs into a tote bag.

### **Plastic-Kucha Night**

June 10 • 7-9 p.m. • Spalding House • Free with museum admission

Reservations: [eventsrsvp@honolulumuseum.org](mailto:eventsrsvp@honolulumuseum.org)

PechaKucha Night Honolulu is a free and informal event where creative people get together and share their ideas, work, and thoughts through six-minute presentations. In this special edition, artists, designers, and professionals will share their work as it relates to the many issues surrounding plastic. Plus it's a rare chance to experience Spalding House at night! Limited to 200 guests, reservations required.

**The Creation Process: Injected Plastic Mold Figures**

June 25 • 10 a.m.-3 p.m. • Spalding House • \$25 • Free for museum members

Reservations: [skramer@honolulumuseum.org](mailto:skramer@honolulumuseum.org)

Plastic is now a common art medium. Artist Scott Yoell shares his mold-making technique for making a miniature plastic figure.

Funding for *Plastic Fantastic?* has been provided by presenting partner Johnson Ohana Charitable Foundation, founded by Kim and Jack Johnson to support environmental, art, and music education. And, presenting corporate sponsor Hawaiian Electric, supporting STEM education, the arts and the environment in Hawai'i.

This project was also funded by the Louis L. Borick Foundation and developed in partnership with the Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation, Sustainable Coastlines Hawai'i, the Surfrider Foundation Oahu Chapter, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Marine Debris Program.

**About the Honolulu Museum of Art**

One of the world's premier art museums, the Honolulu Museum of Art presents international caliber special exhibitions and features a collection that includes Hokusai, van Gogh, Gauguin, Monet, Picasso and Warhol, as well as traditional Asian and Hawaiian art. Located in two of Honolulu's most beautiful buildings, visitors enjoy two cafés, gardens, and films and concerts at the theater.

In 2011, The Contemporary Museum gifted its assets and collection to the Honolulu Academy of Arts and in 2012, the combined museum changed its name to the Honolulu Museum of Art.

**Locations:**

Honolulu Museum of Art: 900 S. Beretania Street

Honolulu Museum of Art Spalding House: 2411 Makiki Heights Drive

Honolulu Museum of Art School: 1111 Victoria Street

Honolulu Museum of Art at First Hawaiian Center: 999 Bishop Street

Honolulu Museum of Art Doris Duke Theatre: 901 Kinau Street (at rear of museum)

**Website:** [www.honolulumuseum.org](http://www.honolulumuseum.org)

Phone: 808-532-8700

**Hours:**

Honolulu Museum of Art: Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sun. 1-5 p.m.; closed Monday.

The Honolulu Museum of Art Café: lunch only, Tues.-Sat., 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Honolulu Museum of Art Spalding House: Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sun. noon-4 p.m.

Spalding House Café: lunch only, Tues.-Sat. 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

**Admission** (permits entry to both museums on the same day):

\$10 general admission; children 17 and under are free.

Admission is free to: shop, cafés, Robert Allerton Art Library, and the art school

Free days: First Wednesday of every month

Bank of Hawaii Family Sunday: The museum is free to the public on the third Sunday of the month, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., courtesy Bank of Hawaii.