PRESS RELEASE

BAMPFA

Keka Enriquez Receives First US Solo Museum Exhibition at BAMPFA

On View from December 2, 2026 through April 25, 2027

New Paintings Mark San Francisco-Based Artist's Return to Painting After Two-Decade Hiatus

(Berkeley, CA) October 13, 2026—The Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive will present the first solo museum exhibition in the United States of San Francisco-based artist Keka Enriquez. *MATRIX 290 / Keka Enriquez: History Painting* brings together eight new paintings commissioned for the exhibition in partnership with Enriquez's residency at Headlands Center for the Arts earlier this year, marking the artist's return to painting after more than two decades.

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The exhibition is the latest installment in BAMPFA's MATRIX program, an experimental platform since 1978 for contemporary artists to make and show new work.

Enriquez (b. 1962, Manila) began working as a painter in the 1980s after studying with Roberto Chabet, who is widely considered a foundational figure in the history of Filipino contemporary art. As part of the vibrant new generation of Filipino artists who emerged in Manila during the 1990s, Enriquez was recognized in 1994 with the Thirteen Artists Award by the Cultural Center of the Philippines, a triennial award that is considered among the country's most prestigious artistic honors. After relocating to the United States in 1998, Enriquez paused her art practice and transitioned into a career as a healthcare worker most recently at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital, eventually settling in the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco, where she still lives and works. She returned to painting in 2023.

During her twelve-week Headlands residency in early 2026, organized in partnership with BAMPFA, Enriquez created a series of large-scale paintings that move restlessly between abstraction and figuration. Built from layered passages of color, line, texture, and form, the works engage familiar mythologies of the American West while bringing into view histories that have often been marginalized from official accounts. Several paintings draw on the artist's archival and place-based research, including a visit to the Angel Island Immigration Station in San Francisco Bay, where hundreds of thousands of Chinese and other Asian immigrants were detained under exclusionary US immigration policies. Through painting, Enriquez revisits these histories through the lens of her own experiences of migration, displacement, and memory. *MATRIX 290 / Keka Enriquez: History Painting* presents eight of these paintings in a museum setting for the first time; a companion presentation of additional paintings by Enriquez will be on view at Headlands in Spring 2027.

The BAMPFA and Headlands presentations are organized in collaboration as part of the Further Triennial, a region-wide celebration of historical and contemporary artmaking across Northern California. For more information about Further, visit furthertriennial.org.

“Keka Enriquez’s bold, expressionist paintings do it all: They incorporate historical and contemporary references, abstract and figurative forms, and most importantly, they evince an exuberant love of paint,” said BAMPFA’s Phyllis C. Wattis Senior Curator Victoria Sung, who curated the MATRIX exhibition. “Enriquez’s willingness to embrace risk, reimagine her artistic practice, and pursue ambitious new work is precisely the spirit that has defined MATRIX for nearly fifty years.”

“BAMPFA is thrilled to support Keka Enriquez's return to painting, in collaboration with two wonderful community partners, the Headlands Center for the Arts and the Further Triennial. Together, we want to help ensure the Bay Area remains a place where artists can live, work, and thrive," said BAMPFA’s Executive Director Julie Rodrigues Widholm.

About Keka Enriquez

Keka Enriquez (b. 1962, Manila; lives and works in San Francisco) makes expressionistic canvases that move between abstraction and figuration. Emerging in the 1980s under the mentorship of Roberto Chabet, Enriquez became known for dynamic paintings of domestic interiors that examine home as a psychological, social, and aspirational space. Where her earlier practice turned inward, her recent work opens outward toward collective memory, excavating the marginalized histories of diasporic, Indigenous, and working communities whose stories have been obscured by dominant mythologies. This expansion of subject is rendered through dense accumulations of color, texture, line, figures, animals, landscapes, and fragments of personal memory. Enriquez earned a BFA in painting from the University of the Philippines Diliman and, with support from a UNESCO grant, an MA in Fine Arts from the Norwich School of Art and Design in England.

Enriquez has had recent solo exhibitions at Silverlens Gallery in New York and Manila. Earlier solo exhibitions were presented at Finale Art File, the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Museo Iloilo, and Valentine Willie Fine Art Gallery in Kuala Lumpur; her work was included in the Second

Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art at Queensland Art Gallery in 1996. She received the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Thirteen Artists Award in 1994 and was a 2026 Artist in Residence at Headlands Center for the Arts.

About BAMPFA

Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) ignites cultural change for a more inclusive and artistic world. BAMPFA has been uniquely dedicated to art and film since 1970, with international programming that is locally connected and globally relevant. It holds more than 25,000 artworks and 18,000 films and videos in its collection, with particular strengths in modern and contemporary art and historical Chinese painting, as well as the world's largest collection of African American quilts. As part of the University of California, Berkeley, BAMPFA is committed to artistic diversity through its robust slate of art exhibitions, film screenings, artist talks, live performances, and educational programs that shed new light on the art of the past and connect our audiences with leading filmmakers and artists of our time. BAMPFA sits on the edge of campus and downtown Berkeley, where it welcomes visitors from across and beyond the Bay Area in a repurposed building designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro.

Sponsorship

The exhibition is part of BAMPFA's ongoing MATRIX series of contemporary art exhibitions. Founded in 1978, MATRIX provides artists with an experimental platform to make and show new work. The MATRIX program is made possible by a generous endowment gift from Phyllis C. Wattis.

Image credits

Photo by Luke Abiol, courtesy of BAMPFA.

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