

LA WEEKLY

Best of L.A. Arts: Fall Preview Pick: Todd Gray at Pomona College

by Alex Distefano
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Art by Todd Gray (Courtesy of the artist at Meliksetian Briggs)

Beginning on September 3, the Pomona College Museum of Art will be host to an exhibition showcasing the art of Todd Gray. Euclidean Gris Gris will run through May 2020 and will feature a sprawling site-specific wall drawing (a fairly new medium for the artist) as well as a selection of Gray's photographs which contain images and themes of colonialism, pop culture and political oppression in Africa as it relates to European and American cultural tropes.

Gray is an L.A.-based contemporary artist who works as a sculptor, photographer and performance artist whose motifs revolve around African history in relation to the rest of the world. Gray's experience with photography includes his longtime stint as the photographer for the King of Pop, Michael Jackson, in the 1980s. His pictures of Jackson are sometimes incorporated into his other art forms, as he often superimposes images of Jackson with photographs he took of wild, rural landscapes in Africa. As an internationally renowned artist, Gray lives in L.A. and also spends a significant amount of time Ghana, where he has an art studio with an educational component.

Currently featured in the prestigious Whitney Biennial in New York, last year, Gray's artwork was included in Public Fiction: The Conscientious Objector at the MAK Center for Art & Architecture in Los Angeles. He also created a key image for the landmark exhibition Michael Jackson: On the Wall at London's National Portrait Gallery.



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The Pomona College Museum of Art website exhibition is curated by Rebecca McGrew and is accompanied by a publication designed by Kimberly Varella, which will feature essays by Dr. Nana Adusei-Poku and Dr. Neelika Jayawardane, as well as an interview between Todd Gray and iconic photographer Carrie Mae Weems. PCMA hosts Longing on a Large Scale, a year-long series of events and discussions curated by Nana Adusei-Poku. The show is made possible by major grants from the Andy Warhol Foundation and the Mike Kelley Foundation.

Pomona College Museum of Art, 330 N. College Ave., Claremont; opening reception: Sat., Sept. 14, 3-5 p.m.; through May 17; (909) 621-8283; pomona.edu/museum.



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