

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 7, 2012

**MOCA MOBILIZATION DELIVERS
1700-SIGNATURE PETITION TO MOCA**

**5-POINT-PETITION CALLS ON THE MUSEUM BOARD TO
EXAMINE ITS ROLE IN RECENT CRISIS**

(Los Angeles) MOCA Mobilization delivered a petition with over 1700 signatures to Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art Director Jeffrey Deitch and Board of Trustees co-chairs Maria Bell and David Johnson today. The petition demands the hiring of senior curatorial staff and calls on the Board of Trustees to dedicate itself to responsible governance including maintaining transparency with all Board members and the community. **[MOCA Mobilization has just been informed that the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees conceded part of the first point of our petition and has stated their intention to hire a chief curator.]**

Initiated at Change.org on July 24, 2012, support for the petition gathered rapidly and expanded globally, with over 1700 signatures collected in two weeks. The final version contains 1740 signatures from supporters in 20 countries. The entire petition, signatures and extensive comments section can be downloaded from the MOCA Mobilization website: <http://www.mocamobilization.org>.

Signatory former MOCA Curator Julie Lazar commented on the petition, "MoCA was formed by a coalition of artists, patrons, and civic leaders to serve the greater public good. Its first directors, Pontus Hulten and Richard Koshalek, were engaged because they were respected first and foremost by artists (among them: Sam Francis, Alexis Smith, Robert Irwin and Vija Celmins). They envisioned the museum as a patron of artists and a place that was inclusive, not exclusive...If the "humanities" in culture become overpowered by commercial interests, where does that really leave us as a society? Art and artists help us to understand where we are now, as well as to envision where we hope to go in the future. MoCA is only one part of the creative ecology. Let's make sure that, as a private institution with a public mandate, MoCA is a healthy contributor to the cultural landscape and not a polluting one."

Internationally recognized artist Allan McCollum wrote, "Please don't let the museum descend to a pop culture playground, or the brag site for a few wealthy art collectors. Please recognize that LAMoCA's curators have been the leaders in bringing Los Angeles artists into serious view to the rest of the world, which is so important, as some of the world's best artists are in Los Angeles. Please."

Other notable signatories include Liz Larner, Stephen Prina, Lari Pittman, Stan Douglas Alan Sekula, Joan Jonas, Charles Gaines and Louise Lawler.

The petition was also sent to **the American Association of Museums** whose *Considerations for AAM Accredited Museums Facing Retrenchment or Downsizing* was quoted by MOCA Mobilization in the petition, “Actions that are inconsistent with standards and best practices in the field, or with the criteria and characteristics of an accredited museum, include: Major staff cutbacks, protracted vacancies in key professional positions, or major changes in qualifications of staff that adversely affect the museum’s ability to fulfill its mission.””

MOCA Mobilization was formed in November 2008 to support the staff of MOCA in a time of fiscal crisis and gathered more than 3,000 supporters at that time. Since reactivating in mid-July in order to respond to the current crisis at MOCA, MOCA Mobilization has gathered the support of 1431 members at Facebook, initiating a lively discussion of the current status of the MOCA.

From MOCA Mobilization’s 2008 founding statement, “We support MOCA’s staff as they suffer through this crisis. It is their work, their talent and their integrity that give the luster to this Museum. We acknowledge with pride the exceptional quality and quantity of ground-breaking exhibitions produced by MOCA. We appreciate the excellence of its permanent collection. For any one of these things to be diminished is to diminish the entire institution.”

“We are a vigilant public who care for the integrity and autonomy of MOCA. The Board of Trustees is the guardian of this great institution. It is the Board’s responsibility to insure the Museum’s financial health and preserve its programming and staff. We call upon the Trustees to maintain MOCA’s independence and to keep its collection intact and accessible to a wide and appreciative public.”

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<http://www.change.org/petitions/los-angeles-museum-of-contemporary-art>