

Press Release

For immediate Release
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Images available



Museum of Sonoma County Presents *Pacific World* Exhibition
February 26 – June 2, 2019

(SANTA ROSA, CA)- February 19, 2019 – The Museum of Sonoma County is pleased to announce the exhibition, *Pacific World: The History That Binds Us to the Sea*, opening Tuesday, February 26, followed by an opening reception on Friday, March 1. From ancient voyagers who spread throughout a watery world, to the Spanish treasure ships known as Manila Galleons, to the nineteenth century traders who plied the coast from Sonoma County to Peru, the Pacific Ocean is a world unto itself. Explore the Great Ocean from a different perspective in *Pacific World*- a perspective where California is the eastern edge of the Pacific, rather than the more familiar symbol of the American west.

The exhibition will include a collection of Ming Chinese porcelain and other objects that were an important part of the world's first sustained, globalized trade aboard the Manila Galleons. A striking feature of the exhibition will be a suspended 23' long *Bangka*, a canoe traditionally of the Philippines that represents ancient seafaring traditions and ongoing connections. *Pacific World* will also include a collection of antique maps of Asia and the Pacific, objects from nineteenth century shipwrecks including the *Frolic* and the *Lammermoor*, and a children's gallery with an interactive game and ship model.

"It is important to offer visitors the opportunity to reorient themselves to the remarkable influence of the Pacific World on Sonoma County and its history," said Curator of History and Associate Director, Eric Stanley. "Too often, we view the history of our region exclusively through the lens of U.S. history and westward migration. Understanding this region as the eastern edge of the Pacific creates a sense of a vibrant legacy of diverse people, places, and events that shape us to this day."

In the nineteenth century, Sonoma County became a point of convergence, where the eastern and southern frontier of the Russian Empire rubbed up against the northern frontier of Mexico. From the establishment of the Russian coastal outpost of Fort Ross, to the last in the string of California missions, to the intense interest of the United States, Sonoma County's history is marked by the confluence of

competing international interests on the Pacific Coast. Their presence created a fluid and multiethnic world, with the trading of goods to distant ports in Alaska, Hawaii, South America, and Asia.

“I hope that visitors leave with a greater sense of interconnectedness with people and places that may have felt distant and unrelated- when in fact there are bright threads connecting us to a myriad of places and people within the Pacific World,” said Stanley.

The *Pacific World* exhibition is dedicated to the late Edward Von Der Porten (1933-2018), a maritime scholar who had a deep and abiding interest in the stories of the Pacific. Through this work, Von Der Porten became a noted expert on 16th century Chinese porcelains, using evidence from shipwrecks to help Chinese scholars date their materials. His analysis of porcelain fragments found in the Native American sites at Drakes Bay, led to the determination that there were two distinct Chinese porcelain sets at Point Reyes corresponding to historically documented visits by early European explorers: Drake in 1579 and Cermeño in 1595. The former Santa Rosa teacher had devoted a tremendous amount of time and knowledge to the Museum of Sonoma County since its very beginnings and was a dedicated member of the History Committee past decade. He will be missed.

For more information, please visit our website: <https://museumsc.org/pacific-world>

This exhibition is generously sponsored by Ann Sebastian, Lawrence and Jacqueline Simons, County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors, Drake Navigators Guild and Friedman’s Home Improvement.

Programs and Events

Opening Reception

Friday, March 1, 2019

5:00-7:00pm

Free with General Admission

Performances include an interpretive dance piece to recognize the indigenous people of the Philippines and Mexico, a paddle dance procession, a musical performance by Kalingaforia Laga and more.

Pacific Cultures Day

Saturday April 6, 2019

Time TBA

Free with General Admission

Programs subject to change. Please check our website for the most current information. Additional public programs related to the exhibition will be posted on our website: www.museumsc.org/events.

About the Museum of Sonoma County

Located in Downtown Santa Rosa on Seventh Street between A and B Streets, the Museum of Sonoma County (MSC) presents exhibitions of modern and contemporary art and local and regional history. MSC is open year-round with changing exhibitions, public programs, school tours, and education programs. MSC preserves and manages a regional art and history collection of over eighteen thousand objects, the region's largest object documentation of Sonoma County's history and culture.

Mission

The Museum of Sonoma County engages and inspires our diverse community with art and history exhibitions, collections, and public programs that are inclusive, educational, and relevant.

Smithsonian Affiliate

The Museum of Sonoma County has been a Smithsonian Affiliate since 2009. Smithsonian Affiliations establishes long-term partnerships with museums, education, and cultural organizations to facilitate the loan of Smithsonian artifacts and traveling exhibitions, as well as to develop innovative educational collaborations locally and nationally. Created in 1996 by an act of the Smithsonian Board of Regents, the program is overseen by the Smithsonian's Assistant Secretary for Education and Access and is one of the pillars of the Institution's national outreach efforts. There are more than 200 Smithsonian Affiliates in nearly every state, Puerto Rico and Panama. Affiliates represent the diversity of America's museum community—size, location and subject—and serve all audiences. More than 8,000 Smithsonian artifacts have been displayed at Affiliate locations for the past 20 years.

Museum of Sonoma County

425 Seventh Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
707-579-1500
www.museumsc.org

Admission

Adults: \$10.00
Students and Seniors: \$7.00
Museum Members: FREE
Children 12 and under: FREE

Museum Hours

Open: Tuesday through Sunday, 11:00am - 5:00pm

Closed: Mondays

Closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, President's Day, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas; please visit our website for additional closures

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