

# SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF ART

SAN JOSÉ MUSEUM OF ART PRESENTS  
*WAYFINDER: CLARE ROJAS*  
FROM SEPTEMBER 3, 2021–MARCH 7, 2022

New public art project invites Bay Area Artists to create street banners for downtown San José.

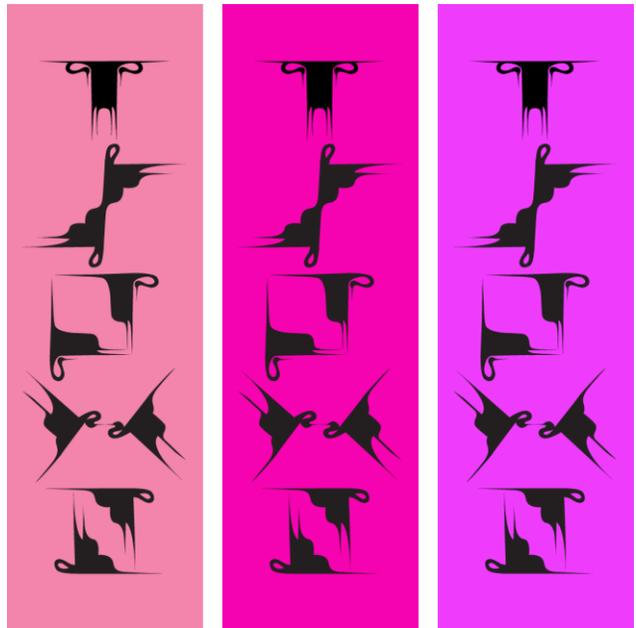
For Immediate Release

**San José, California** (August 27, 2021) — The San José Museum of Art will present *Wayfinder: Clare Rojas* from September 3, 2021 through March 7, 2022. For the launch of this new public art project San Francisco artist Clare Rojas created designs that will be placed on 40 streetlight banners along South Market and West San Carlos Streets in downtown San José. Following Rojas' presentation, SJMA will invite other Bay Area Artists to create new street banners for the *Wayfinder* series on an annual basis.

Rojas' street banners will be designed with shades of pink, magenta, and lavender. Each banner will feature a cascade of stylized blackbirds that tumble and shapeshift into abstract, beguiling forms. In the artist's work, blackbirds appear as omens from the supernatural world. Imbued with mysticism and magic, they caution against hubris and take shape as talismans for luck, protection, and freedom.

"With *Wayfinder*, SJMA will invite artists to use the existing streetlight banner infrastructure as a venue for public art. We are thrilled to launch this series with Clare Rojas. The birds in her artworks are often considered to be protectors and creators and I can think of no better symbol for San José, a city that is reimagining itself in a post-pandemic world," shared SJMA curator, Rory Padeken.

"We recognize that many people are not ready to return to public institutions and SJMA envisioned extending the experience of contemporary art. *Wayfinder* will ensure that creative expression is on view downtown for all visitors and enliven our city streets with cutting-edge art and design," said S. Sayre Batton, Oshman Executive Director, San José Museum of Art.



*Wayfinder* offers pedestrians, commuters, residents, and Museum visitors free, continuous access to contemporary art. The open nature of *Wayfinder* reinforces SJMA's overarching goal to become a borderless museum, essential to creative life throughout the diverse communities of San José and Silicon Valley. The banners create an informal walking tour through downtown San José, connecting SJMA to the mural *Sophie Holding the World Together*, created by El Mac in collaboration with The Propeller Group, part of Viet Nam: *The World Tour*. It was commissioned by the San José Museum of Art, in partnership with Empire Seven Studios and the Children's Discovery Museum and is located outside of the Children's Discovery Museum on Discovery Meadow. *Wayfinder* reiterates SJMA's dedication to the City of San José and to the community, by providing more public art.

## **CLARE ROJAS**

Clare Rojas combines abstract forms found in architecture and nature with figures and motifs culled from folkloric traditions and personal symbolism to create enigmatic and idiosyncratic paintings. She often addresses the relationship between humans and nature and issues of gender and female sexuality by depicting birds that represent mystical and spiritual forces of the natural world and strong, powerful women. Born in 1976 in Columbus, Ohio, Rojas received a BFA in printmaking from Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, and an MFA in painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has been awarded grants and residencies from Artadia, the Fleishhacker Foundation, Headlands Center for the Arts, and the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation. Rojas has had solo exhibitions at IKON Gallery, Birmingham, England; Knoxville Museum of Art, Tennessee; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts; and Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita, Kansas. Her work is in the permanent collections of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, California; Denver Art Museum; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; San José Museum of Art; Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, among others. Rojas lives and works in San Francisco.

## **PROGRAMMING**

First Friday | *Wayfinder: Clare Rojas* Opening  
Friday, September 3, 6–9pm | Free.

Celebrate the opening of *Wayfinder: Clare Rojas*, a public art project that encourages visitors to explore the heart of downtown San José. Remarks at 7pm, followed by a curator-led walking tour.

## **SUPPORT**

Operations and programs at the San José Museum of Art are made possible by generous support from the Museum's Board of Trustees, a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San José, the Lipman Family Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Richard A. Karp Charitable Foundation, Yvonne and Mike Nevens, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, The Yellow Chair Foundation, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the SJMA Director's Council and Council of 100, the San José Museum of Art

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**SAN JOSÉ MUSEUM OF ART**

SJMA is located at 110 South Market Street in downtown San José, California. The Museum is open Friday through Sunday, 11am to 6pm and until 8pm or later on the first Friday of each month. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and free to members, college students, youth and children ages 17 and under, and school teachers (with valid ID). For more information, call 408.271.6840 or visit [SanJoseMuseumofArt.org](http://SanJoseMuseumofArt.org).

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**IMAGE CREDITS**

*Wayfinder: Clare Rojas.* Design for an installation of 40 streetlight banners by Clare Rojas. Commissioned by the San José Museum of Art, 2021. © Clare Rojas. Courtesy of the artist and Jessica Silverman, San Francisco.