

# African American Art & Culture Complex Honors Emory Douglas' Revolutionary Work as an Artist in Two-Part Retrospective

*'Emory Douglas: In Our Lifetime' features Douglas' iconic pieces from the 1960s and contemporary work to-date*

**San Francisco, CA - January 27, 2026** - The [African American Art and Culture Complex](#) (AAACC) will open *Emory Douglas: In Our Lifetime*—a two-part retrospective of the work and process of artist and Minister of Culture for the Black Panther Party Emory Douglas—in its entirety to the public on Thursday, February 19 through October 2026. AAACC will host an [opening reception](#) on Thursday evening, February 19 from 5-8pm. Curators Rosalind McGary and Rio Yañez framed *In Our Lifetime* around Douglas's 12-point Political Artist Manifesto, a blueprint for anyone seeking to align creative practice with their revolutionary values. AAACC's two-part exhibition not only illustrates Douglas's evolution as a revolutionary artist across periods of profound social upheaval, but shows the power of visual art to inspire political awareness, radical imagination, and social change amidst urgent times.

"Emory Douglas is an iconic artist—to the world, and especially to San Francisco. He got his start as Minister of Culture for the Black Panther Party here in the Bay Area in 1967. He created their most well-known political graphics," said Rio Yañez, co-curator of *Emory Douglas: In Our Lifetime*. "He is a brilliant visual artist and activist who spreads powerful messages and engages multiple generations of people with his artwork. It's an honor to showcase his art and to show that even after a long and storied career, he is still making critical, relevant, and urgent work."

## **50 Years of Revolutionary Work and the Digital Era**

*Emory Douglas: In Our Lifetime Part One* of the exhibition, which has been on-view since December 5th, features work from the last two decades of the contemporary digital-era of Emory Douglas's work—reflecting modern political movements as well as remixes of Douglas's most iconic works. This part of the exhibition establishes the Manifesto as the guiding principle of Douglas's process to this day.

*Emory Douglas: In Our Lifetime Part Two* is a survey of the work and vision of the revolutionary artist spanning over 50 years. This exhibit captures Douglas's iconic work with the Black Panther Party, prints visually defining decades of global movements, and rarely seen original paintings. The exhibition also documents his artistic process and the many forms his works have taken over the years.

*Emory Douglas: In Our Lifetime Part Two* exemplifies what it means for an artist to create political work. Whether it is in Douglas's revolutionary artwork for the Panthers or his work as a political printmaker and painter, the art and messages of *Emory Douglas: In Our Lifetime Part*

Two have only grown in relevancy, urgency, and power. As the United States reckons with authoritarian violence and racism Douglas' work is a profound reminder of the revolutionary resistance and collective care of which we are capable.

"The importance of art and the Black Panther Party movement was to share a visual interpretation of the issues, struggles, and challenges that concerned our people, with a broader community," said Emory Douglas, artist and Minister of Culture for the Black Panther Party. "Much of the African American community learns through observation and participation, so it was vital to tell our own stories through the arts."

### **An Activist and Revolutionary Artist**

Emory Douglas has deep roots in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he has been a resident since 1951. He attended City College of San Francisco where he majored in commercial art. Huey Newton and Bobby Seale named Douglas as Revolutionary Artist and later Minister of Culture for the Black Panther Party from 1967 until 1982 when the Party disbanded. Primarily an activist, Douglas uses his visual creativity and skills to advocate for international social justice.

Douglas's work became the recognizable signature style of The Black Panther newspaper, which usually featured bold illustrated graphics on its back covers. In addition to designing and creating illustrations for the publication, he trained other Party members to contribute their creativity. Later, he was a pre-press production artist and created illustrations for the San Francisco Sun Reporter publishing company until his retirement.

Still creating visual work that comments on and protests current events, Douglas continues to make art that shows people overcoming obstacles while working towards harmony and peace. He developed a manifesto for aspiring visual activists, continuing the Black Panther Party directive, "each one teach one." Emory Douglas's work reaches across decades, generations, and the world to achieve "All Power to the People."

### **Opening event details:**

*Emory Douglas: In Our Lifetime*

Curated by Rosalind McGary and Rio Yañez

762 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

Thursday, February 19, 2026

5pm-8pm

[RSVP here](#)

For more information, please visit [aaacc.org](http://aaacc.org)

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**About the African American Art and Culture Complex (AAACC)**

Located in the historic Fillmore/Western Addition neighborhood, the African American Art & Culture Complex (AAACC) is one of the premier Black arts and cultural institutions in the San Francisco/Bay Area. AAACC is one of seven cultural centers in the San Francisco Arts Commission's Neighborhood Arts Program.

**About Rosalind McGary**

Rosalind McGary is a curator, producer, and practicing artist committed to leveraging art as a catalyst for healing, empowerment, and social impact. She is the Founder and Creative Director of The Compton Arts Project, an artist-led, community-based initiative in the City of Compton that utilizes the arts as a mechanism for community building and cultural preservation. She is also the Founder and CEO of Cakecutter Institute, its nonprofit partner, an arts organization serving the South LA and Compton ecosystem through arts and cultural programming. McGary is the founder of Sêpia Artist Collective, which produces ICONIC: Black Panther, a critically acclaimed, multi-city group exhibition that has featured the work of over 200 artists. She has a Proven track record of fostering strategic partnerships, and developing impactful arts initiatives that highlight a region's rich artistic heritage and support local artists.

**About Rio Yañez**

Rio Yañez (he/him) is a visual artist and curator based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Born into a family of artists—quite literally conceived in an art studio—his creative path was predestined.

Yañez's artwork has been exhibited internationally, from San Francisco to Tokyo, and he has created original installations for major exhibitions, including The Fashion World of Jean Paul Gaultier: From the Sidewalk to the Catwalk. As a curator, he has organized over 25 exhibitions, many in collaboration with his late father, artist and curator René Yañez. Their 13-year partnership shaped a wide range of exhibitions and public programs that centered cultural legacy, community, and humor.

Carrying forward his father's legacy, Yañez continues to co-curate the annual Día de los Muertos exhibition at SOMArts in collaboration with artist Bridgett Rex. He is also a proud founding member of The Great Tortilla Conspiracy, the world's first—and arguably most subversive—tortilla art collective.