

BAY AREA 灣區

Ansel Adams Wallace Berman Luke Butler Jeffrey Cheung Bruce Conner
Imogen Cunningham Sahar Khoury Lynn Hershman Leeson
Alicia McCarthy Barry McGee Ishimoto Yasuhiro Oliver Lee Jackson

1 October to 7 November 2026 *Each Modern* 亞紀畫廊

Each Modern is pleased to present **BAY AREA**. Continuing the gallery's city-based curatorial series launched in 2025, the exhibition looks at the cultural and artistic development of a city to reconsider significant works across different periods, and to reflect on their meaning within art history and collecting today.

When the world talks about art and AI, the discussion often centers on the same question: **Will AI replace artists?** This exhibition turns that question around and asks one that has received far less attention: **What kind of art and culture made AI possible?**

The emergence of artificial intelligence was not simply a technological development that took place in laboratories; it was deeply connected to history and environment. Long before the Bay Area became a global center of technology, it had already served as a cultural laboratory for continually rethinking vision, media, identity, and ways of living. Artists, engineers, immigrants, countercultural movements, LGBTQ+ communities, university researchers, and those who freely challenged established conventions converged in this region, gradually cultivating a distinctive cultural environment. Again and again, the Bay Area became a place where new media, new ways of seeing, and new ideas could emerge.

Over the past century, the Bay Area has witnessed at least three major revolutions in visual culture.

The first was **photography**. In 1932, Group f/64 redefined photography in San Francisco. Rejecting the imitation of painting, its members embraced the camera's own mechanical qualities and sought to render the world with maximum clarity and precision. Ansel Adams transformed nature into the visual order of modern photography, while Imogen Cunningham brought the same incisive vision to plants and the human body. In her photographs of Martha Graham, Cunningham portrayed a woman who had forged her own artistic language through movement, strength, and determination. Born in San Francisco, Yasuhiro Ishimoto moved between American modernism and Japanese culture, bringing Japanese aesthetics and Zen-inflected ways of seeing into the Bay Area's cross-cultural dialogue. Together, they reveal a defining openness of the region: the freedom to see the world anew from different cultural positions.

The second revolution was **the electronic image**. In 1927, Philo Farnsworth conducted a crucial early experiment with electronic television in San Francisco. By the second half of the twentieth century, the Bay Area had become an important site for experimentation with electronic media, images, and technology. Lynn Hershman Leeson was among the earliest artists to explore questions of identity, surveillance, networks, artificial intelligence, and technological ethics through photography, video, and interactive media. In her work, technology is no longer simply a tool for producing images; it begins to intervene in how we understand ourselves, and in who holds the power to see and to be seen.

The third revolution is **Computer Vision**. From the early research of the Stanford Artificial Intelligence Laboratory in the 1960s to ImageNet, Google Street View, and Waymo, images gradually ceased to exist solely for human eyes and became data that machines could analyze, classify, and interpret. Photography once enabled machines to record the world; a century later, humans began teaching machines to read it. Computer Vision therefore changes not only how images are produced, but the very status of the image itself.

And yet, these three revolutions alone cannot explain the Bay Area.

Running parallel to technological innovation is another, equally important cultural history. Wallace Berman developed a visual language associated with the Beat Generation through Verifax, photography, and underground publishing, transforming new reproduction technologies into vehicles for the free circulation of images and ideas. Bruce Conner, a key figure associated with the Beat generation, also documented the music culture of his time. Oliver Lee Jackson forged his own pictorial language across music, abstraction, and African American culture, refusing to allow his practice to be confined by a single identity or established form.

By the 1990s, this countercultural spirit reappeared in another form. The Mission School, represented by Barry McGee and Alicia McCarthy, brought street culture, graffiti, punk, DIY practices, and community into contemporary art. As the technology industry rapidly transformed the urban landscape of San Francisco, their art emerged not from another grand system, but organically from streets, friendships, subcultures, and local communities.

The region's openness to difference has continued to attract people of diverse identities and backgrounds to live and work there. Drawing from multiple cultural and communal experiences, Sahar Khoury creates structures shaped by material, memory, everyday life, and chance. Through painting, publishing, and community-based practices, Jeffrey Cheung portrays the diverse queer bodies and ways of living that characterize the Bay Area today. Luke Butler reappropriates images from film, television, and American popular culture, examining how visual symbols that once shaped collective memory acquire new meanings in the present.

From **Group f/64 to the Beat Generation, from the Mission School to community-based practices; from female perspectives, Asian immigration, African American culture, and queer communities to electronic images, Computer Vision, and AI**—these histories may appear unrelated, yet they all emerged from the same cultural ground.

Seen from this perspective, AI is not an isolated technological phenomenon, but the latest chapter in the Bay Area's longer history of questioning established systems and imagining alternatives—one shaped by its sustained openness to experimentation across media, disciplines, identities, and ways of life. BAY AREA looks back at the art and culture that helped make such a future imaginable, not simply to trace where AI came from, but to consider what this history might offer its next stage.

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當所有人問：「AI 會對藝術產生什麼影響？」

我們則反問：「究竟是什麼樣的藝術文化才讓 AI 成為可能？」

亞紀畫廊很榮幸呈現國際群展「BAY AREA」。本展延續畫廊自 2025 年展開的城市策展系列，透過一座城市的文化與藝術發展，重新觀看不同時代的重要作品，並思考其在今日的收藏與藝術史意義。

繼去年以「昭和 100 年」為背景、廣受好評的「TOKYO」之後，今年將視線轉向與台灣科技產業具有深刻連結的「舊金山灣區」。

當世界談起藝術與 AI 時，往往將焦點放在同一個問題：AI 會不會取代藝術家？本展試圖將這個問題倒轉過來，提出一個我們較少關注的問題：究竟是什麼樣的藝術與文化，讓 AI 的誕生成為可能？

人工智慧的誕生，並非僅是實驗室中的技術發展，而與歷史及環境息息相關。AI 所出現的 Bay Area，在成為全球科技中心以前，早已是一片持續重新思考觀看、媒介、身份與生活方式的文化實驗場。藝術家、工程師、移民、反文化運動、LGBTQ+ 社群與大學研究，以及所有以自由的態度對既有規則提出質疑的人，在這片土地上彼此交會，逐漸培育出深層的地域文化，使 Bay Area 一次又一次成為新媒介、新觀看方式與新思想得以萌芽的地方。

過去一個世紀，Bay Area 至少見證了三次重要的視覺革命。

一次革命是攝影。1932 年，Group f/64 在舊金山重新定義了攝影。他們拒絕讓攝影模仿繪畫，主張忠於相機自身的機械特性，以最大的清晰度與精確性觀看世界。Ansel Adams 將自然轉化為現代攝影的視覺秩序；Imogen Cunningham 則將同樣銳利的觀看帶向植物與人體，她鏡頭下的 Martha Graham，更是一位以動作、力量與意志建立自身語言的女性。出生於舊金山的石元泰博，則往返於美國現代主義與日本文化之間，將日本美學與禪的觀看帶入灣區的跨文化思考之中。他們共同說明了灣區所具有的開放性——容許人們從不同的文化位置重新觀看世界。

第二次革命是電子影像。1927 年，Philo Farnsworth 在舊金山完成早期電視系統的重要實驗；到了二十世紀後半，灣區進一步成為電子媒介、影像與科技實驗的重要場域。Lynn Hershman Leeson 很早便開始透過攝影、錄像與互動媒介思考身份、監控、網路、人工智慧與科技倫理。在她的作品中，科技不再只是製造影像的工具，而開始介入人如何理解自己，以及誰擁有觀看與被觀看的權力。

第三次革命是 Computer Vision。從 1960 年代 Stanford Artificial Intelligence Laboratory 的早期研究，到後來的 ImageNet、Google Street View 與 Waymo，影像逐漸不再只是為人眼而存在，而成為可以被機器分析、分類與理解的資料。攝影曾經讓機器記錄世界；一個世紀之後，人類開始教導機器閱讀世界。Computer Vision 因此改變的不只是影像製造的方法，更是影像本身的地位。

然而，這三次革命仍不足以解釋 Bay Area。

與科技創新平行發生的，是另一條同樣重要的文化歷史。Wallace Berman 透過 Verifax、攝影與地下出版建立垮世代（Beat Generation）的視覺語言，讓當時嶄新的複印技術成為自由傳播影像與思想的媒介；Bruce Conner 也以垮世代領導者的身份，記錄了當時的音樂文化。Oliver Lee Jackson 在音樂、抽象與非裔美國文化之間建立自己的繪畫語言，拒絕讓創作被單一身份或既定形式所限定。

到了 1990 年代，這種反文化精神以另一種形式重新出現。Barry McGee 與 Alicia McCarthy 所代表的 Mission School，將街頭、塗鴉、punk、DIY 與社群文化帶入當代藝術。在科技產業迅速改變舊金山城市面貌的同時，他們的藝術並非來自另一套宏大的體系，而是從街道、朋友、次文化與地方社群中自然生長。

這片土地對差異的容納，也持續吸引不同身份與背景的人在此生活與創作。Sahar Khoury 從多元的文化與社群經驗出發，在材料、記憶與日常生活之間建立充滿偶然性的結構；Jeffrey Cheung 則透過繪畫、出版與社群實踐，描繪今日灣區多元的 queer 身體與生活方式。Luke Butler 重新取用電影、電視與美國大眾文化中的圖像，觀看這些曾經塑造共同記憶的視覺符號，如何在今天產生新的意義。

從 Group f/64 到 Beat Generation，從 Mission School 到社群實踐；從女性觀看、亞洲移民、非裔文化與 queer communities，電子影像、Computer Vision 與 AI——這些看似彼此無關的歷史，其實共享著同一片文化土壤。

Bay Area 的特殊性，或許從來不只是它發明了什麼，而是它長期對新的觀看、創作與生活方式保持開放。唯有這樣的文化，才能讓人持續相信，世界可以用另一種方式被觀看與思考。每一次新的觀看，最終仍開始於人。這正是 Bay Area 的文化——或許也是藝術始終存在的理由。