

1 THE BOROUGHES: BY ZACH ROSEN

STATE STREET

MUSEUMS ALONG STATE: OFFERING A TOUCH OF THE NEW AND THE FAMILIAR



Lunchboxing with Lasers is the newest exhibit at the MOXI

The past year has seen countless changes in both our personal lives and our community. With how much is different, visiting somewhere familiar can help bring a sense of comfort. As the city reopens, it is a chance to go back to some of our favorite places around town. The museums of Santa Barbara have long been icons in the community, bringing in tourists and locals alike. With several museums lining State Street, and all of them now reopened, take some time to pop in and give one a visit. Seeing the old exhibits while also viewing what they have new on display may bring a much-needed moment of comfort.

MOXI, The Wolf Museum of Exploration + Innovation, has officially reopened and will be bringing interactive fun to guests seven days a week once again starting on June 20. Returning visitors may notice a couple of one-way paths and will be asked to remain masked and socially distanced, but for the most part, they will enjoy the same museum experience they're familiar with. Many of the exhibits are reopened, including all of their most popular ones, and some have even been renovated.

During the closure, the MOXI staff was able to finish some projects including an update for their popular Build it, Test it, Race it exhibit where participants can build and race their own cars. The exhibit parts had been in use since the museum opened in 2017 and were getting worn so they wanted to redesign and replace all of the car pieces. Guests can now visit the same exhibit but will have a new challenge as they navigate the renovated parts.

Last summer, MOXI hosted a community challenge, CurioCity, to construct buildings and the city of the future out of cardboard. With about 40 entries, the cardboard structures now form a cityscape along their second-floor bridge. Their scheduled temporary artists all had to be postponed or canceled last year, but they are now starting to bring back these special contributors as well.

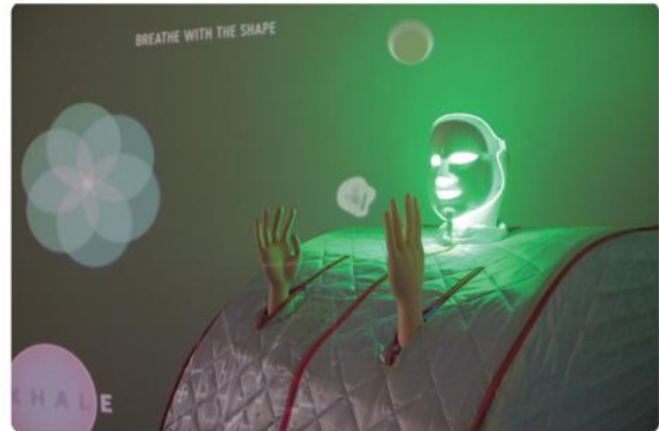
The MOXI is introducing their newest exhibit, Lunchboxing with Lasers by renowned laser artist Mike Gould, just in time for the city reopening. Enter into a dark room to find a wall of lasers dancing in red, blue, and green. Three vintage lunch boxes add a touch of nostalgia for visiting parents and house futuristic jeweled controls that allow tinkerers to control the speed, angle, and intensity of the lasers, creating their own live light show.

Over the past year, like many of the museums, MOXI developed online and at-home experiences to stay in touch with the community. From a Backyard Summer BBQ to their Innovation Workshop Maker Kits, this series of take-home kits brought the same hands-on fun that MOXI is known for. Since the fall they have been developing their Virtual Design Labs that bring a live classroom experience through Zoom where students can explore the engineering design process. Students were faced with a real-world challenge with participants creating, sketching, and building solutions from their own mind and simple household materials.

While they are planning to bring back their school programs as the county allows, the past year of online programs allowed them to expand their reach beyond the museum walls. To maintain this, they will likely create a hybrid approach of in-person and online offerings in the future. Until then, the MOXI is focused on giving the best experience they can to their everyday visitor.

Visit moxi.org for more information or for tickets. Reservations are highly recommended.

RECORD CROWDS GREET MCASB'S RETURN



In her exhibit, artist Shana Moulton explores consumerism and both alternative and conventional healing

Many of the museums have been hurting during their closures due to the loss of admission fees. Since the Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (MCASB) always has free admission, their reopening has had a different effect. Much of their support comes from their range of popular public events that have covered everything from curated cocktails to slam poetry (of course, the donations at the door from visitors also help). And depending on how this summer's safety fares, they plan to bring back their in-person offerings as soon as they can.

The museum officially reopened about eight weeks ago and has since seen record attendance. Besides the fact that we could all use some socialization, their current exhibit, *Shana Moulton: The Invisible Seventh is the Mystic Column*, is one of the reasons they are drawing in the crowds. Melding video installations and art objects, this colorful exhibit is a continuation of her series, *Whispering Pines*.

Exploring ideas of isolation, self-help, and consumerism, follow Shana's alter ego Cynthia in a variety of quirky video performances spread throughout the museum. While the exhibit was being planned since before the pandemic, the message became even more relevant as the exhibit discussions continued.

There will be a Zoom artist talk with Shana Moulton on July 1, where the audience will be able to hear directly about the project and her overall body of work. Many of Shana's exhibitions include an element of performance and a closing ceremony for the exhibit is being planned for the end of July that will display her performative work. If all goes smoothly with the reopening, the closing ceremony will be held in-person near the end of July at the museum and its front outdoor terrace.

While a lot may have changed, these museums at least offer a sense of the familiar we all know and love, and the new that we are learning to go through.

Visit mcasantabarbara.org for more information on the exhibit or to sign up for the artist talk.

THE HAPPENING... JUNETEENTH

Location: 833 State Street

Date: June 18-19

Time: Noon-7 pm (open gallery)

Cost: Free

Website: juneteenthsb.org

Description: Remembering Juneteenth, this annual event highlights local Black artisans and culture with two days of activities celebrating Black history and futures including a market, gallery, and virtual programs alongside free food, dancing, and singing.