



**Contact:** Emily Brunt | [emilyb@slartcenter.org](mailto:emilyb@slartcenter.org) | 801.328.4201 x 115  
[www.utahmoca.org](http://www.utahmoca.org) | 20 S West Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84101  
Tue-Thu & Sat 11 AM – 6 PM, Fri 11 AM – 9 PM

## **Salt Lake Art Center is now Utah Museum of Contemporary Art**

***Community leaders embrace the evolution of Utah's  
oldest visual arts organization***

**For Immediate Release:  
December 6, 2011**

**SALT LAKE CITY-** Salt Lake Art Center announces that it is changing its name to the **Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, also to be known as UMOCA (pronounced “you-mocha”).**

This change will provide greater clarity to the general public about what the institution offers.

“This is not the first time we have changed our name. This institution started life as the Art Barn in 1931, and then changed to Salt Lake Art Center in 1958. As the community in Salt Lake has grown since then, so, too, has the Art Center, becoming a vibrant contemporary art museum,” says Adam Price, Executive Director. “Our new name, the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, reaffirms our determination to bring great contemporary visual art to residents of--and visitors to-- our state through more than 20 exhibitions annually.”

“Salt Lake Art Center’s metamorphosis into the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art is a momentous event for our community. I am proud that UMOCA is resident in our County facilities, ensuring that our citizens have access to the best contemporary art from around the world all year long,” says Salt Lake County Mayor, Peter Corroon.

In just the last 12 months, for instance, the Art Center, now UMOCA, has exhibited groundbreaking work by leading national and international artists, including: TED presenter Miwa Matreyek; MacArthur Genius Award recipient Bill T. Jones; Guggenheim Fellow Jennifer Nelson; Venice Biennale artist Daniela Comani; 2011 Rome Prize winner Mary Reid Kelly; recipient of the Leone d’Oro award for Lifetime Achievement, Barbara Kruger; and the inaugural recipient of the Catherine Doctorow Prize for Contemporary Painting, Kim Schoenstadt. On Dec. 2, 2012, UMOCA opened a new exhibition by German artist and Fulbright scholar Mirko Martin, and in January UMOCA will exhibit artists working at the cutting-edge of digital media as part of Sundance Film Festival’s *New Frontier*.

At the same time, the staff and trustees of UMOCA have recommitted themselves to the local community by designating the front-most gallery in the building exclusively for exhibitions year-round of Utah artists working in a contemporary idiom.

“Our new name honors the many contributions of past trustees, directors, staff, donors and volunteers who have sustained the organization for eight decades, while moving us simultaneously toward a bright and exciting future,” says Roy Jespersen, President-Elect, Board of Trustees, Utah Museum of Contemporary Art.

“UMOCA is one of our greatest assets, contributing to the economic, cultural, and artistic life of our urban core. In particular I’ve been delighted to notice their new community outreach, transforming the institution into a cherished centerpiece of downtown life,” says Jason Mathis, Executive Director, Downtown Alliance.

With two new permanent galleries recently added, an exciting curatorial vision that is striking a resonant chord with residents of Utah, a five-fold increase in audience over the last 18 months, and a new premium café scheduled to open shortly, the change of name also signals high aspirations for the future.

Adam Price continues, “The great cities of this country have museums that are dedicated to the ‘art of today,’ and that also contribute to downtown renewal, cultural tourism, national recognition and economic development that benefit the urban core. We stand ready to play this active role in the broader community.”

Aspects of the change from Salt Lake Art Center to Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, such as the website, [utahmoca.org](http://utahmoca.org), are already in place, and other changes, such as permanent signage, will take place in the first part of the New Year.

###