

I'm writing in support of funding for the Portland Art Museum the funding for their Rothko Pavilion project and ongoing support for the museum's programming. When I moved to Oregon in 1985 PAM was an interesting regional museum but seemed out of touch with both the broader community and with the growing local contemporary art community. Over the years and especially in the last ten or so years PAM has really come into its own, with a more progressive curatorial philosophy along with wonderful outreach program to all facets of our community. The staff has diversified and the kinds of programs offered to the community has expanded, with programs for families, cutting edge risk taking shows to challenge the art community, support for artists during the pandemic, and opportunities for guest curating to expand the offerings even further, all while sustaining the more traditional roles of a civic art museum. With the Rothko Pavilion PAM has the opportunity to honor one of Oregon's most innovative and important artists. It also has the opportunity to unify the original museum building with the Mark Building. If the architecture lives up to its promise it has the potential to make PAM more of a destination for art lovers from outside the state and to enhance our presence in the international cultural ecosystem. People travel from around the world to visit the Rothko Chapel in Texas. With luck and support from the state our Rothko Pavilion could exert the same kind of magnetism at a time when Portland's downtown needs revival. This is one of those opportunities that is about more than what initially meets the eye. If PAM is able to grow it will also be able to provide more programs for our community. If PAM grows and thrives they will also be able to open more opportunities for local artists. During the pandemic I've seen PAM step up both for the community and for artists. At the same time, we've lost so many important cultural institutions in the past few years; the Art Gym, the Oregon College of Arts and Crafts, The Hoffman Gallery at Lewis and Clark is much diminished with the loss of its professional curator, The Contemporary Crafts Museum was a loss not just to Oregon but to the entire country as it was one of only a handful of such museums in the world. In many ways Oregon and Portland have been defined by its creative community, our remaining institutions need our robust support if we are to remain the innovative hub of creativity we like to think we are.