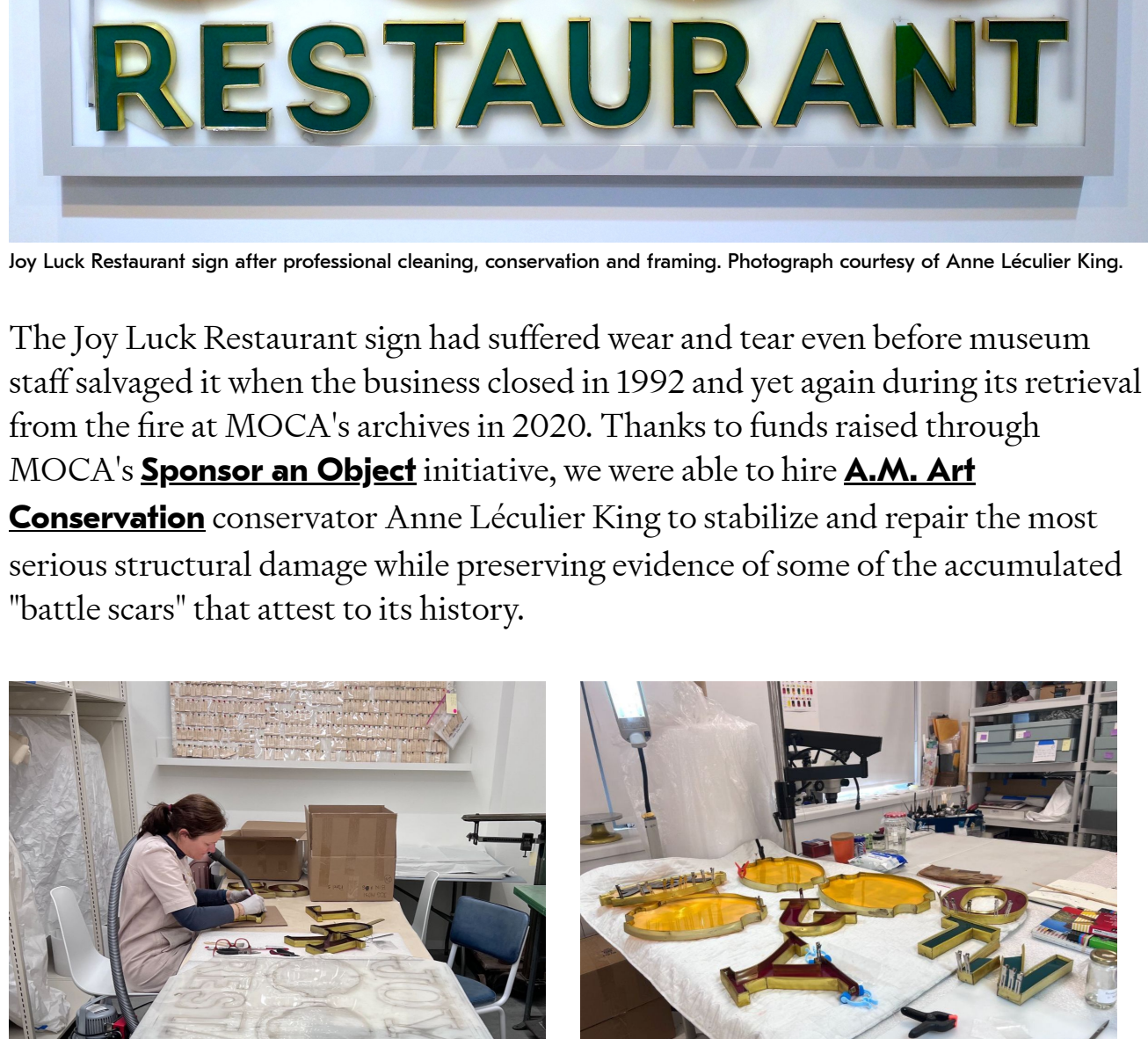


MOCA Collections

Newsletter

April 2024

Joy Luck Restaurant Sign Conservation Treatment Complete!



Joy Luck Restaurant sign after professional cleaning, conservation and framing. Photograph courtesy of Anne Léculier King.

The Joy Luck Restaurant sign had suffered wear and tear even before museum staff salvaged it when the business closed in 1992 and yet again during its retrieval from the fire at MOCA's archives in 2020. Thanks to funds raised through MOCA's **Sponsor an Object** initiative, we were able to hire **A.M. Art Conservation** conservator Anne Léculier King to stabilize and repair the most serious structural damage while preserving evidence of some of the accumulated "battle scars" that attest to its history.



Anne Léculier King surface cleaning the removed lettering of the Joy Luck Restaurant sign with vacuum and brush. Photograph courtesy of Anne Léculier King.



Metal lettering undergoing repair of the professional conservation lab of Anne Léculier King. Photograph courtesy of Anne Léculier King.

Opened by Sai Fon Lung in the 1930s, when the country was in the midst of the Great Depression, the family-owned Joy Luck Restaurant sustained through six decades and became a neighborhood favorite.

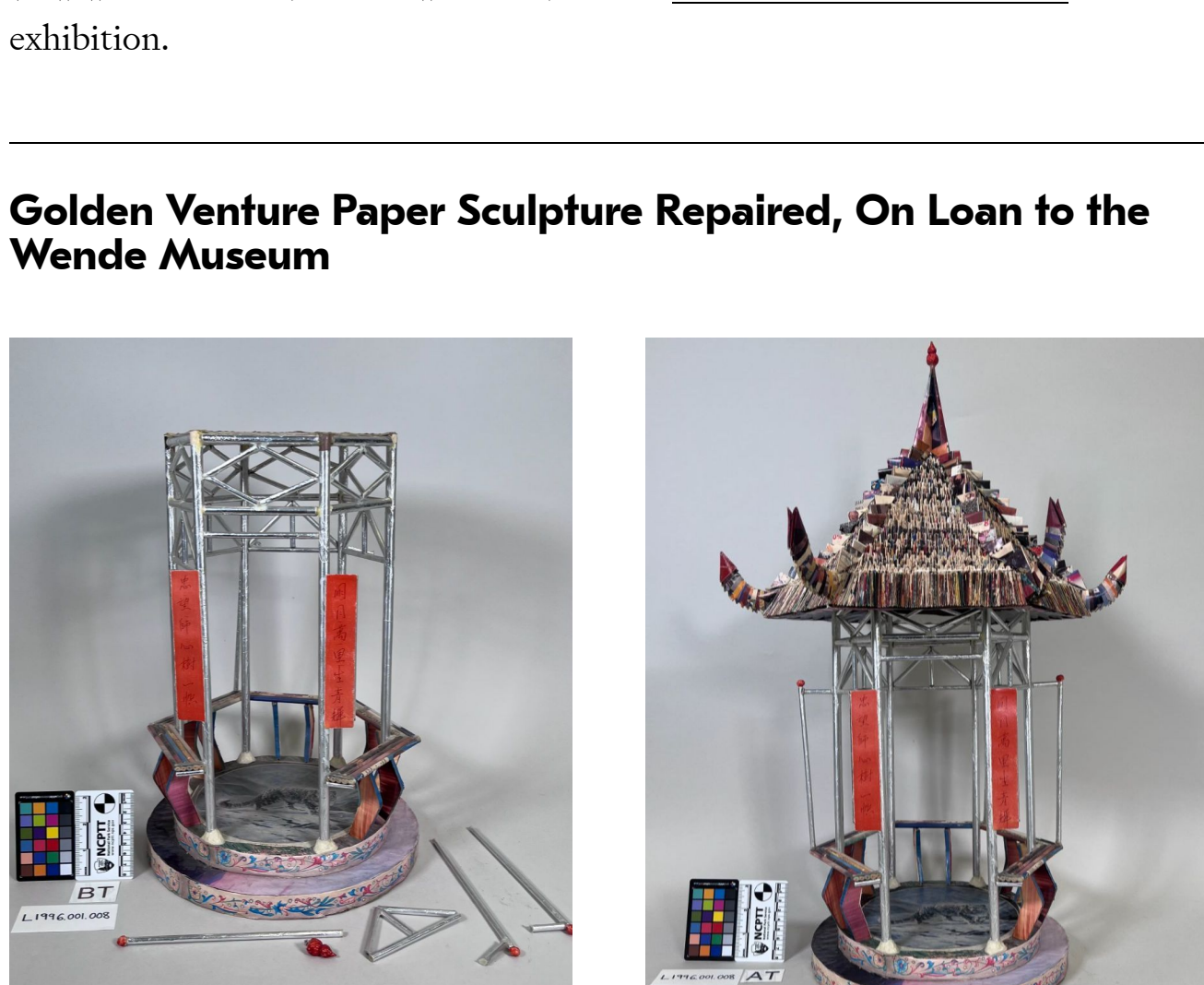


Portrait of Sai Fon Lung, his wife Tew Ying, and their three sons, Leung Chun Siew (Leung Fook Soon, left), Leung Chun Yim (Leung Fook Him, center), and Leung Chun Kai (Leung Fook Hong, right), in 1957. Photograph courtesy of the families of Sai Fon Lung's three sons.

Recently, MOCA was honored to host a visit from more than 20 members of Sai Fon Lung's family, who came from all across the country and across the pond to see their family's Joy Luck Restaurant sign in person after it had been fully restored.

We are grateful to the families of Sai Fon Lung's three sons, Lillian Cheu, Kristine and Robert Dennehy, Kerri Ann Lee, and Pam Elam for generously sponsoring the sign's conservation treatment.

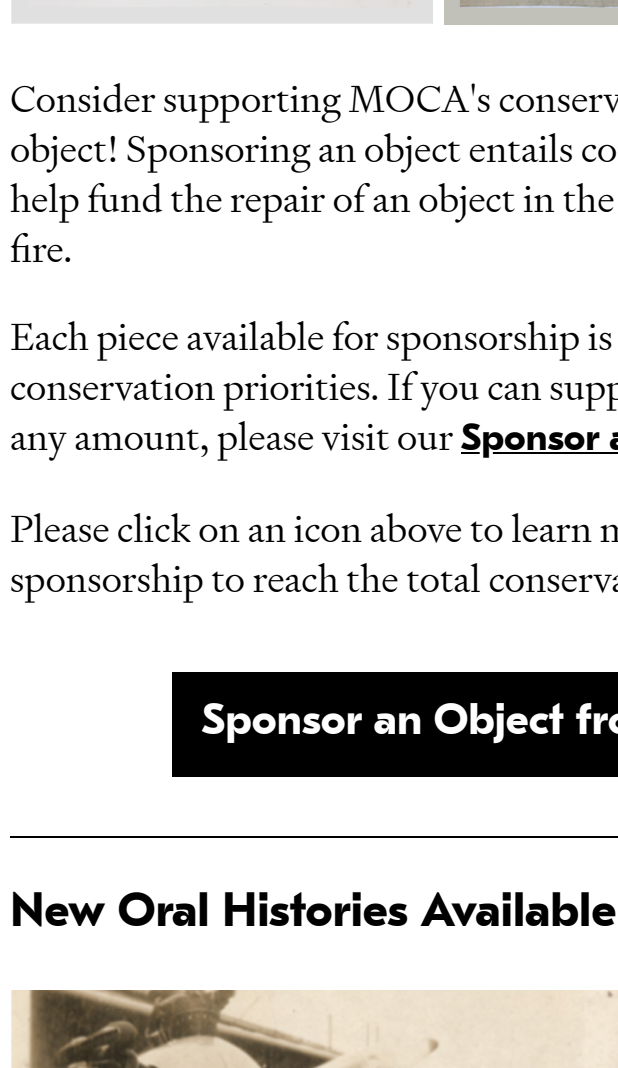
Dong Kingman Watercolor Repaired, On View in MOCA's Five Senses of Chinatown Exhibition



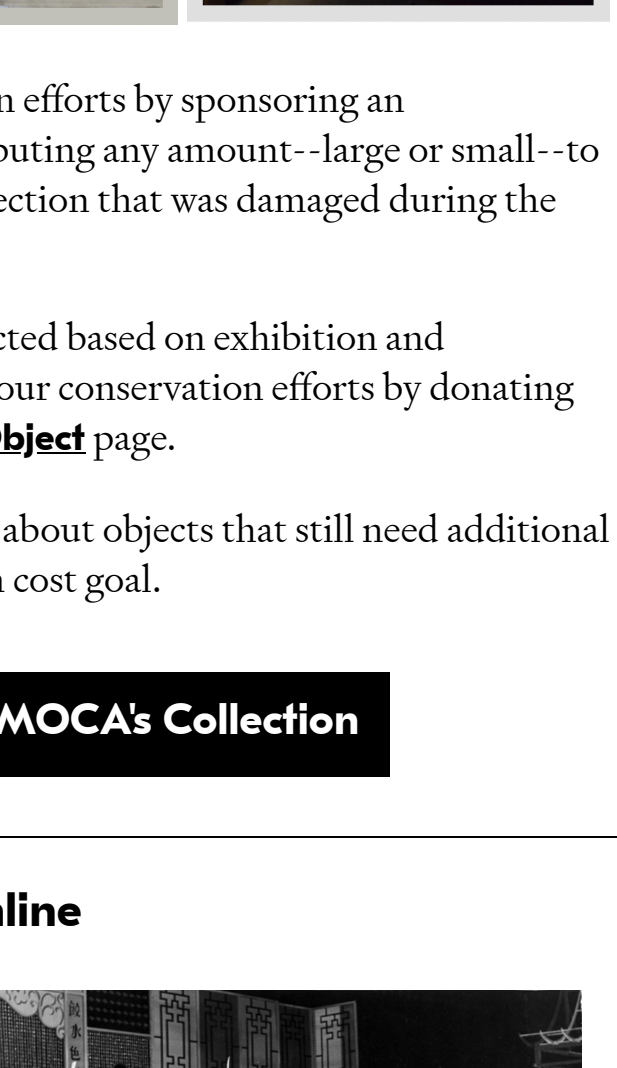
Restored Dong Kingman watercolor currently on display in MOCA's Five Senses of Chinatown exhibition. Photograph courtesy of Nancy Ng Tam.

With funds donated to MOCA's **Sponsor an Object** initiative by Elaine Kingman, MOCA was able to hire conservator Rachel Danzing to expertly clean and remove mold and stains from Dong Kingman's watercolor of New York Chinatown's iconic Mott Street in 1953. The fully restored piece is currently on view with local students' artwork in MOCA's **Five Senses of Chinatown** exhibition.

Golden Venture Paper Sculpture Repaired, On Loan to the Wende Museum



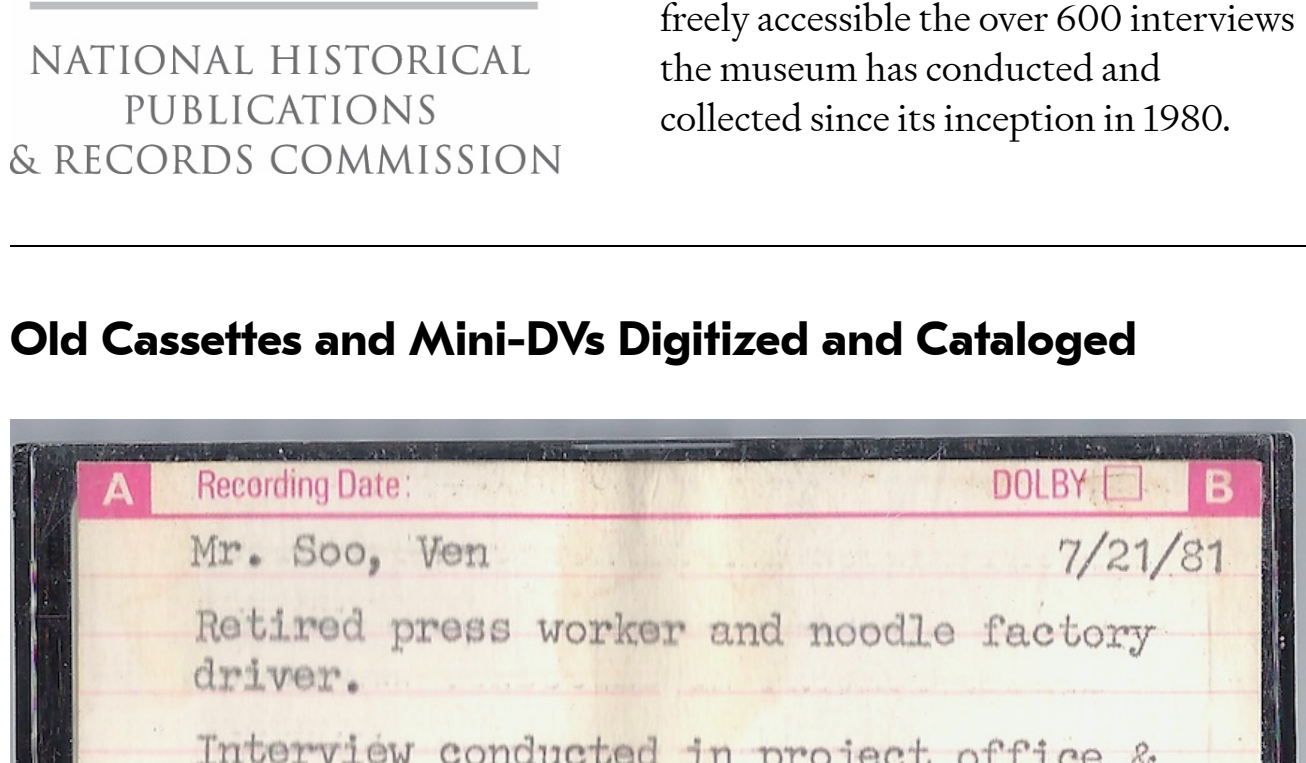
Before treatment photograph showing the pagoda with detachable roof removed and broken pieces of the base in need of repair. Photograph courtesy of Anne Léculier King.



Frontal view of the pagoda paper sculpture after undergoing conservation treatment by Anne Léculier King. Photograph courtesy of Anne Léculier King.

Being mostly made of glue and paper, MOCA's collection of paper sculptures crafted by Chinese refugees of the Golden Venture during their long years in immigration detention suffered widespread water damage during the fire at MOCA's archives. **The Wende Museum** recently partnered with us to sponsor the repair of one paper sculpture--an intricately folded and assembled pagoda--for the purpose of displaying it in their popular current exhibition, **Visions of Transcendence: Creating Space in East and West**. A digital version of the **exhibition catalog** is viewable online. We are grateful to the Wende Museum for their conservation assistance and for helping to share the art and story of Golden Venture refugees with audiences in Culver City, California and beyond.

Sponsor an Object



Consider supporting MOCA's conservation efforts by sponsoring an object! Sponsoring an object entails contributing any amount--large or small--to help fund the repair of an object in the collection that was damaged during the fire.

Each piece available for sponsorship is selected based on exhibition and conservation priorities. If you can support our conservation efforts by donating any amount, please visit our **Sponsor an Object** page.

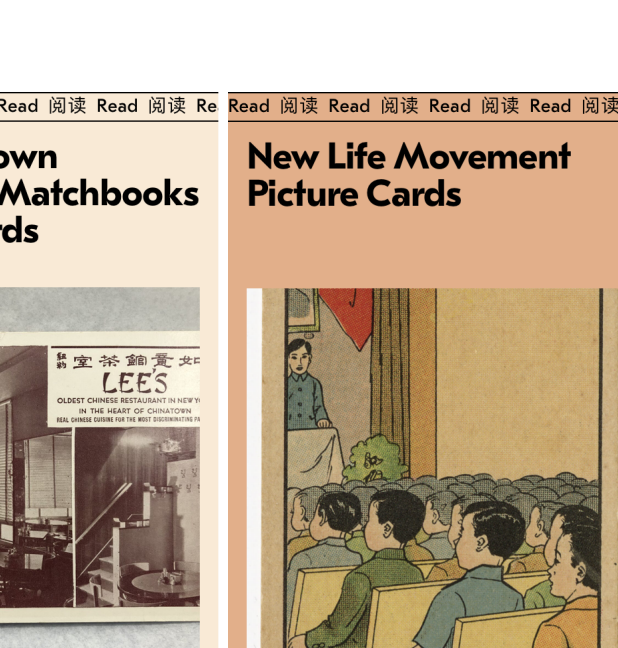
Please click on an icon above to learn more about objects that still need additional sponsorship to reach the total conservation cost goal.

Sponsor an Object from MOCA's Collection

New Oral Histories Available Online

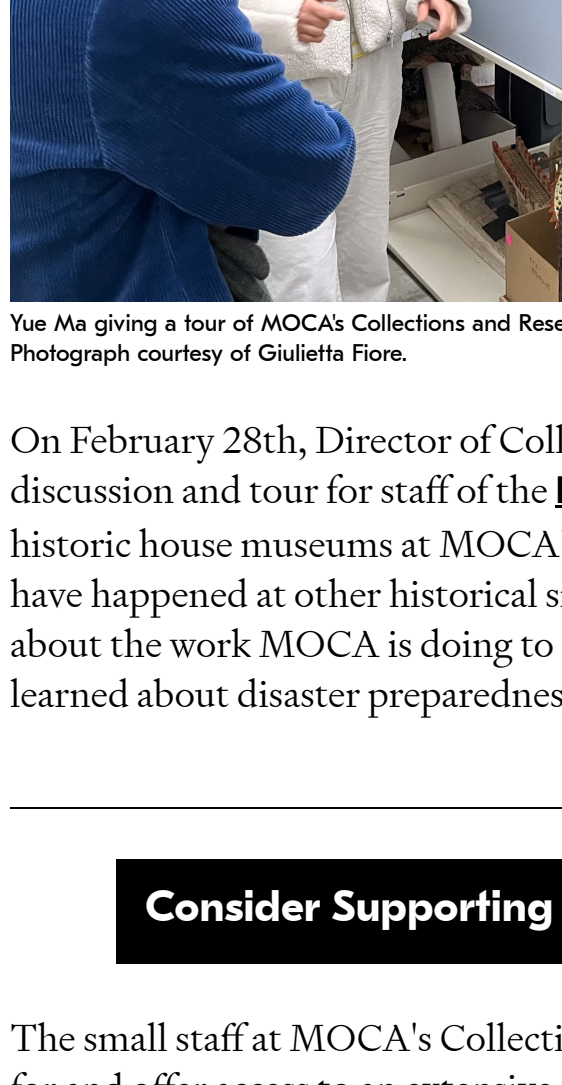


Hazel Ying Lee (right) and Virginia Wong (left), two pioneer Chinese American women aviators, ca. 1932. Photograph courtesy of Frances M. Tong.



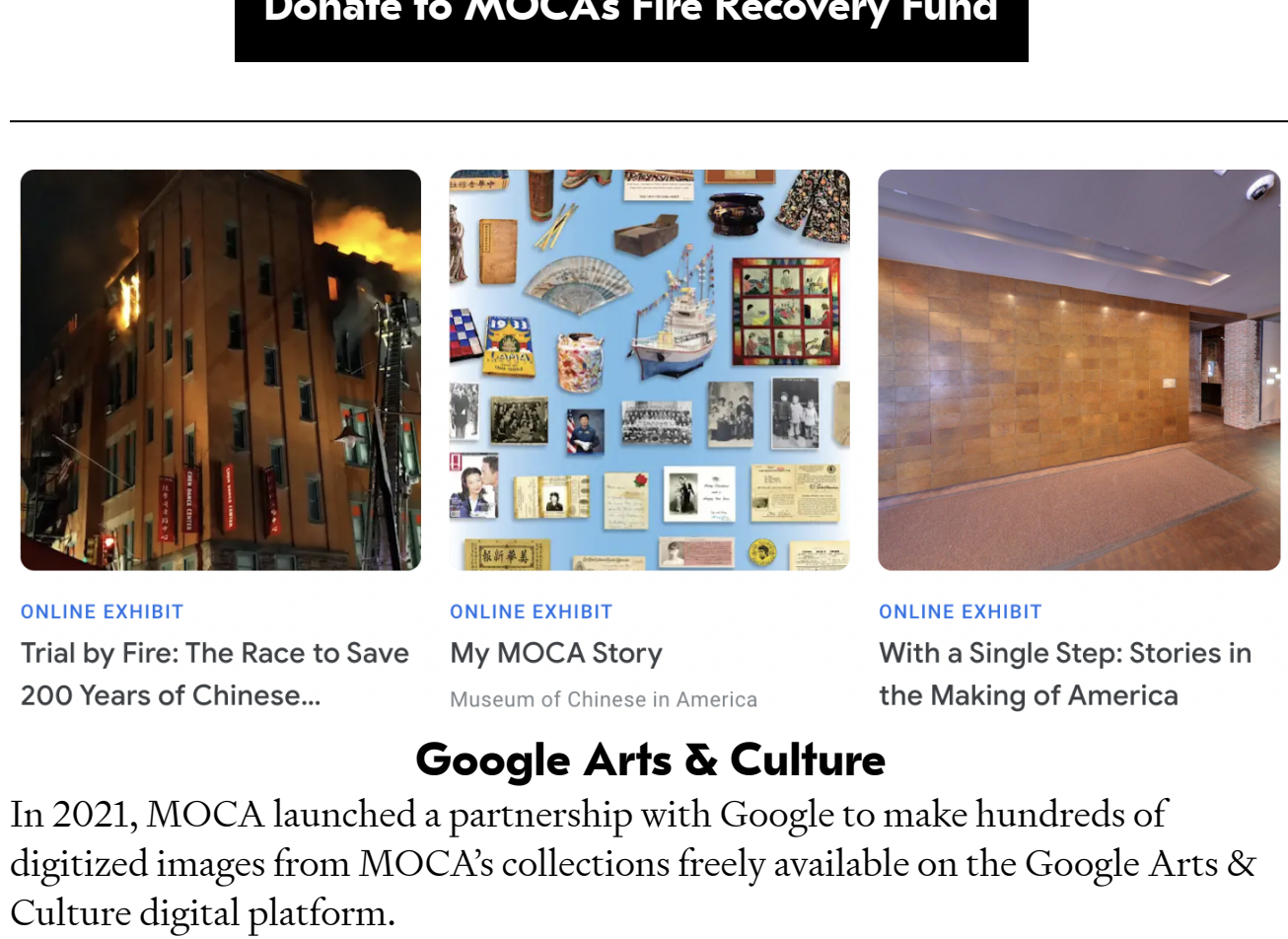
Asian Americans cast in the dancing ensemble of Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1958 Broadway musical Flower Drum Song. Photograph courtesy of Mae Wong.

MOCA staff members have cataloged and digitized an additional 29 oral histories. Among those newly available are interviews conducted by filmmaker Alan Rosenberg as part of research for his documentary, *A Brief Flight*, about the first Chinese American woman to fly for the U.S. military, Hazel Ying Lee. New additions also include interviews with the original 1958 and 2002 revival casts of *Flower Drum Song* that author David Hammarstrom conducted as part of research for his book, *Flower Drum Songs: The Story of Two Musicals*. Rosenberg and Hammarstrom donated these interviews along with other research materials to MOCA's collection. Visit MOCA's oral history archive platform **OHMS** to freely listen to digitized interviews.



MOCA's oral history processing work is being made possible by a grant from the **National Historical Publications & Records Commission (NHPRC)**. Over the course of three years, the grant will support the digitization of 150 of MOCA's oral histories. This effort is part of a larger ongoing Digitizing and Sharing MOCA's Oral Histories initiative to restore, digitize, and make freely accessible the over 600 interviews the museum has conducted and collected since its inception in 1980.

Old Cassettes and Mini-DVs Digitized and Cataloged



The back of an old cassette tape recording an oral history with Mr. Ven Soo in 1981, when the museum was the grassroots Chinatown History Project, Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) Collection.

During our post-fire assessment, MOCA staff found that numerous cassette and mini-DV tapes from the 1980s-2000s were lost during the fire. Fortunately, our staff had previously digitized many of these. To preserve the tapes that survived and had not yet been digitized, MOCA received funding from the **Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation** to partner with George Blood, a leading provider of audio and video preservation for institutions nationwide, to clean and digitize 93 cassettes and 50 mini-DVs.

The cassettes and mini-DVs contain valuable recordings from the museum's first decades and cover a variety of topics, including stories about working in the garment and laundry industries and family immigration histories. They also record interviews with contemporary artists Zhang Hongtu and Xu Bing, and renowned architect Maya Lin. Visit MOCA's **Past/Perfect** database to search or browse the newly cataloged interviews.

New Acquisition Highlights

MOCA continues to acquire new objects into our vast 85,000-object collection. Visit our **New Acquisitions** page or click on an icon above to read more about the coaching book used when Arthur Lem immigrated as a paper son in the 1920s and other exciting recent acquisitions.

Historic House Trust of NYC Visits 3 Howard

Yue Ma giving a tour of MOCA's Collections and Research Center to members of the Historic House Trust of NYC. Photograph courtesy of Giulietta Fiore.

On February 28th, Director of Collections and Research, Yue Ma, hosted a discussion and tour for staff of the **Historic House Trust of NYC** and their partner historic house museums at MOCA's Collections and Research Center. As fires have happened at other historical sites, attendees were interested in learning about the work MOCA is doing to recover from the fire and the lessons we learned about disaster preparedness.

Consider Supporting the Work of MOCA Collections

The small staff at MOCA's Collections and Research Center do vital work to care for and offer access to an extensive collection of 85,000+ objects documenting and supporting research on Chinese American history. After the fire, all of the collections need rehousing and an estimated 73 percent need restoration. Support our work through donating to **MOCA's Fire Recovery Fund**. Include the note, "Donation to MOCA's Fire Recovery Fund." Each contribution helps us preserve MOCA's historical treasures for generations to come.

Donate to MOCA's Fire Recovery Fund

Google Arts & Culture

In 2021, MOCA launched a partnership with Google to make hundreds of digitized images from MOCA's collections freely available on the Google Arts & Culture digital platform.

MOCA's special virtual exhibition, **Trial by Fire: The Race to Save 200 Years of Chinese American History**, tells the story of the Museum's race against the clock to retrieve, rescue, and repair its archives.

With a Single Step: Stories in the Making of America is a digital version of MOCA's permanent exhibition, and *My MOCA Story* is a crowdsourced social-media storytelling project launched by MOCA at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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