

## James Luna Biography

1950

Born: Orange, California  
Enrolled Luiseño Tribe  
La Jolla Reservation, California

2018

Died: New Orleans, Louisiana

### EDUCATION

1976  
University of California Irvine

### SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1981

Rolando Castellón Gallery, San Francisco, California

1982

*James Luna*, San Jose State University, San Jose,  
California

1983

San Diego State University, San Diego, California

1987

*The Artifact Piece*, Sushi Gallery, San Diego, California

1989

*Two Worlds*, International Arts Relations Gallery,  
New York; Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego,  
California

1991

*On the Spiritual*, Isaac Delgado Fine Arts Gallery,  
Delgado Community College, New Orleans, Louisiana

1992

*James Luna: Actions and Reactions, An Eleven Year  
Survey of Installation/Performance Work 1981–1992*,  
Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery, University of  
California, Santa Cruz, California

*Places for People to Meet*, Art Awareness, Lexington,  
New York

*The Sacred Colors*, Galeria Posada, Sacramento,  
California

*James Luna*, Atlantic Center for the Arts, New Smyrna  
Beach, Florida

*Two Multimedia Installations*, Center for Contemporary  
Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico

*Indian Tales*, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego;  
The Center for Contemporary Arts, Santa Fe; Banff  
Centre, Banff, Alberta, Canada

*Indian Tales: Stories of Native People from the Rez  
and Cities*, National Museum of Natural History,  
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

*Sometimes It's Not So Beautiful to Be an Indian*,  
Intermedia Arts and Two Rivers Gallery, Minneapolis  
*The Red Album*, Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago,  
Illinois

1993

*Relocation Stories*, Capp Street Project, San Francisco  
*New Basket Designs*, Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago  
*The History of the Luiseño People: La Jolla Reservation,  
Christmas 1990*, Memorial Art Gallery of the  
University of Rochester, New York

*Indian Tales*, Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum,  
California; Humboldt State University, Arcata,  
California

*James Luna*, University of Colorado at Denver;  
University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma  
*The Shameman*, Art Awareness, Lexington, New York

1994

*The Sacred Colors*, Real Art Ways, Hartford,  
Connecticut

*Old Designs/New Messages*, Pomona College Museum  
of Art, Montgomery Art Center, Claremont, California

*The Shameman: My Way*, Imagining Indians: Native  
American Film and Video Festival, Scottsdale  
Center for the Arts, Arizona; Detroit Institute of Arts,  
Michigan; Asheville Art Museum, North Carolina

*James Luna: My Way*, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design  
Museum, Smithsonian Institution, New York

*My Way*, SAW Gallery, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada  
*The Web of Life (with Palomar Choir and Chamber  
Singers)*, Palomar College, San Marcos, California

1995

*Tribal Identity: An Installation by James Luna*, Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire  
*The Shameman*, Walker's Point Center for the Arts, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico

1996

*Tribal Identity*, Schneider Museum of Art, Southern Oregon University, Ashland, Oregon  
*The Dream Hat Ritual*, Santa Monica Museum of Art, California  
*In My Dreams*, Getty Center, Los Angeles, California; ATLATL Conference, Tulsa, Oklahoma; The Swiss Institute, New York; Siena Heights College, Adrian, Michigan

1997

*The Dream Hat Ritual*, Sacred Circle Gallery, Seattle, Washington  
*Our Indians*, Arizona State University, Tempe  
*Two Installations*, Saddleback College, Mission Viejo, California

1998

*The Spirits of Virtue and Evil Await My Ascension*, University of Wyoming, Laramie; The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
*Our Indians*, Florida State University, Tallahassee  
*Collage*, Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, Grand Rapids, Michigan

1999

*The Ballad of the Shameman and Betty Day Bird*, Tozzer Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts  
*American Indian Studies*, Georgia State University, Atlanta; Living Arts of Tulsa, Oklahoma  
*The Last Wild California Indian*, Cleveland Public Theater, Ohio  
*The Last Wild California Indian and Collage*, Hartwick College, Oneonta, New York

2000

*Outfits & Other Paraphernalia for Night Raids*, California State University, San Marcos, California  
*The Ballad of the Shameman and Betty Day Bird*, Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art, Shawnee, Oklahoma  
*The Chapel of the Sacred Colors*, Gordon Snelgrove Gallery, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon,

Canada

*American Indian Studies*, National Museum of Wildlife Art, Jackson Hole, Wyoming; 7A\*11d International Festival of Performance Art, Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
*Futuristic Native Outfits for Night Raids (and Other Paraphernalia)*, 911 Media Arts, Seattle, Washington  
*Petroglyphs in Motion* [performance], SITE Santa Fe, New Mexico

2001

*James Luna*, Porter Troupe Gallery, San Diego, California  
*Take a Picture with a Real Indian and Creation and Destruction of an Indian Reservation*, Salina Art Center, Salina, Kansas  
*American Indian Studies*, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington  
*American Indian Studies II*, The Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona; University of California San Diego; University of California Santa Cruz  
*The Deadfall Revue*, Institute of American Indian Arts Museum, Santa Fe, New Mexico  
*Subterranean Post Indian Blues*, Idyllwild Arts, Idyllwild, California  
*Take a Picture with a Real Indian*, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

2002

*Petroglyphs in Motion* [installation], de Saisset Museum, Santa Clara University, California

2003

*The Sun and Moon Blues*, Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta, Canada  
*Artists on the Cutting Edge: Cross Fertilizations Series*, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, California  
*Take a Picture with a Real Indian/The Sun and Moon Blues*, University of Essex, Colchester, United Kingdom

2005

*James Luna: Emendatio*, Venice Biennale, June 12–November 6

2014

*I CON*, Mesa College Art Gallery, San Diego, California, March 17–April 16, 2014

2020

*James Luna: Take a Picture with a Real Indian*, Garth Greenan Gallery, New York, September 10–

December 19

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1975

Carl N. Gorman Museum, University of California, Davis  
*Native American Art Exhibit for the Governor of California*, California State Capitol Building, Sacramento, California  
*Native American Art*, American Indian Studies Department, San Diego State University, California

1981

Carl N. Gorman Museum, University of California, Davis, California

1986

*Made in Aztlan*, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California  
Hippodrome Gallery, Long Beach, California  
*He's Resting Now*, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California

1987

*Arts and Culture Show*, Public Arts Advisory Council, San Diego, California  
*En Memoria*, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego  
*Street Sets*, Sushi Gallery, San Diego, California

1988

*Up Tiempo!*, El Museo del Barrio/Creative Time, New York  
*California Mission Daze*, Installation Gallery, San Diego, California  
*Native American Art in the '80s*, University of California, Riverside, California

1990

*The Decade Show: Frameworks of Identity in the 1980s*, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, in collaboration with the New Museum of Contemporary Art and the Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art  
*Art History/AA Meeting*, Atlanta College of Art, Georgia  
*Disputed Identities*, San Francisco Camerawork, California  
*California Mission Daze*, California Indian Conference, Riverside, California  
*The Tell Tale Heart*, Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, D.C.  
*2 Worlds*, American Indian Community House Gallery, New York

*Cultural Diversity in American Theater*, University of California, San Diego, California

1991

*Facing the Finish: Some Recent California Art*, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California  
*Encuentro: Invasion of the Americas and the Making of the Mestizo*, Social and Public Art Resource Center Gallery, Venice, California  
*SITEseeing: Travel and Tourism in Contemporary Art*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York  
*Shared Visions: Native American Painters and Sculptors in the Twentieth Century*, Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona; Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, Indianapolis, Indiana  
*Disputed Identities*, California Museum of Photography, University of California, Riverside; Presentation House Gallery, North Vancouver, British Columbia  
*Selected Works 1990–91*, Palomar College, San Marcos, California  
*Contemporary American Indian Art*, San Bernardino County Museum, Redlands, California  
*Indigenous America: Honoring Our Heritage*, University of California, San Diego, California  
*Counter-Colonialismo*, Centro Cultural de la Raza, San Diego, California  
San Francisco Arts Commission Public Art Program, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, California  
*Submuloc Show/Columbus Wohs*, ATLATL Traveling Exhibition, Phoenix, Arizona

1992

*Sites of Recollection: Four Altars and a Rap Opera*, Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts; Museum of the National Center of Afro-American Artists, Boston, Massachusetts  
*Body Takes*, Toronto Photographers Workshop, Ontario, Canada  
*Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada*, Ottawa, Ontario  
*As Public As Race*, Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta, Canada  
*The Alcove Show*, Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico  
*Kish Tétayawet Wampkish (Dream House)* with Lewis deSoto, Mesa College Art Gallery, San Diego, California  
*Shared Visions: Native American Painters and Sculptors in the Twentieth Century*, Portland Art Museum,

- Oregon; Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma  
*The People Themselves: Native American Photography*,  
 Los Angeles Photography Center, California  
*Message Carriers: Contemporary Photography by  
 Native American Artists*, Photographic Resource  
 Center, Boston University, Massachusetts  
*Native America: Reflecting Contemporary Realities*,  
 Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles, California  
*Facing the Finish: Some Recent California Art*, Art  
 Center College of Design, Pasadena, California  
*Counterweight: Alienation, Assimilation, Resistance*,  
 Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, California
- 1993  
*The Sacred Colors*, University of Arizona, Tucson  
*1993 Biennial Exhibition*, Whitney Museum of American  
 Art, New York  
*Sites of Recollection: Four Funerals and a Rap Opera*,  
 Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester,  
 New York; Dayton Art Institute, Museum of  
 Contemporary Art at Wright State University, Dayton,  
 Ohio  
*San Diego Artists from the Collection of the Museum  
 of Contemporary Art*, San Diego, Boehm Gallery,  
 Palomar College, San Marcos, California  
*This Is Not a Multicultural Show*, St. Lawrence  
 University, Canton, New York  
*Shared Experiences/Personal Interpretations: Seven  
 Native American Artists*, Sonoma State University Art  
 Gallery, Rohnert Park, California  
*The Shaman Meets El Mexican't at the Smithsonian  
 Hotel and Country Club (with Guillermo Gómez-  
 Peña)*, National Museum of Natural History,  
 Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
- 1994  
*42nd Street Project*, Creative Time, New York  
*The Shaman Meets El Mexican't and the CyberVato  
 in Chicago in Search of Their Lost Identities (with  
 Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Roberto Sifuentes)*,  
 Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, Chicago, Illinois
- 1995  
*The Shaman and El Mexican't Meet the CyberVato at  
 the Ethno-CyberPunk Trading Post & Curio Shop on  
 the Electronic Frontier (with Guillermo Gómez-Peña  
 and Roberto Sifuentes)*, DiverseWorks Art Space,  
 Houston, Texas
- 1996  
*Continuity & Contradiction: A New Look at the  
 Permanent Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art  
 San Diego, California  
*Re: public/Listening to San Diego*, Museum of  
 Photographic Arts, San Diego, California
- 1997  
*Scene of the Crime*, Armand Hammer Museum of  
 Art and Culture Center, University of California Los  
 Angeles, California  
*Identity Crisis: Self-Portraiture at the End of the Century*,  
 Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin  
*Changing Spaces*, University of Colorado at Boulder  
*In My Dreams*, Western Front, Vancouver, British  
 Columbia, Canada  
*Collage: Thoughts, Dreams, and Hallucinations*, Arizona  
 State University, Tempe; Institute of American  
 Indian Arts Museum, Santa Fe, New Mexico; TRIBE,  
 Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada
- 1998  
*Sex and Shamanism: The Seduction of Stereotypes  
 and Misrepresentations of Native Peoples*, Carl N.  
 Gorman Museum, University of California, Davis  
*Dimensions of Native America: The Contact Zone*,  
 Museum of Fine Arts, Florida State University,  
 Tallahassee, Florida  
 Side Streets Projects, Santa Monica, California
- 2000  
*Made in California: Art, Image, and Identity, 1900–2000*,  
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles,  
 California  
*The Chapel of the Sacred Colors*, LewAllen  
 Contemporary, Santa Fe, New Mexico
- 2001  
*The Road to Aztlan: Art from a Mythic Homeland*,  
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles,  
 California
- 2002  
*Staging the Indian: The Politics of Representation*, Tang  
 Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, Skidmore College,  
 Saratoga Springs, New York  
*Alter-Native Dialogues*, Nippon International  
 Performance Art Festival, Tokyo, Japan
- 2004  
*Native Views: Influences of Modern Culture*, Artrain USA  
 touring exhibition

2009

*Into the Sunset: Photography's Image of the American West*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, March 29–June 8

2019–2020

*When I Remember I See Red*, Autry Museum of the American West, Los Angeles, September 25, 2020–January 3, 2021

2021

*Cousins and Kin*, San Francisco Cinematheque, San Francisco, April 16–May 15

*Proof of Stake: Technological Claims*, Kunstverein in Hamburg, Germany, September 4–November 14

2022

*Based on a True Story...*, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, February 12–August 14

*Unmasking Masculinity for the 21st Century*, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Michigan, September 24–December 29, 2022

2023

*Indian Theater: Native Performance, Art, and Self-Determination Since 1969*, CCS Bard, New York, June 24–November 26

*The Iridescence of Knowing*, Oxy Arts, Los Angeles, September 14–November 18

2023–2024

*Xican-a.o.x. Body*, The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture of the Riverside Art Museum, California, June 14, 2023–January 7, 2024.

*In Our Hands: Native Photography, 1890 to Now*, Minneapolis Institute of Art, October 22, 2023–January 14, 2024

#### PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe

Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

## Selected Bibliography

### BOOKS/CATALOGUES

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- Burnham, Frye and Steven Durland, eds. *The Citizen Artist: 20 Years of Art in the Public Arena: An Anthology from High Performance Magazine, 1978–1998*. Gardiner, NY: Critical Press, 1998.
- Buskirk, Martha. *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003.
- Counterweight: Alienation, Assimilation, Resistance*. Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum, 1992.
- Cardinal-Schubert, Joane, Kerri Sakamoto, and Larissa Lai. *As Public and Race: Margo Kane, James Luna, Paul Wong*. Banff: Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff Centre, 1993.
- Castillo, Edward D. and Michael Schwager. *Shared Experiences/Personal Interpretations: Seven Native American Artists*. Rohnert Park: University Art Gallery, Sonoma State University, 1994.
- Dawsey, Jill and Anthony Graham. *Being Here with You: 42 Artists from San Diego and Tijuana*. Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego 2018.
- Davies, Hugh Marlais and Ronald J. Onorato, ed. *Blurring the Boundaries: Installation Art, 1969–1996*. San Diego: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1997.
- Dimensions of Native America: The Contact Zone*. Tallahassee: Florida State University, Museum of Fine Arts, School of Visual Arts and Dance, 1998.
- Dubin, Margaret. *Native America Collected: The Culture of an Art World*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001.
- Dubin, Margaret. *The Dirt is Red Here: Art and Poetry from Native California*. Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2002.
- Facing the Finish: Some Recent California Art*. Los Angeles: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Fellows of Contemporary Art, 1991.
- Fajaro-Hill, Cecilia, et al. *Xican-a.o.x. Body*. The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture of the Riverside Art Museum, 2023–2024.
- Fields, Virginia M. *The Road to Aztlan: Art from a Mythic Homeland*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2001.
- Glancy, Diane and Mark Nowak, eds. *Visit Teepee Town: New Writings After the Detours*. Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 1999.
- Gómez-Peña, Guillermo. *Dangerous Border Crossers: The Artist Talks Back*. London: Routledge, 2000.
- James Luna: Actions and Reactions, An Eleven Year Survey of Installation/Performance Work, 1981–1992*. Santa Cruz: Mary Porter Sesnon Art Gallery, University of California, Santa Cruz, 1992.
- Johnson, Lorraine, ed. *Body Takes: Deborah Bright, James Luna, Chuck Samuels, Jin-me Yoon*. Toronto: Toronto Photographers Workshop: 1992.
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- Lacy, Suzanne, ed. *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*. Seattle: Bay Press, 1995.
- LaPena, Frank, Mark Dean Johnson, and Kristina Perea Gilmore, eds. *When I Remember I See Red*. Sacramento: Crocker Art Museum, 2019.
- Lippard, Lucy. *Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1990.
- Lippard, Lucy. *On the Beaten Track: Tourism, Art, and Place*. New York: New Press, 1999.
- Lippard, Lucy. *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society*. New York: New Press, 1997.
- Mandle, Julia Barnes and Deborah Menaker Rothschild. *Sites of Recollection: Four Altars and a Rap Opera*. Williamstown: Williams College Museum of Art, 1992.
- Nemiroff, Diana, Robert Houle, and Charlotte Townsend-Gault. *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1992.
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- The Tell Tale Heart: Ken Little, James Luna, Judy Southerland, Pat Ward Williams*. Washington, D.C.: Washington Project for the Arts, 1990.
- Tribal Identity: An Installation by James Luna*. Hanover: Dartmouth College, 1995.
- Two Worlds: James Luna*. New York: INTAR Gallery, 1989.
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- PERIODICALS
- Ammirati, Domenick. "Reviews: James Luna at Garth Greenan Gallery." *Artforum* 59, no. 3 (2020): 176–177.
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- . "I've Always Wanted to be an American Indian." *Art Journal* 51, no. 3 (1992): 18–27.
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