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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## New Museum Los Gatos Presents ***Cement Prairie: The History and Legacy of the 1952 American Indian Relocation Program***

November 3, 2016 - June 25, 2017

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*Cement Prairie* is an exhibition that explores the genesis, rollout and impact of the American Indian Relocation Program initiated by the US government in 1952. This significant yet little-known chapter in American Indian migration history will be viewed through a collection of personal stories, ephemera, primary source documents and support programming. The exhibition will focus specifically on the San Jose, California relocatee community and those who followed in their footsteps to the urban communities. The exhibit will examine the program's successes and failures, the rise of Indian activism in the 1960s, and how today's Pan-Indian community has adapted and preserves its native culture in the new "urban rez."

In the 1950s, America's general perceptions of Indians was formed by cultural and historical stereotypes of "the noble savage" wearing a feather headdress, living in a teepee, kidnapping women and children; or the Lone Ranger's stoic sidekick Tonto, characterized in popular literature. While these indelible images permeated American culture, the reality presented a stark contrast. The Indian reservation system became another failed attempt by the U.S. government to solve the "Indian Problem," and as a result, many Indians suffered in poverty and cultures began to erode.

In an attempt to address this problem, the US government created the Indian Urban Relocation Program in 1952 to move Native Americans to major metropolitan cities to improve the community's standard of living. In its first phase, an estimated 100,000 Indians left their reservations and settled in cities across the U.S. Today, over 70

percent of Native Americans live in urban centers, marking a significant migration period that has forever changed the Native American community and culture.o

“We are privileged to have this opportunity to work directly with our local Indian community and offer a forum where they can tell this little-known but important chapter in contemporary Native American history, “ said Amy Long, NUMU history curator.

“The San Jose Indian community has long-attempted to create a visual platform to tell this story. We are very excited to partner with NUMU to make this dream a reality, explains exhibition advisor, Al Cross, Mandan/Hidatsa/Arikara, North Dakota.

*Cement Prairie* will also include an auxiliary exhibition that focuses on the San Francisco Bay Area Native Indian tribe, the Muwekma/Ohlone, and its struggle to gain federal recognition and its efforts to counter the myth of its extinction.

*Cement Prairie* is supported in part by San Jose State University’s Anthropology Department, the Muwekma/Ohlone tribe, the National Archives, The Bancroft Library, the Indian Health Center, Bay Area photographer, Ilka Hartmann, and notable Bay Area American Indian community members.

A Members and Special Guests Preview Party will be held on Thursday, November 3, 7pm-9pm. A Public Opening Celebration will be held on Saturday, November 5th, 11am-5pm

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New Museum Los Gatos (NUMU), formerly the Los Gatos Museum Association founded in 1965, is a non-profit art and history museum located in the Civic Center Plaza in downtown Los Gatos. NUMU’s mission is to engage the community at the intersection of art, history and education through innovative, locally connected and globally relevant exhibitions, programs and experiences. The NUMU Atelier offer classical instruction in painting and drawing. NUMU MakerSpace programs offer weekday, weekend and evening hands-on art engagement for children and adults.

Museum hours are Wednesday 1pm-5pm, Thursday 11am-8pm, and Friday through Sunday 11am-5pm. General admission is \$10. Admission for members of the military and students over 18 years is \$6, and free for members and visitors under 18 years of age.

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**Images:**

**Image 1: Ilka Hartmann, *Urban Indian Car, Oakland, CA, 1971*, photography, Courtesy of: Ilka Hartmann Photography**

**Image 2: Ilka Hartmann, *Preparing for the Pow Wow: Child Getting Ready for Dancing, Brooks Hall Dance, San Francisco, 1973*, Photography, Courtesy of Ilka Hartmann Photography**

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