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## MOCAD announces spring reopening, Olayami Dabls show

The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD) on Thursday, Jan. 22, announced a spring 2026 reopening date after critical renovations triggered a [temporary closure last August](#).

The institution's doors will open once again on April 25 with the launch of its new exhibition season, which will kick off MOCAD's 20th anniversary under the organizing theme "A Practice of Multiplicity."



A rendering of MOCAD's new facade, ahead of a projected April 2026 reopening. PLY+

The season marks the museum's reopening following renovations, with exhibitions by Detroit-based artists Olayami Dabls, Carole Harris and Martha Mysko — figures whose work has played a significant role in shaping the city's creative identity. Together, the presentations underscore MOCAD's long-standing emphasis on experimentation, civic engagement and Detroit-rooted artistic practice.

### Celebrating Detroit artists

The season is anchored by "Olayami Dabls: Detroit Cosmologies," the first comprehensive museum retrospective of the Detroit artist, [cultural historian and founder of the MBAD African Bead Museum](#). Surveying 45 years of work, the exhibition assembles dozens of previously unseen pieces, including paintings, sculptures, collages, works on paper and public art. Dabls's practice weaves African symbolism, African American history and Detroit's industrial landscape into a visual language focused on resilience and collective memory.

Rather than a conventional retrospective, "Detroit Cosmologies" transforms MOCAD into an immersive, layered environment reflecting Dabls's community-centered approach. Monumental installations—including his nkisi-inspired "Iron Teaches Rocks How to Rust" series—reconfigure salvaged industrial materials such as iron, glass, rock and mirrors into forms that suggest spiritual continuity and historical endurance.

Tracing Dabls' career from his time at The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History to the outdoor, architectural installations of the MBAD African Bead Museum, the exhibition highlights a practice that moves fluidly between artmaking, education, ritual and community building.

Also on view will be "Carole Harris: This Side of the River," a wide-ranging survey of the Detroit-based fiber artist whose quilts and textile works have influenced the field for more than five decades. Known for improvisational structures, layered surfaces and rhythmic abstraction, Harris' work reflects shifts in Detroit's cultural and artistic landscape. The exhibition follows her trajectory from early work shown at Gallery 7 — where she held her first solo exhibition in 1977—through more recent explorations of color, structure and spatial complexity.

Archival materials connected to Gallery 7 and to Detroit's Black artistic networks from the 1970s through the 1990s will place Harris' work within a broader local lineage, situating her practice as foundational to ongoing contemporary movements in the city.

The spring season also includes the first solo museum exhibition by Martha Mysko, co-head of the Painting Department at Cranbrook Academy of Art. Mysko is known for immersive installations and assemblages constructed from salvaged and secondhand materials sourced throughout Detroit. Titled "Martha Mysko: Retail Therapy," the exhibition presents a broad view of her practice alongside new, site-responsive installations that examine memory, domestic space and transformation.