

September 16, 2020

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90036

Dear Elaine Wynn, Tony Ressler, and Michael Govan,

On September 9, 2020, Worth Rises, a national advocacy organization dedicated to exposing and challenging the gross corporatization of our prison system, and Color Of Change, the nation's largest digital racial justice organization, issued a letter to LACMA's Board of Trustees calling for the removal of board member Tom Gores, the billionaire CEO of Platinum Equity, a Beverly Hills-based private equity firm. We, the undersigned members of the arts community, urge LACMA to publicly support activists' appeals and disavow the unethical extraction of capital from economically-distressed communities by demanding that Tom Gores immediately resign from its Board of Trustees.

In 2017, Platinum Equity acquired Securus Technologies, one of the largest and most exploitative prison telecom corporations in the already woefully unethical prison industry. The corporation rakes in more than \$700 million per year charging egregious rates for phone calls from prisons, jails, and immigrant detention centers—funds that are primarily siphoned from impoverished families and Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities of color, further constricting the urgent resources of marginalized people. As the CEO of Platinum Equity, Tom Gores wields unique control over Securus' operational practices.

Under his control, Securus charges families as much as \$25 for a 15-minute phone call with their incarcerated loved ones and, on average, approximately 40% more than its largest competitor. Their extortionary rates and unscrupulous practices inflict undue financial and emotional harm on those directly impacted by mass incarceration. By price gouging a crucial lifeline between incarcerated people and their undeniably important networks of familial support, Securus pilfers from families (particularly women and children of color), propels many into debt, and leaves both family members and their incarcerated loved ones inhumanely isolated. Securus' impact extends further still; their predation undermines the successful reentry of people upon release by limiting their access to support, jeopardizing public safety, and feeding a bloated and brutal prison industrial complex that owes its roots to the toxic legacies of chattel slavery.

Echoing the artists, art workers, curators, scholars, and theorists who catalyzed the successful removal of Safariland CEO Warren Kanders from the Whitney Museum of American Art Board of Trustees, those who are advocating for the removal of BlackRock CEO Larry Fink from the

Museum of Modern Art Board of Trustees, and those members of the P.A.I.N coalition working to disentangle opioid money from the endowments of numerous public institutions, we condemn the artwashing that has poisoned the wells of our cultural centers. While the pre-existing power structures reinforcing these conditions are deeply rooted—and their unearthing reveals painful truths about our institutions’ indebtedness to colonialism, structural racism, and mass incarceration—reform through accountability is both urgent and necessary. Our institutions face an overdue moment of critical reckoning, from which LACMA is not immune.

At this crucial moment, we extol the museum to honor the truth of its own words. In a statement issued in response to the extensive protests that followed the horrific murder of George Floyd by police, a museum spokesperson declared: “We stand with our community in rejecting racism, in mourning, and in demanding justice for the deaths of countless African Americans who continue to be targeted by systematic violence. We recognize that museums cannot claim neutrality in addressing the horrific issues that have plagued our society for centuries.” It is imperative that LACMA examine its own breach of neutrality as it pertains to the diverse communities it wishes to serve. In doing so, the Board of Trustees must repudiate the rotten entanglements of racism, police brutality, and state-sanctioned violence by renouncing Tom Gores.

Sincerely,

<i>Sasha Ali</i>	<i>Jean Cooney</i>	<i>Catherine Gund</i>
<i>Rhea Anastas</i>	<i>Veronica Corzo-Duchardt</i>	<i>Abel Guzman</i>
<i>Matthew Anderson</i>	<i>Leslie Dick</i>	<i>Andrea Gyrody</i>
<i>Shagha Ariannia</i>	<i>Kimberly Drew</i>	<i>Julia Haft-Candell</i>
<i>David Aronoff</i>	<i>Sam Durant</i>	<i>Alexandria Hall</i>
<i>Colleen Asper</i>	<i>Gabrielle Ferrer</i>	<i>Tobi Haslett</i>
<i>Mark Ayala</i>	<i>Ciarán Finlayson</i>	<i>EJ Hill</i>
<i>Nevena Binney</i>	<i>Colleen Flanigan</i>	<i>Aaron Horst</i>
<i>Brice Bischoff</i>	<i>Nicole Fleetwood</i>	<i>John Houck</i>
<i>Hannah Black</i>	<i>Jason Flom</i>	<i>Kahlil Irving</i>
<i>Theodore Boyer</i>	<i>Eve Fowler</i>	<i>Jess Jacobs</i>
<i>Andrea Breiling</i>	<i>Andrea Fraser</i>	<i>Nova Jiang</i>
<i>Sarah Bremner</i>	<i>Britte Geijer</i>	<i>Rachel Jones</i>
<i>Tanya Brodsky</i>	<i>Rema Ghuloum</i>	<i>Nikki Juen</i>
<i>Kelsie Capitano</i>	<i>Eric Golo Stone</i>	<i>brooke kanther</i>
<i>Spencer Carmona</i>	<i>Meghan Gordon</i>	<i>Nora Kletter</i>
<i>Srijon Chowdhury</i>	<i>Molly Greene</i>	<i>Karen Lee Williams</i>
<i>Donna Chung</i>	<i>Julia Gualtieri</i>	<i>Thomas Linder</i>
<i>Jessica Cook</i>	<i>Iva Gueorgieva</i>	<i>Jennifer Lin-Weinheimer</i>

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Kristy Luck
Michael Luo
Shana Lutker
Ian Lynam
Emma MacDonald
Erica Mahinay
Monica Majoli
Regina Mamou
Aubrey Ingmar Manson
Jean Marie McKee
Chandler McWilliams
Yong Min
Naeem Mohaiemen
John Morrow
Carter Mull
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