

The background is a solid yellow color with a faint, repeating pattern of various keys in a light green color. The keys are of different shapes and sizes, some with notches and others with smooth heads, scattered across the entire background.

THE ART OF RELEVANCE


@ninaksimon

#artofrelevance



your **museum.** *tu* **museo.**

santacruzmah.org



what happens
in that building?





**ACTIVATE THE MAH AS A
WELCOMING GATHERING PLACE**



**FIND, SPARK, SHARE, AND
PRESERVE **STORIES & IDEAS****

In those days when something was needed and you didn't have an organization to do it, you'd start one."

- Hal Hyde, Santa Cruz County resident and former UCSC vice chancellor

Santa Cruz became a cauldron of cultural exploration, neighborhood activism, intellectual exploration, and environmental protection in the 1960s and 1970s.

This progressive shift was one part university, one part community activists, one part hippies with alternative lifestyles. UCSC Dean McHenry's vision of high academic standards encouraged students to practice grassroots activism. At the same time, many political and cultural movements — environmental, queer, indigenous — flourished.

...aba algo y
...ara hacerlo,

...imen
...al y
...19

...es
...pa
...la U
...Mo
...te
...ch

...ental,
...ruz.

**ENJOY SHARED
EXPERIENCES**





BUILD BRIDGES
ACROSS DIFFERENCES



**FEEL EMPOWERED TO SHARE
CREATIVE AND CIVIC VOICES**

AT THE SANTA CRUZ MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY, WE...



ACTIVATE THE MAH
AS A **WELCOMING**
GATHERING PLACE



FIND, SPARK, SHARE,
AND PRESERVE
STORIES AND IDEAS

SO THAT PARTICIPANTS...

ENJOY SHARED EXPERIENCES

EXPLORE ART AND HISTORY

FEEL INVOLVED
AND INCLUDED



**STRENGTHEN
BONDS**
WITH FRIENDS
AND FAMILY

MAKE **UNEXPECTED**
CONNECTIONS

MAKE PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

BUILD AWARENESS AND
RESPECT FOR DIVERSE
CULTURES AND PEOPLE

FEEL INSPIRED TO GO DEEPER

BUILD
BRIDGES

ACROSS
DIFFERENCES

FEEL
EMPOWERED

TO SHARE THEIR
CREATIVE AND
CIVIC VOICES



OUR COMMUNITY

GROWS

STRONGER
& *more connected*

OUR COMMUNITY

GROWS

STRONGER

& more connected

17,000 to **60,000** participants

7 to **17** full-time staff

\$740,000 to **\$1,640,000** budget

\$16,000 to **\$500,000** cash reserves

2011-2016: FIVE YEARS OF GROWTH









WHAT IS RELEVANCE?
INSIDERS & OUTSIDERS
GO OUTSIDE
ROOMS AND DOORS

There is no such thing as universal relevance.

RELEVANT INFORMATION:

- ▶ GENERATES A POSITIVE COGNITIVE EFFECT**
- ▶ REQUIRES LOW EFFORT**

Deirdre Wilson & Dan Sperber





**BREAKING
NEWS**

YOUR LIFE IS OVER!

But bacon
causes canc...

JUST
GIVE
ME BACON!

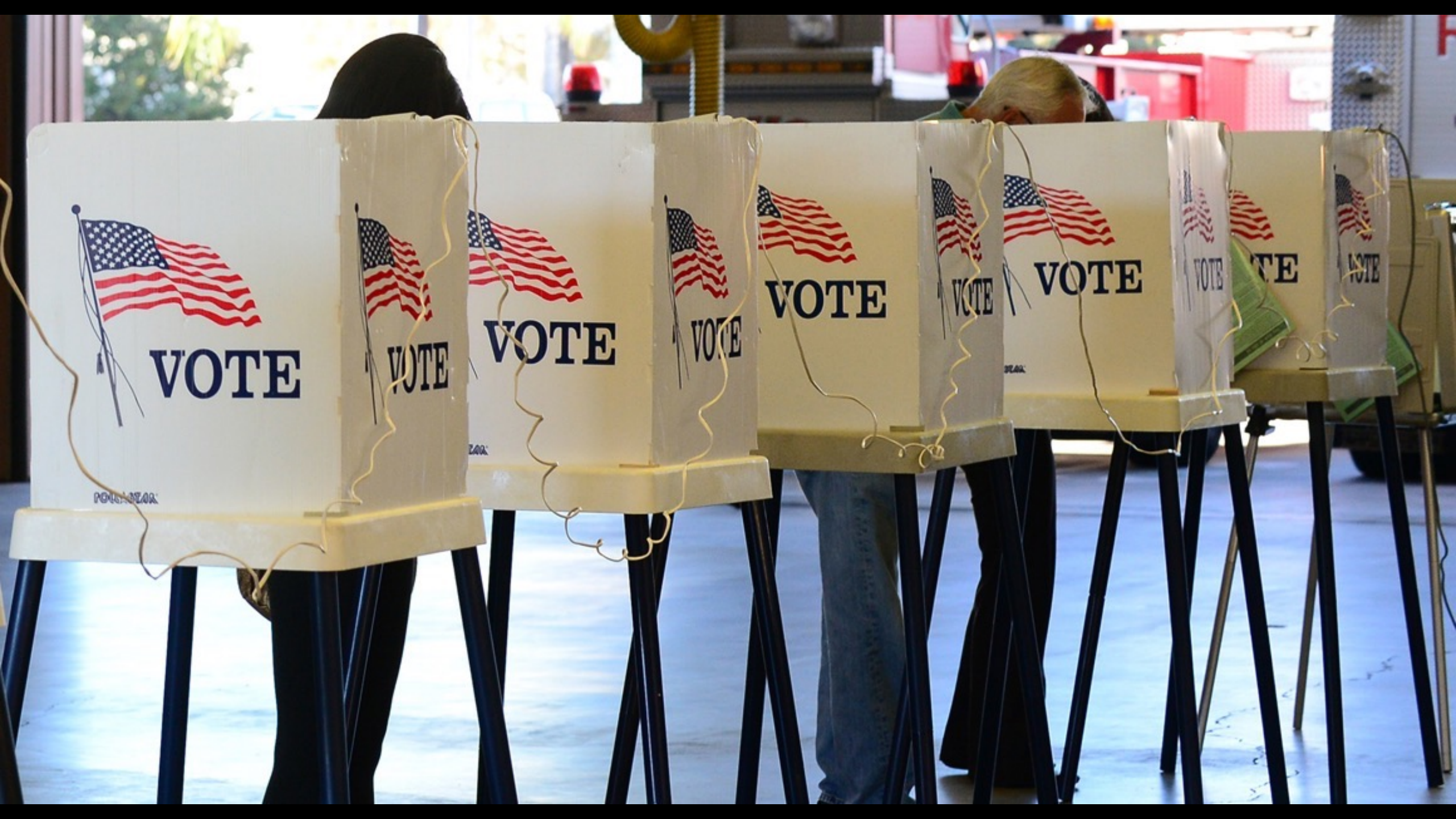


**RELEVANCE IS A KEY THAT
UNLOCKS MEANING.**





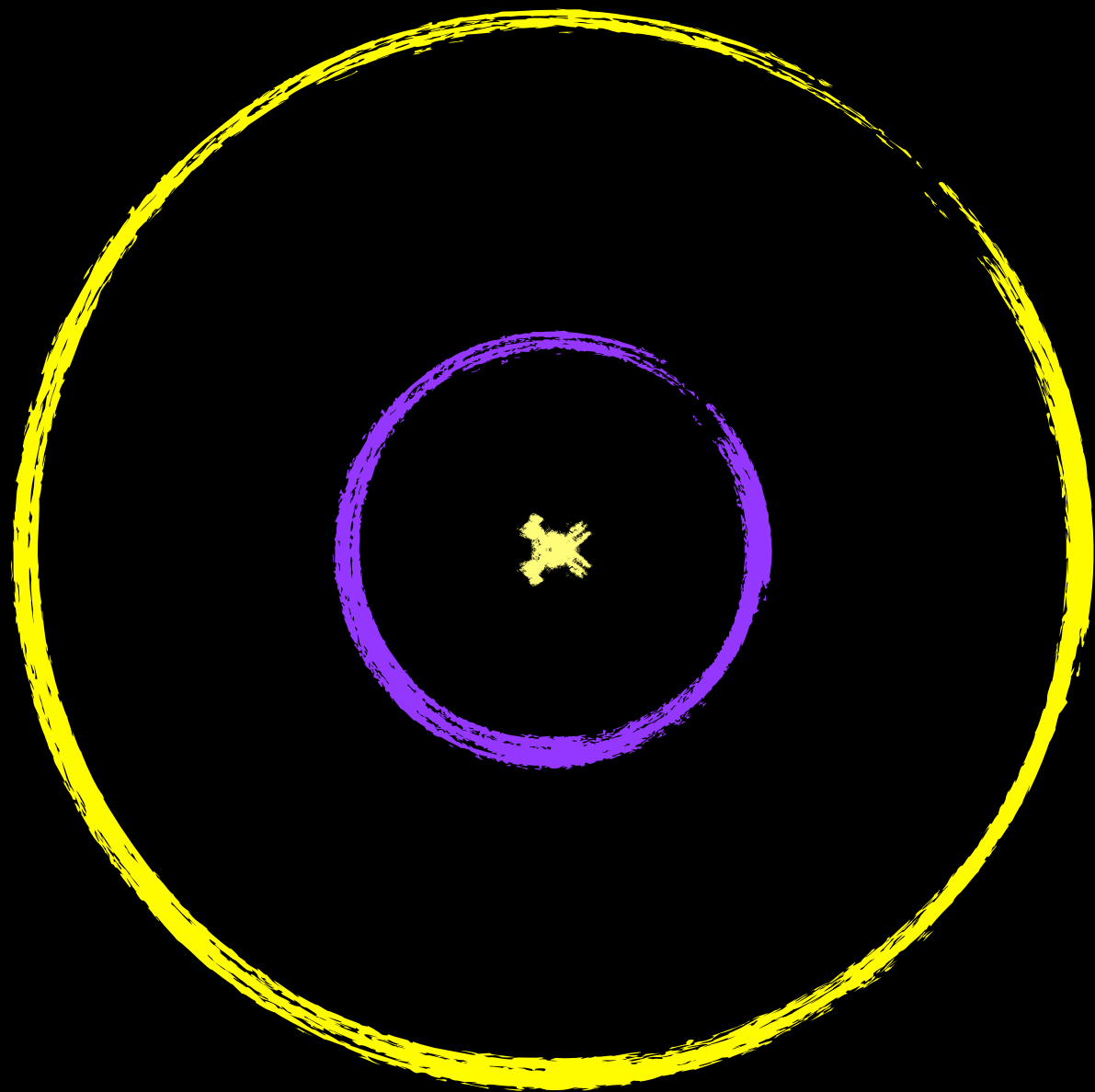
WHAT IS RELEVANCE?
INSIDERS & OUTSIDERS
GO OUTSIDE
ROOMS AND DOORS

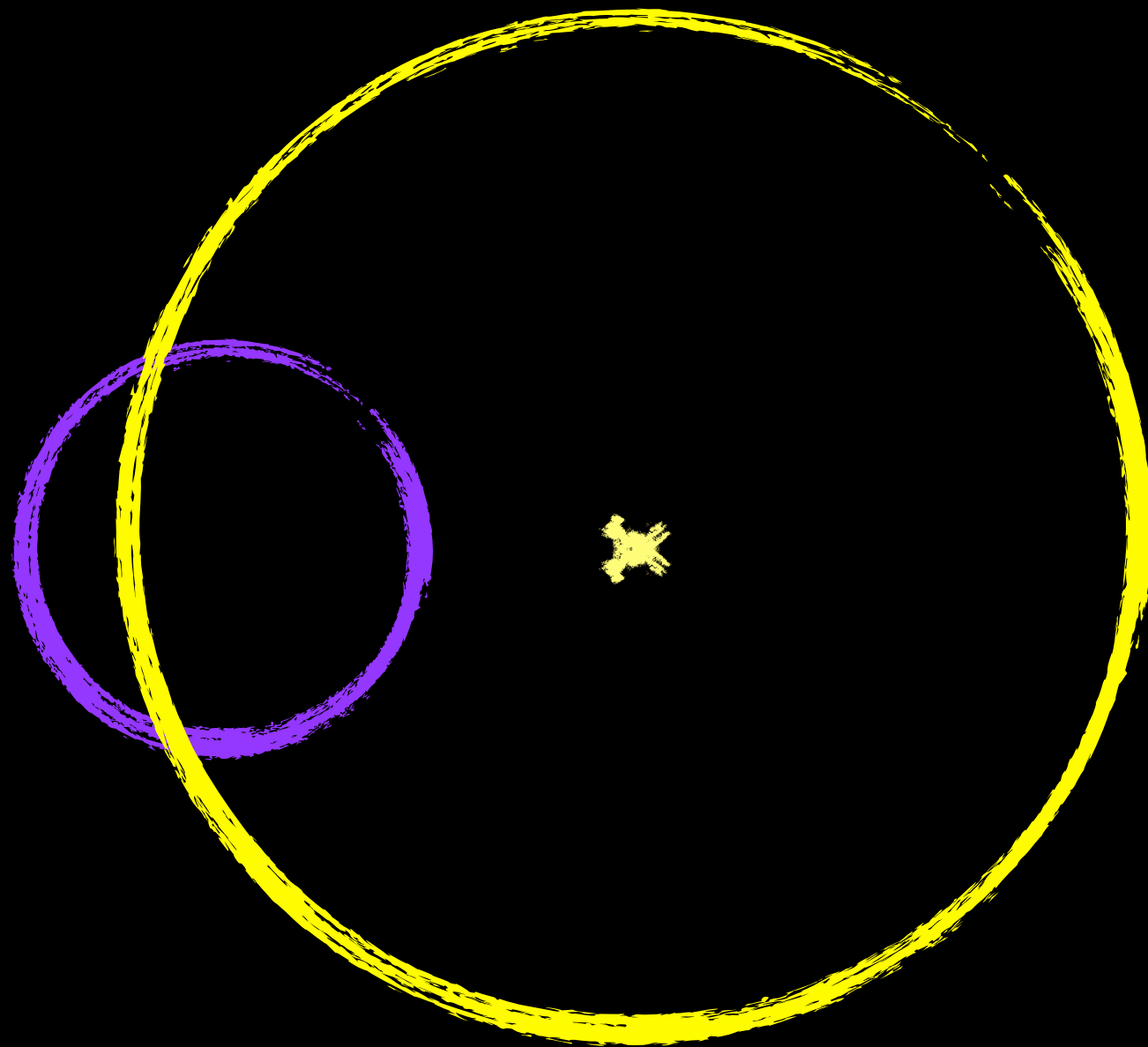


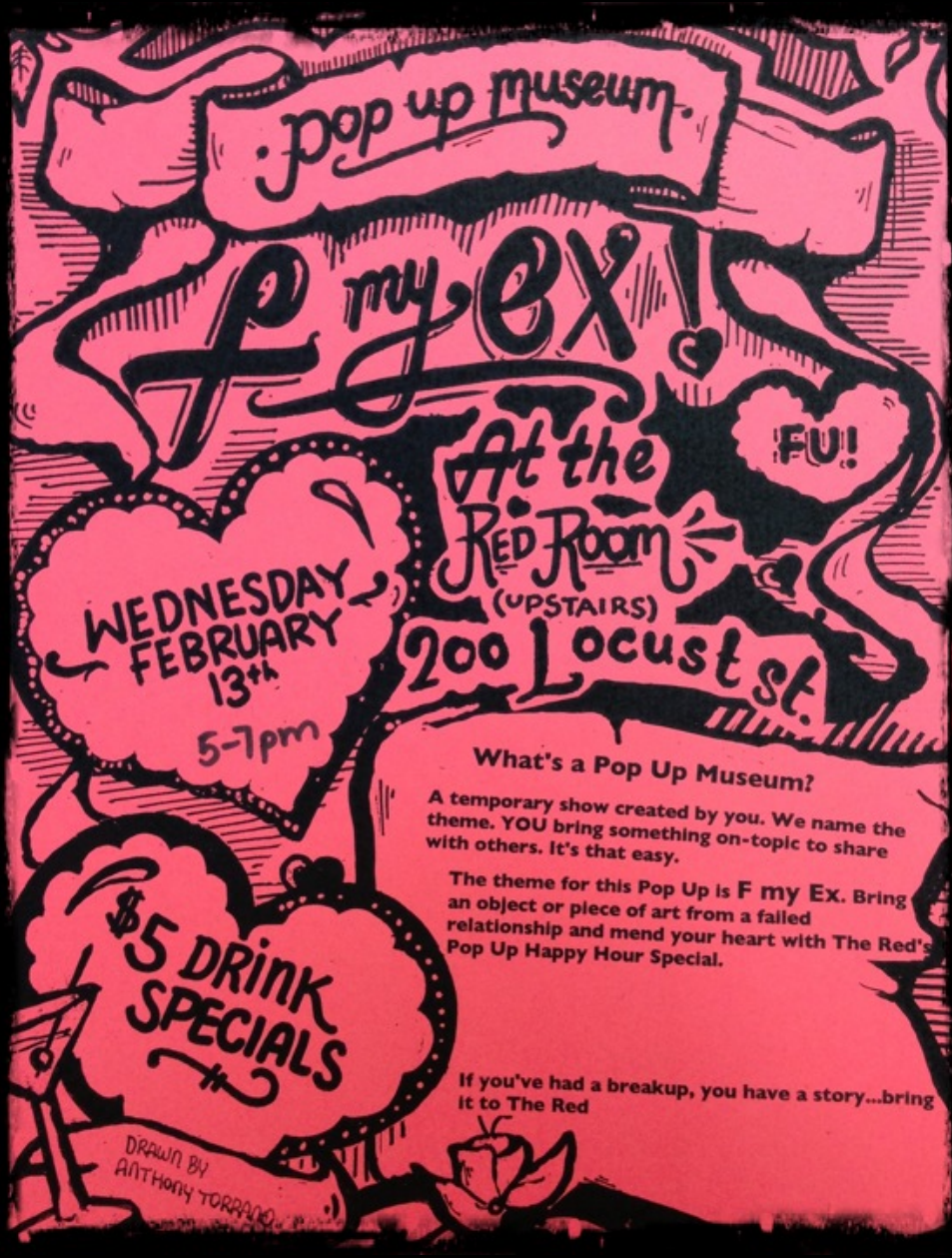












I'm closer to the stodgy traditional museum supporter than to the audiences you are currently trying to reach, but I strongly support your outreach and attempts to involve new communities. It is precisely because of that outreach that I finally became a museum member last year. There was no reason to do so before, since the museum was doing nothing. I still have little occasion to go to the museum, but I'm willing to support it as an important community resource.

What's your MAH moment?

Share a story of an unexpected
connection you've made here.

WHAT IS THIS?

Community Center
or museum?

CAN'T IT BE
BOTH?

“Why is everything at the museum about
Mexicans? I’m proud of my white culture and I
don’t understand why you aren’t honoring my
heritage anymore.”

- angry caller

“I don’t come to a museum to be empowered.”

- trustee



Growing up in LA, I was surrounded by my culture. There were constant reminders of who I am. Santa Cruz always felt like something was missing-- that parts of *me* were missing-- even after living here for seven years.

The MAH is special to me because it fills that gap; it reflects my story, my history, and my culture. It not only provides events that reflect my story but it



WHAT IS RELEVANCE?
INSIDERS & OUTSIDERS
GO OUTSIDE
ROOMS AND DOORS

Relevance is an exercise in empathy.







MAH

Museum of Art & History

101

WHAT THE CRUZ?!
[HOME OF SERBIA]
TO CHANGE

MAH

MAH



COURTESY OF SHANTANU STARICK







WHAT IS RELEVANCE?
INSIDERS & OUTSIDERS
GO OUTSIDE
ROOMS AND DOORS





5

3



© 1999 Warner Bros.

**let's build bigger
rooms together.**

THANK YOU / @NINAKSIMON

