



REINSTALLED CONTEMPORARY ART WING TO OPEN FALL 2012 AT THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

Museum to Celebrate 100th Anniversary with Major Reinstallation of Three Collections and Renovations to Improve Visitor Experience

BALTIMORE, MD (November 18, 2011)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) is reinstalling its contemporary art wing, which will open in fall 2012 launching a three-year, comprehensive renovation plan leading up to its 100th Anniversary in 2014. Known for its longtime commitment to collecting and supporting the work of living artists and acquiring works that speak to the events and innovations of our time, the BMA’s contemporary art wing features a significant collection of American art from the last six decades, including major late paintings by Andy Warhol, as well as works by Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Donald Judd, Glenn Ligon, Jasper Johns, Bruce Nauman, Robert Rauschenberg, and Anne Truitt. The museum is also home to a remarkable collection of notable international artists, including Olafur Eliasson, Thomas Hirschhorn, Susan Philipsz, and Franz West.

Several new acquisitions will make their debut in the reinstalled wing, including *A Man Screaming is Not a Dancing Bear* by the artist collaborative Allora & Calzadilla, *Untitled (bicycle shower)* by Rirkrit Tiravanija, and *Live Ball* by Nari Ward. The BMA is also the first major American institution to commission and acquire a work by Sarah Oppenheimer, whose groundbreaking installation will connect the museum's modern and contemporary collections through incisions and meticulously crafted sculptural forms placed in the floor, ceiling, and walls. An exhibition of large-scale color photographs by South African artist Zwelethu Mthethwa will inaugurate the wing’s new dedicated project space for rotating exhibitions.

“As we look towards our 100th year, we are embarking on a major renovation designed to reinvent and refresh the museum-going experience by presenting our collections in unexpected and thought-provoking ways,” said Museum Director Doreen Bolger. “In addition to the contemporary wing, we will be reinstalling our American wing and our African collection, and in each case, we are challenging ourselves to re-imagine the way visitors experience our museum by providing more textured and meaningful encounters with art.”

The BMA’s distinctive contemporary art collection features a significant number of works by women, artists of color, and both emerging and established artists whose art makes a profound social statement, including General Idea, Zoe Leonard, and Hank Willis Thomas. A new dedicated gallery will showcase the museum's exceptional holdings of prints, drawings, and photographs, which ranges from pieces by Diane Arbus, Eva Hesse, and Cy Twombly to works by Edward Burtynsky, Los Carpinteros, Rachel Harrison, and Elad Lassry.

“We have begun re-envisioning our contemporary wing by expanding our collection to include artists that are developing highly charged, of-the-moment works, and are grappling with issues that visitors’ see as relevant to their own lives,” said Contemporary Art Curator Kristen Hileman. “The collection will be presented thematically rather than chronologically, so that audiences can think about the important topics addressed by the artists and engage with contemporary art both aesthetically and philosophically.”

Hileman, who joined the museum in 2009, had previously worked as a curator for the Smithsonian Institute’s Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. Since joining the BMA she has worked to expand the museum’s contemporary collection to include younger, emerging artists and curated *Seeing Now: Photography Since 1960* and the BMA’s presentation of *Andy Warhol: The Last Decade*.

Renovations to the wing have been designed to enhance visitors’ engagement with contemporary art and include: dedicated space for rotating exhibitions, which will allow visitors to see a greater variety of work more frequently; a black box gallery that will enable the museum to present video installations more effectively; and two educational spaces that will be used for both organized programs and for individual reflection.

In addition to the reinstallation of the contemporary art wing, the BMA’s renovation plans include the construction of new educational spaces and renovations to the lobby that will help enhance the visitor experience. The renovation will increase gallery space and provide the museum with greater flexibility in the presentation of both their collection and rotating exhibitions, allowing more opportunities to refresh the experience for the public.

ABOUT THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

The Baltimore Museum of Art is home to an internationally renowned collection of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art. Founded in 1914 with a single painting, the BMA today has 90,000 works of art—including the largest holding of works by Henri Matisse in the world. The BMA has a long tradition of collecting art of the day, beginning with the Cone sisters, whose avid acquisitions from living artists signaled the museum’s commitment to collecting contemporary art. Throughout the Museum, visitors will find an outstanding selection of European and American fine and decorative arts, 15th- through 19th-century prints and drawings, works by established and emerging contemporary artists, and objects from Africa, Asia, the Ancient Americas, and Pacific Islands. The Museum is located in a park-like setting in the heart of Charles Village and adjacent to the main campus of The Johns Hopkins University. The BMA’s 10-building complex encompasses 210,000 square feet and is distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope. Two beautifully landscaped gardens display an array of 20th-century sculpture that is an oasis in the city. Since 2006, the BMA has eliminated general admission fees so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

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