

THE BMA'S FRONT ROOM SERIES CONTINUES WITH NOTES ON MONUMENTALITY

BALTIMORE, MD (February 25, 2008)—The *Front Room* series at The Baltimore Museum of Art continues with an exhibition focusing on monuments and monumentality. **Front Room: Notes on Monumentality**, on view **February 27** through **May 25, 2008**, reconsiders historic and contemporary conceptions of the monument and monumentality through the presentation of more than 40 photographs, prints, drawings, paintings, video, and sculpture.

Traditionally monuments have served to mark significant historic events, represent heroic figures, or symbolize universal ideals. Our cities are sprinkled with figures carved from marble or forged in bronze whose relevance has faded in the public's memory. To whom do the monuments of the past now speak? Monuments traditionally require social agreement on common values and broadly accepted narratives of history. Can the idea of the monument continue in an era when social consensus no longer exists?

Front Room: Notes on Monumentality reflects on these questions, along with the monument as an art form, by considering historical monuments found in Baltimore and other cities, as well as more recent conceptions such as Claes Oldenburg's *Proposed Colossal Monument for Grand Army Plaza, New York City: Baked Potato (Thrown Version)*, 1965, Krzysztof Wodiczko's *Martin Luther Kirche, Kassel, West Germany* (1987), and Matthew McConville's *Wagner Memorial, Druid Hill Park* (2008).



Krzysztof Wodiczko. *Martin Luther Kirche, Kassel, West Germany*. 1987. ©Krzysztof Wodiczko.
Courtesy Galerie Lelong, New York

Toppled monuments, monuments to the ordinary, and monuments without narrative are just some of the strategies contemporary artists have used to create more personal, enigmatic, and ephemeral monuments that are relevant to a less heroic and more fragmented time.

This exhibition is guest curated by Mark Alice Durant, a professor in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and a faculty member at the Milton Avery Graduate School for the Arts at Bard College.

The *Front Room* series is generously sponsored by The Rouse Company Foundation.

ABOUT THE FRONT ROOM

Located in the first gallery of the BMA's West Wing for Contemporary Art, the Front Room series features a variety of art experiences throughout the year, ranging from innovative works by individual artists to thematic exhibitions that incorporate objects from the Museum's collection of contemporary art.

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. 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. Two beautifully landscaped gardens display an array of 20th-century sculpture that is an oasis in the city. As a major cultural destination for the greater Baltimore region, the BMA organizes and presents a variety of dynamic exhibitions and innovative programs throughout the year, and frequently hosts special events with cultural and educational partners. 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. It is distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope with an impressive wing for contemporary art added in 1994.

VISITOR INFORMATION

General admission to the BMA is free. Special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Friday, 11 a.m.– 5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. The Museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The BMA is located on Art Museum Drive at North Charles and 31st Streets, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general Museum information, call 443-573-1700 or visit artbma.org.

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