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BALTIMORE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATIVE WINS \$25,000 SONDHEIM ARTSCAPE PRIZE

BALTIMORE, MD (July 11, 2009)—Mayor Sheila Dixon and the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts are proud to announce that **Baltimore Development Cooperative** is the winner of the **2009 Janet & Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize**. The coveted \$25,000 prize was presented by Mayor Dixon at this evening's awards ceremony at The Baltimore Museum of Art. Works of art by the prizewinner and five other finalists are on view at the BMA until August 16.

The Sondheim prize is part of Artscape, America's largest free celebration of the arts, taking place July 17-19 along Mount Royal Avenue and North Charles Street. It is designed to assist area visual artists in furthering their careers by allowing them to pursue tracks in their work that may not otherwise be possible. The winner was determined by an outside panel of three jurors: Ellen Harvey, a New York-based artist; Valerie Cassel Oliver, Curator at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; and Elisabeth Sussman, Curator and Sondra Gilman Curator of Photography at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

The **Baltimore Development Cooperative (BDC)** is an artist group with an interdisciplinary practice that uses the strategies of art, research, and activism to critically engage with urban spatial politics. Co-founded in 2005, the group has produced tours, exhibitions, workshops and site-specific projects in public space. The BDC is dedicated to the analysis of neo-liberal urbanism and the invention of alternatives based on social, economic, and ecological justice in the city. The core members of BDC are Scott Berzofsky, Dane Nester, and Nicholas Wisniewski. For the 2009 Sondheim Prize Finalists exhibition, BDC created *Participation Park*, a two-part multi-media installation. Outside on the terrace in front of the BMA is a colorful geodesic dome with seating that invites viewers to create their own experience; whether listening to music, eating, or talking. In the exhibition galleries is a cardboard sculpture of Baltimore's downtown landmarks on bulldozer tracks.

FINALISTS EXHIBITION

The Janet & Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize: 2009 Finalists exhibition includes works of art by all six finalists for this year's prize—Baltimore Development Cooperative, Leslie Furlong, Ryan Hackett, Jessie Lehson, Molly Springfield, and Karen Yasinsky. The BMA's exhibition is organized by Jay Fisher, Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs. Another exhibition of semifinalists will take place at the Maryland Institute College of Art's Decker and Meyerhoff Galleries from July 17 through August 2.

The finalist exhibition is presented by the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts in partnership with The Baltimore Museum of Art.

Generously supported by Amy and Chuck Newhall and an anonymous donor.

The 2009 Janet & Walter Sondheim Prize is made possible in part by grants from The Abell Foundation, Alex. Brown Charitable Foundation, Charlesmead Foundation, Ellie Dankert, France-Merrick Foundation, Hecht-Levi Foundation, Legg Mason, Chuck and Amy Newhall, The Henry & Ruth Blaustein Rosenberg Foundation, Under Armour Baltimore Marathon/Corrigan Sports Enterprises, and Whiting-Turner Contracting Company.

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JANET & WALTER SONDHEIM

The Artscape prize is named in honor of Janet and Walter Sondheim, who were instrumental in creating the Baltimore City that exists today. Walter Sondheim, Jr. was one of Baltimore's most important civic leaders for over 50 years. His accomplishments included oversight of the desegregation of the Baltimore City Public Schools in 1954, and championing the development of Charles Center and the Inner Harbor. He was active in civic and educational activities in the city and state, and served as senior advisor to the Greater Baltimore Committee until his death in February 2007. Janet Sondheim danced with the pioneering Denishawn Dancers, a legendary dance troupe founded by Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn. Later, she turned to teaching and she spent 15 years at the Children's Guild working with severely emotionally disturbed children. After retirement, she was a volunteer tutor at Highlandtown Elementary School. She married Walter in 1934, and they were together until her death in 1992.

ARTSCAPE

Artscape returns July 18-20 with more than 150 artists, craftspeople, and fashion designers from across the country; visual art exhibits both on and off site; live concerts on four outdoor stages; performing arts including dance, opera, theater, fashion, film, and classical music, hands-on projects, and children's entertainers; three street theater locations; and a delicious international menu of food and beverages. Artscape is presented by Mayor Sheila Dixon and produced by the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts.

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 Matisse in the world. The Museum is also distinguished by a grand historic building designed by the great American architect John Russell Pope and a scenic three-acre sculpture garden that is an oasis in the City. As a major cultural destination for the greater Baltimore region, the BMA welcomes more than 250,000 visitors annually with an exciting program of dynamic, critically acclaimed exhibitions; lively concerts, lectures, and performances; and imaginative activities for families. Thanks to extraordinary government and private support, general admission to the BMA is free for everyone, every day, so that great art is accessible to all.

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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