



BMA Presents *Coming Attractions: The John Waters Collection*

Exhibition curated by artists Catherine Opie and Jack Pierson features approximately 90 works from Waters' personal fine art collection

For media in Baltimore

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BALTIMORE, MD (August 4, 2022)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) is showcasing approximately 90 works from the collection of John Waters that provide an insider's look at of the Baltimore icon's tastes in fine art. The artworks are drawn from the 372 objects that Waters is giving to the museum as part of his bequest, marking the first presentation of works from the gift since its announcement in fall 2020. The exhibition, titled ***Coming Attractions: The John Waters Collection***, is guest curated by photographer Catherine Opie and artist Jack Pierson, both of whom have been friends with Waters for many years and are represented in his collection. Through their collaboration, Waters' collected works are examined through a particularly intimate lens, offering audiences a distinct sense of his singular sensibilities. On view November 20, 2022, through April 16, 2023, *Coming Attractions* will be presented in the BMA's Nancy Dorman and Stanley Mazaroff Center for the Study of Prints, Drawings and Photographs.

Among the featured works in the exhibition are paintings, sculptures, photographs, and prints by Diane Arbus, Nan Goldin, Mike Kelley, Cindy Sherman, Gary Simmons, Cy Twombly, Andy Warhol, Christopher Wool, and numerous others. The selected works capture elements of key importance to Waters' collecting vision, including a commitment to daring artists and artworks that exude confidence, wit, and humor. The exhibition also highlights the deep and longstanding relationships that Waters has established with artists and the ways in which those personal engagements and connections have further defined his collecting. A publication featuring images of the artworks installed in Waters' Baltimore, New York City, and San Francisco homes will accompany the exhibition, giving audiences the opportunity to see the way that Waters' lives with the works on view.

"We have both known John Waters for years as an auteur filmmaker, a writer, an artist, an art collector, and a friend. We are honored to have the opportunity to curate a presentation of his collection, which so richly reflects his personality and imagination," said co-curators Opie and Pierson. "Our hope is to share with audiences another aspect of John's creative vision by offering a glimpse into what he values: artists who are unafraid to take risks, who do not compromise, and who create their art on the margins."

Waters' bequest to the BMA of 372 works by 125 artists brings a cutting-edge articulation of American individualism to the BMA's collection, particularly as it

relates to queer identity and freedom of expression. The exhibition begins with a grouping of touchstone works that represent Waters' relationships with people in the art and film world such as Brigid Berlin, Colin de Land, Cookie Mueller, and Andy Warhol. Works by Vincent Fecteau, Fischli and Weiss, Paul Lee, Doug Padgett, George Stoll, and others lean heavily on craft to emulate everyday or eerily familiar objects—a theme well-defined within the collection. The definition of painting extends beyond oil and canvas with works by Richard Artschwager, Tadashi Kawamata, Tom Sachs, and Richard Tuttle, embracing a variety of materials. Photography also plays a key role in Waters' collection, and among the photographers he admires are Diane Arbus, Peter Hujar, Nan Goldin, Larry Clark, Catherine Opie, Jack Pierson, Richard Prince, and Karlheinz Weinberger. Baltimore-area visitors will appreciate a rare painting by Betsy the Chimpanzee, who lived at the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore and became a local art sensation in the 1950s. Though Waters' bequest includes many artworks he created, *Coming Attractions* will focus on those he has collected.

The exhibition is organized by BMA Associate Curator of Contemporary Art Leila Grothe.

Catherine Opie

Catherine Opie (b. 1961, Sandusky, OH; lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) is an artist working with photography, film, collage, and ceramics. She received her BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1985, and an MFA from CalArts in 1988. Opie's work has been exhibited extensively throughout the United States, Europe, and Japan, including a mid-career survey in 2008 at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. Solo exhibitions of Opie's work have been organized by the Henie Onstad Art Centre in Oslo, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, Saint Louis Art Museum, Photographers' Gallery in London, and The Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, among others. Her work is held in over 50 major collections throughout the world. She is the recipient of numerous awards, including The Guggenheim Fellowship in 2019, The Smithsonian's Archives of American Art Medal in 2016, and a United States Artists Fellowship in 2006. Opie is the Lynda and Stewart Resnick endowed Chair in Art and Art Department Chair at UCLA.

Jack Pierson

Jack Pierson (b. 1960, Plymouth, MA; lives and works in New York and California) works across several mediums, including photography, drawing, and sculpture. He graduated from the Massachusetts College of Art, where he participated in the Studio for Interrelated Media, one of the earliest formal academic programs for the study of performance art. Recent solo exhibitions of his work have been presented at Museo Ettore Fico Torino, Italy (2021); Aspen Art Museum, CO (2017); and CAC Malaga, Spain (2009); and he has participated in numerous group exhibitions, most recently at High Desert Test Sites in Joshua Tree, California (2022); RISD Museum in Providence, RI (2021); and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, NY (2020). Among the major public collections with Pierson's work are the Art Institute of Chicago, IL; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, NY.

John Waters

Over the course of his five-decade career, John Waters has left an indelible mark on filmmaking and popular culture and pushed the boundaries of creative endeavor as a film director, writer, actor, and journalist. His visual art, which has been presented in numerous exhibitions throughout the U.S. and Europe, embraces photographs, sculptures, sound and video works, and mixed-media installations that engage with insider knowledge, celebrity culture, consumerism, sex, and identity. His manipulation and subversion of images, symbols, and low-brow references entice viewers to connect with his astute observations about society—conversations that feel ever more prescient and necessary today. Major retrospectives of Waters’ films have been presented by the Film Society of Lincoln Center in 2014 and by the British Film Institute in 2015. Waters is a member of The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. He is also a member of the Board of Directors for the Maryland Film Festival and has been a key participant in the Provincetown International Film Festival (PIFF) since it began in 1999. Waters was honored as the first recipient of the PIFF “Filmmaker on the Edge” award in 1999. Waters was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2015, the Maryland Institute College of Arts in 2016, and the School of Visual Arts in New York City in 2020 and 2022. In 2017, he was presented the Writers Guild of America, East’s Ian McLellan Hunter Award honoring his body of work as a writer in motion pictures. In 2017, he was bestowed the rank of Officer in the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Minister of Culture.

Baltimore Museum of Art

Founded in 1914, the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) inspires people of all ages and backgrounds through exhibitions, programs, and collections that tell an expansive story of art—challenging long-held narratives and embracing new voices. Our outstanding collection of more than 95,000 objects spans many eras and cultures and includes the world’s largest public holding of works by Henri Matisse; one of the nation’s finest collections of prints, drawings, and photographs; and a rapidly growing number of works by contemporary artists of diverse backgrounds. The museum is also distinguished by a neoclassical building designed by American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped gardens featuring an array of modern and contemporary sculpture. The BMA is located three miles north of the Inner Harbor, adjacent to the main campus of Johns Hopkins University, and has a community branch at Lexington Market. General admission is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

Visitor Information

General admission to the BMA is free. The BMA is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with extended hours on Thursdays until 9 p.m. Timed reservations are required for all visitors to the galleries. The Sculpture Gardens are open Wednesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to dusk. The museum and gardens are closed New Year’s Day, Juneteenth, July 4, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. The BMA is located at 10 Art Museum Drive, three miles north of Baltimore’s Inner Harbor. For general museum information, call 443-573-1700 or visit artbma.org.

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