



## **BMA Announces Acquisition of More Than 100 Objects and Suites Across Media, Culture, Geography, and Time**

Twenty works from [P. Bruce Marine and Donald Hardy Collection](#) strengthen holdings of Black artists from the 19th through 21st centuries

### **For media in Baltimore**

**Anne Brown**

410-274-9907

[abrown@artbma.org](mailto:abrown@artbma.org)

### **For media outside**

**Baltimore**

**Alina Sumajin**

PAVE Communications

& Consulting

646-369-2050

[alina@paveconsult.com](mailto:alina@paveconsult.com)

BALTIMORE, MD (July 13, 2023)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) announced today that it has acquired more than 100 objects and suites during winter and spring 2023. The broad range of works reflect the BMA’s ongoing commitment to diversify its collection across time, media, and culture; to bring forward new and under-recognized voices from across the globe; and to uplift artists with ties to Baltimore and the surrounding region.

A major highlight is a purchase and promised gift from the **P. Bruce Marine and Donald Hardy Collection** that significantly enhances the museum’s holdings of paintings and works on paper by Black artists from the 19th through the 21st centuries. The BMA purchased from the collection **Charles White’s** extraordinary 1938 drawing *Peace on Earth*, which depicts the Red Summer race riots of Chicago in 1919 and is an important example of the artist’s impact on the graphic tradition as a vehicle for messages of social justice. The work joins *The Voice of Jericho* (1958), a powerful print by White of his friend Harry Belafonte already in the BMA’s collection. The Marine-Hardy Collection also gifted 19 works to the BMA by **John Henry Adams Jr., Edward Mitchell Bannister, Eldzier Cortor, Viyé Diba, David Driskell, John Farrar, Kojo Griffin, Seydou Keïta, Joe Overstreet, Charles Ethan Porter, Laura Wheeler Waring, Philemona Williamson**, and others. Together, these works allow the museum to narrate the achievements of African American and African diasporic artists more fully within the art historical canon.

Among the rich selection of works by artists connected to the Baltimore region are paintings by **Linling Lu** and **Zéh Palito**; mixed-media works by **Charles Mason III, Devin N. Morris, Lavar Munroe**, and **Elizabeth Talford Scott**; works on paper and photographs by **Bernhard Hildebrandt, Zoë Charlton, Louis Fratino**, and **Elena Volkova**; and sculpture, garments, and jewelry by **Joyce J. Scott**. The BMA also acquired objects by **Omar Ba, Darrel Ellis**, and **Elle Pérez**, who were featured in recent exhibitions, as well as works by **Larry W. Cook Jr.** and **Steffani Jemison** from the critically acclaimed presentation *A Movement in Every Direction: Legacies of the Great Migration*.

**John Ahearn’s** *Bashira* (1992) entered the collection as the gift of BMA Trustee Michael Sherman and his wife Carrie Tivador. The sculpture was originally presented at the museum in 1992 as part of the exhibition *Friends and Neighbors: The Art of John Ahearn and Rigoberto Torres*. The BMA also acquired a video artwork by the artist’s

twin, artist and filmmaker **Charlie Ahearn**, which documents the life-casting process for *Bashira* that took place outside his brother’s studio in the South Bronx.

Additional objects include a suite of 16 photographs by American artist **Nancy Katz** that depict significant figures across the worlds of art and design; a group of design objects by Hungarian-American artist **Eva Ziesel**; a commissioned photographic installation by Hunkpapa Lakota artist **Dana Claxton**; paintings by Egyptian artist **Hend Samir** and American artist **Anthony Cudahy**; a sculpture by Congolese artist **Bodys Isek Kingelez**; a sound sculpture by Ukraine-born artist **Luba Drozd**; a silk scroll of Guanyin by Chinese female artist **Wang Shuhui**; and paintings by 19th-century American women artists **Lilla Cabot Perry**, **Louisa Davis Minot**, and **Laura Woodward**.

“We are thrilled to bring this extraordinary group of works into the BMA’s collection, allowing us to share more nuanced and complicated narratives from across culture and the history of art. As we proceed in our work to diversify our holdings, we are particularly focused on ensuring that our collection speaks to global experiences through time and that we are continuing to support our own community, which is the source of broad and dynamic artistic innovation. We look forward to sharing these works with our audiences in the coming months and years,” said Asma Naeem, the BMA’s Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director.

## Object Highlights

**Rasheed Araeen. *Pher Bahar Ayee (Come Spring Again)*. 2022.** Widely considered to be an early trailblazer of Minimalism, Rasheed Araeen (born Karachi, Pakistan, 1935) is an artist, writer, theorist, publisher, and curator who uses geometry to bridge two distinct philosophies—Islam and Modernism. For this large-scale wall-mounted work, he has produced a repeating pattern of geometric forms with diagonal struts and negative space that illustrates the dialectical relationship between the object and viewer and the invisibility of the divine. The work also represents the artist’s position on the fundamental nature of red, yellow, and blue. This is a major addition to the BMA’s already strong holdings in Minimalism.

**Peter Bradley. *Oblivious Venus*. 1974.** Peter Bradley (b. 1940, Connellsville, PA) is a painter and sculptor whose work is associated with the Color Field Movement. Across his abstract paintings, vivid hues splatter and stain the canvas, creating an experience that revels in the brilliance of color. In addition to his distinctive practice, he is recognized for curating the first racially integrated art show in the United States. *The De Luxe Show* became a landmark moment in civil rights history. *Oblivious Venus* is an early and rare extant work that crystallizes the artist’s investment in studies of color and abstraction. The work is the first by Bradley to enter the BMA’s collection.

**Zoë Charlton. *Wrist Bands (Spirit Squad Series)*, 2021, and *Blue Flip-Flops (Immortal Series)*, 2022** Baltimore-based artist Zoë Charlton (b. 1973, Eglin Air Force Base, FL) created the *Immortal* and *Spirit Squad* series to consider the diffuse possibilities for genealogical research available for African Americans because of forced migration as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Through the use of charged cultural objects such as African masks, she calls into question the conundrum of Black American identity forged through archival absences, but also a constant negotiation of land and

belonging. Whether they are worn or consumed, the masked figure repairs such temporal and ancestral fissures by returning and privileging the body as a site for knowing.

**Ben Enwonwu. *Untitled*, 1949.** This painting by internationally renowned artist Odinigwe Benedict Chukwukadibia Enwonwu—known professionally as Ben Enwonwu (Nigerian, 1917-1994)—was created early in his career while he traveled across what was then colonized Nigeria in the 1930s and 40s. His drawings and paintings from this period, which depict both the diversity of Nigerian people and Nigerian traditions, garnered worldwide critical acclaim for the artist and aided in the struggle for Nigerian independence. This is the first work by Enwonwu and also the first pre-1960 painting by an African artist to enter the museum's collection.

**Fortune Justice (attributed to). *Face Jug*, c. 1870-1880.** Fortune Justice (American, c. 1856–1898) is one of the only named Black potters with existing work from the Edgefield pottery district of South Carolina. Trained while enslaved and then prolific while free, his talent and entrepreneurship represent the ingenuity of Black artists in the South in the late 19th century. This face jug is particularly distinguished for its large scale and white, moveable eyes and teeth made of kaolin (porcelain clay). This is the first face jug and Edgefield pottery example and the second work by a 19th-century Black potter to enter the collection.

**Sunil Gupta. *Towards an Indian Gay Image, Lake Pichola, Udaipur*, 1983.** Canadian/British artist Sunil Gupta (b. 1953, New Delhi, India) emigrated to Canada as a teenager. In the 1980s, he connected to the underground gay scene in Delhi. Struck by the lack of images of gay men but also conscious of the dangers to his community, he began composing staged images that captured their experiences but preserved their anonymity. This photograph is a rare vintage example of his early work. The series from which the work is drawn garnered Gupta attention and led to other notable series and career successes. This is the first work by Gupta to enter the BMA's collection.

**Julie Hart Beers. *Woodland Creek*, 1877.** This luminous forest scene by Julie Hart Beers (American, 1835–1913) has the illustrative foreground, confident recession of space, emphasis on light and atmosphere, and attention to the specificities of flora and fauna that are the hallmarks of the 19th-century Hudson River School. Beers, who supported her young family through her art, is a rare example of a woman landscape painter recognized in her own time. *Woodland Creek* strengthens and diversifies the BMA's holdings of this period and is the first work of Beers to enter the BMA's collection.

**Linling Lu. *One Hundred Melodies of Solitude, No.222*. 2022.** Linling Lu (b. 1983, Zunyi, Guizhou Province, China) is one of the most formidable painters working in Baltimore today. While recently the subject of solo exhibitions at Kalamazoo Institute of Arts (2022) and The Phillips Collection (2023), the BMA is among the first institutions to collect her work, advancing the museum's mission to support excellent work by artists with deep ties to the region. Lu began her ongoing series *One Hundred Melodies of Solitude* in 2010. Scaled in relation to the body in space, these circular paintings comprise concentric bands of color in complex harmonies, which suggest a progression of sound while also absorbing the viewer in an optical investigation of each specific hue.

**Devin N. Morris. *Come As You Are*. 2021.** Harlem-based artist Devin N. Morris's (b. 1986, Baltimore, MD) abstracts American life and subverts notions of value through the exploration of racial and sexual identity. His work, which embraces mixed media paintings, photographs, writings, and video, often interrogates the idea of kindness—a subject inspired by his experiences as a Black boy in Baltimore and later as a Black queer man navigating the world. *Come As You Are* is one of two major works the artist created while in residence in Baltimore in 2022 and presents a queer Black figure presiding over a harbor scene and staring in deep meditation and wonder. The work is the first by Morris to enter the BMA's collection and continues its commitment to collecting work by artists with ties to the city.

**Vian Sora. *Last Sound*. 2022.** Iraqi-American artist Vian Sora (b. 1976, Baghdad, Iraq) immigrated to the United States where she received an MBA from Bellarmine University in Kentucky. Her paintings frequently synthesize styles and iconography from modern and ancient Iraqi material cultures. She merges these references with emotive expressions of the immigrant experience, creating a distinct visual vocabulary. Sora's work captures the struggle of the individual in the face of personal and social upheaval, often employing androgynous figures that transmute into abstract landscapes. *Last Sound* is charged with dark stains and clashing surface textures, which Sora then disrupts with vibrant hues interwoven throughout its composition. This is the first work by Sora to enter the BMA's collection.

**Balthasar van der Ast. *A Tulip, a Carnation and Roses, with Shells and Insects, on a Ledge*, c. early 1630s.** Balthasar van der Ast (Dutch, 1593/94–1657) was one of the most significant still life painters in the Netherlands in the 17th century and one of the first to focus on the depiction of seashells. This elegant painting depicts shells drawn from the Indian and Pacific oceans and the Caribbean Sea, alongside a rare red-and-white striped tulip originally from Central Asia, and natural objects that reflect the global trading and colonialist interests of the country during this period. The painting, signed by the artist in the lower left corner along the stone ledge, is also quietly enlivened by the inclusion of a dragonfly, bumblebee, and inchworm.

### **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 97,000 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. 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](http://artbma.org).

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