



THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART DEDICATES A YEAR OF EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS TO WOMEN ARTISTS IN 2020

2020 Marks the 100th Anniversary of Women Getting the Right to Vote in the U.S.

Initiative Includes 20 Exhibitions Beginning Fall 2019

BALTIMORE, MD (August 1, 2019)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) today announced *2020 Vision*, a year of exhibitions and programs dedicated to the presentation of the achievements of female-identifying artists. The initiative will encompass 13 solo exhibitions and seven thematic shows beginning in fall 2019, with additional presentations still being planned. Highlights include a large-scale transformative commission by **Mickalene Thomas**, a major monographic survey of **Joan Mitchell's** career, an exploration of **Candice Breitz's** video works, and the reinstallation of several of the museum's galleries to emphasize the depth and diversity of women's artistry through time. These presentations will be supported by a wide range of public and scholarly programs that will foster dialogue on women's contributions to art history and the development of many of the artistic institutions that we know today.

The initiative is part of the BMA's ongoing implementation of its broader vision to address race and gender diversity gaps within the museum field, and to represent more fully and deeply the spectrum of individuals that have shaped the trajectory of art. *2020 Vision* builds on the BMA's efforts over the last several years to expand its presentations of women artists and artists of color, and to more accurately reflect the community in which it lives. It also coincides with the 100th anniversary of the passing of the 19th Amendment, ratified on August 18, 1920, which guaranteed women in the U.S. the right to vote.

"The BMA's *2020 Vision* initiative serves to recognize the voices, narratives, and creative innovations of a range of extraordinarily talented women artists. The goal for this effort is to rebalance the scales and to acknowledge the ways in which women's contributions still do not receive the scholarly examination, dialogue, and public acclaim that they deserve," said Christopher Bedford, BMA Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director. "This vision and goal are especially appropriate, given the central role women have played in shaping this museum throughout its history."

The BMA will begin implementing *2020 Vision* in fall 2019 with a series of thematic exhibitions and a major commission. *By Their Creative Force: American Women Modernists* will feature works by **Elizabeth Catlett**, **Maria Martinez**, **Georgia O'Keeffe**, and others who contributed to major art movements of the 20th century from Cubism to Abstract Expressionism. Several of these artists—including **Simone Brangier Boas**, **Grace Hartigan**, and **Amalie Rothschild**—were based in Baltimore during their careers. This is followed by the late November opening of a large-scale installation by internationally acclaimed artist **Mickalene Thomas**. This site-specific work for the inaugural Robert E. Meyerhoff and Rheda Becker Biennial Commission will transform the BMA's two-story East Lobby into a living room for the city with new wallpapers, furnishings, and prints by Thomas. In December, the museum will open *Free Form: 20th-Century Studio Craft* and *Adorned: African Women & the Art of Identity*. *Free Form* presents works by innovative embroidery, ceramic, and jewelry artists such as **Mariska Karasz** and Baltimore-based artists **Gloria Balder Katzenberg** and **Betty Cooke**. *Adorned* features two dozen works that demonstrate the critical role of 20th-century African women in shaping and maintaining social identities through objects created in clay, cloth, and beads.

The BMA's *2020 Vision* initiative will be in full swing by March 2020, when a selection of powerful videos by internationally acclaimed artist **Candice Breitz** are presented in the special exhibition galleries. The South African-born artist creates moving socio-political narratives that address the lives of immigrants, the rights of sex workers, and other topics that reflect human rights concerns. The exhibition will focus on two major video works: *TLDR* (2017)

and *Love Story* (2016). In September 2020, the BMA presents ***Joan Mitchell: Fierce Beauty***, a comprehensive retrospective of works by the renowned American artist. The exhibition will explore the full arc of Mitchell's artistic practice—from her exceptional New York paintings in the early 1950s to the majestic, large-scale multi-panel works made in France later in her career. Rarely shown paintings and works on paper from public and private collections in the U.S. and Europe will reveal the artist's inner landscape—experience, sensation, and memory—expressed with an intensely athletic grace.

Every gallery in the BMA's Contemporary Wing will also be in alignment with *2020 Vision*. This includes a newly commissioned work by German artist **Katharina Grosse**, as well as focused solo exhibitions of works by **Sharon Lockhart, Ana Mendieta, Howardena Pindell, Tschabalala Self**, and **Lisa Yuskavage**, and Baltimore-based artists **Grace Hartigan, Valerie Maynard**, and **Jo Smail**. On the first floor of the museum, ***Ellen Lesperance: Velvet Fist*** will present a suite of seven exquisite paintings from the artist's ongoing *Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp* series shown with her *Congratulations and Celebrations Sweater* participatory project.

In summer 2020, the BMA will present a selection of beaded works created by **19th-century Lakota women** who subversively incorporated the American flag and other patriotic iconography into traditional Native American designs. It is joined by several thematic exhibitions drawn from the BMA's collection, including presentations that feature historic and contemporary works by male artists that emphasize the essential roles of women. With a working title of ***African Art and the Matrilineage***, this exhibition is the first in the United States to propose maternal power as an activating and vital force at work in African art during the 19th through mid-20th centuries. ***Women Behaving Badly*** is the working title for a thematic exhibition about representations of female power and protest in European and American art. From mythic and biblical heroines to femme fatales and witches, the show foregrounds the stories of intellectuals, entertainers, and activists who rebelled against the traditional roles of wife and mother. Additionally, the extraordinary legacy of former BMA director **Adelyn Breeskin**, who arranged the Cone Collection bequest for the museum and commissioned the U.S. Pavilion for the 1960 Venice Biennale, will be celebrated with some of her key acquisitions as well as archival materials.

WOMEN ARTISTS, COLLECTORS, AND LEADERS AT THE BMA

The BMA has nearly 3,800 works of art by 1,050 women artists and designers. The first painting by a woman artist to enter the museum's collection was a portrait by Sarah Miriam Peale, considered the first American woman to succeed as a professional artist. It was given to the BMA in 1916, two years after the museum was founded. The BMA has been avidly collecting works by contemporary female artists for several decades, most recently adding major works by Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Mary Reid Kelley, Wangechi Mutu, Mary Lovelace O'Neal, Amy Sherald, Anne Truitt, Carrie Mae Weems, and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye. Among the other women artists represented in the collection are Louise Bourgeois, Mary Cassatt, Elizabeth Catlett, Helen Frankenthaler, Edmonia Lewis, Louise Nevelson, Faith Ringgold, Susan Rothenberg, Alison Saar, Joyce J. Scott, Cindy Sherman, and Élisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun,.

Important donors and collectors whose legacies continue today include Mary Frick Jacobs (1851–1936), who was one of the BMA's incorporators and funded the 1937 wing that presents European Old Masters paintings and sculpture, many of them from her own collection. Dr. Claribel Cone (1864–1929) and Etta Cone (1870–1949) were groundbreaking collectors who befriended Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso early in their careers and amassed a world-renowned collection of 3,000 works by many of the greatest modern artists of the 20th century. These works were bequeathed to the BMA in 1950, along with the funds to create a suite of galleries for their display. Saidie Adler May (1879–1951) built a remarkable collection focused on the younger generation of Surrealist and other European and American avant-garde artists and also funded a wing at the museum that included a large space dedicated to

children's education. Her sister Blanche Adler (1877–1941) gave the museum a collection of collected lithographs, etchings, and woodcuts by North American and European artists. Dorothy McIlvain Scott (1912–2011) was a BMA Trustee and a prominent collector of 18th- and 19th-century American paintings, furniture, and decorative arts. Scott gave the museum a \$10 million endowment gift in 2007 for the Dorothy McIlvain Scott American Wing, dedicated to her parents and uncles.

The BMA has had a long history of pioneering women who have helped shape the institution since its earliest days. The museum's first director was Florence Levy, who served from 1923 to 1926. Adelyn Breeskin led the museum as acting director and director from 1942 to 1962, helping to secure the Cone Collection and commissioning the U.S. Pavilion for the 1960 Venice Biennale. During the tenure of Doreen Bolger from 1998 to 2015, the museum reinstated many of its collection galleries and reinstated free admission. Women board chairs who have led the BMA include Edith Ferry Hooper, Margot Heller, Constance Caplan, Suzanne Cohen, and the current chair, Clair Zamoiski Segal.

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

Founded in 1914, The Baltimore Museum of Art is a major cultural destination recognized for engaging diverse audiences through dynamic exhibitions and innovative educational and community outreach programs. The BMA's internationally renowned collection of 95,000 objects encompasses more than 1,000 works by Henri Matisse anchored by the famed Cone Collection of modern art, as well as one of the nation's finest holdings of prints, drawings, and photographs. The galleries showcase an exceptional collection of art from Africa; important works by established and emerging contemporary artists; outstanding European and American paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts; significant artworks from China; ancient Antioch mosaics; and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000- square-foot museum is also distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped gardens featuring an array of 20th-century sculpture. The BMA is located in Charles Village, three miles north of the Inner Harbor, and is adjacent to the main campus of Johns Hopkins University. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

VISITOR INFORMATION

General admission to the BMA is free. Special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. The museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. 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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