



THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART HOSTS GINEVRA SHAY'S "PHONE CALL" PARTICIPATORY ART AND POETRY PROJECT APRIL 6–10

BALTIMORE, MD (March 26, 2021)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) hosts *Phone Call*, a participatory dialogue-based work by Baltimore- and New York-based artist Ginevra Shay that brings artists and poets to listeners through one-to-one readings and conversations over the phone. Initially conceived to combat isolation brought about by the first COVID-19 shutdowns in March 2020, *Phone Call* is an ephemeral living work centered around human connection and generosity, building closeness across distance. The work continues this year at select times from April 6 through 10 to offer respite from sustained isolation and fatigue. *Phone Call* is conceived and organized by Shay and inspired in-part by John Giorno's *Dial-a-Poem* (1968), Yoko Ono's *Telephone Piece* (1964), and Nigel Shafran's series *Ruth on the phone* (1995-2004).

Approximately 280 listeners can sign up to receive a phone call from an artist or poet at artbma.org/phonecall starting Monday, March 29. The calls will be placed Tuesday, April 6 through Saturday, April 10 in the morning, afternoon, or evening, as selected by the participant and paired artist or poet. Though poetics are the bedrock of this work, no limits or restrictions have been put on the artists or poets and the length and nature of the calls are up to each of them.

"*Phone Call* is true to my interests and beliefs to decentralize the experience of art, and bring agency and direct-funds to artists and poets without institutional restriction. This is a time where we, collectively, need to radically reimagine the spaces we share, and the world we want to live in once the pandemic is over," said Shay. "Poetry is foundational to this work. This is because of the medium's capacity to help people dream of new possibilities and world-build in the most dire of times."

Engagement with *Phone Call* offers physical connection over airwaves where intonation, cadence, and breath create shared shapes between callers. With the belief that a small gesture can be a radical act, Shay's work engages the public with sharp clarity and consideration against the backdrop of current sustained health, political, and social crises. Shay presents the possibility of human engagement as art praxis and strategy for infinite variable futures.

This round of *Phone Call* features 22 artists and poets. Many are based in Maryland, and nearly all are new to the project, including: Saida Agostini, Christopher Baliwas, Iu Barnes-Lee, Stephanie Barber, Grace Davis, Alexandria Hall, Lane Harlan, Jalynn Harris, Aristilde Kirby, Ty Little, Maya Martinez, Asa Mendelsohn, Shala Miller, Adam Milner, Beatriz Santiago Muñoz, Hoa Nguyen, Funto Omojola, Ariana Reines, Suneil Sanzgiri, Ginevra Shay, Lauren Tosswill, and YATTA.

Phone Call is made possible with support from The Baltimore Museum of Art and the Maryland State Arts Council. The first iteration took place March 30–April 3, 2020 and was hosted and supported by [Transformer DC](#).

Ginevra Shay is an artist based in Baltimore and New York. Their work reimagines the built environment through the intimate engagement of space, image, and text. They are currently pursuing an MFA at the Milton Avery School at Bard College.

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