



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Anne Brown, BMA
abrown@artbma.org, 410-274-9907

Maria May, Resnicow + Associates
mmay@resnicow.com, 214-207-6082

Megan Ardery, Resnicow + Associates
mardery@resnicow.com, 212-671-5178

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART APPOINTS CHRISTOPHER BEDFORD AS ITS NEW DIRECTOR



BALTIMORE, MD (May 2, 2016)—The Baltimore Museum of Art’s (BMA) Board of Trustees announced today that they have appointed Christopher Bedford as its new director. Bedford is currently the Henry and Lois Foster Director of the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University. He will begin his new role as the BMA’s Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director on August 15, 2016, succeeding Doreen Bolger, who served as director of the BMA from 1998 until her retirement in 2015. Bedford was selected following an international search overseen by a committee created by the BMA’s Board of Trustees.

“The Baltimore Museum of Art is poised to enter an exciting new era under Christopher Bedford’s leadership. His visionary approach will enable us to more deeply engage our audiences and serve as a creative catalyst for the city,” said Clair Zamoiski Segal, chair of the BMA’s Board of Trustees. “Chris brings a dynamic mix of experience and energy, from his spearheading the rebirth of the Rose Art Museum, to his innovative work at the Wexner Center and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, making him the right person to build upon the BMA’s distinguished history and lead us into the future.”

Bedford will be the 10th director of the BMA, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2014, and recently completed the most comprehensive philanthropic campaign in its history, raising \$80.7 million and adding nearly 4,000 gifts of art to the collection. The BMA also completed a \$28 million renovation that revitalized galleries for contemporary, American, African, and Asian art; created innovative spaces for education and community programs; and improved visitor amenities and infrastructure.

“The Baltimore Museum of Art has been a pioneer in reinventing the museum experience for 21st-century audiences while remaining committed to its outstanding collections and contributions to the field through special exhibitions and research,” said Bedford. “I look forward to building upon Doreen Bolger’s achievements, working with the staff and board of the BMA as an advocate for their public mission, developing new ways to engage the community, and generating appreciation of the crucial role that the BMA plays as a resource of national standing that contributes to the city and people of Baltimore in so many ways.”

Since his appointment at the Rose Art Museum in 2012, Bedford has developed a robust series of exhibitions, acquired major new works for the permanent collection, expanded the Board of Advisors, and built the museum’s staff. His innovative and dynamic leadership has enabled the museum to more deeply embrace the entire university community and greater Boston area, as well as create programs of national and international impact.

Bedford was recently named the Commissioner for the U.S. Pavilion for the 2017 Venice Biennale, which will present an installation of new work by Mark Bradford. Following his new appointment in Baltimore, the Rose Art Museum will continue as the organizer of the exhibition in Venice co-curated by Bedford and Katy Siegel, curator-at-large for the Rose, and the BMA will support Bedford's role as commissioner.

Prior to joining the Rose Art Museum, Bedford held the positions of chief curator and curator of exhibitions at the Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University (2008-2012), where he organized shows featuring Nathalie Djurberg, Omer Fast, Paul Sietsema, and David Smith, as well as a major exhibition of Mark Bradford's work that toured to the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Dallas Museum of Art, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

He also served as assistant curator and curatorial assistant in the Department of Contemporary Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2006-2008) and consulting curator in the Department of Sculpture and Decorative Arts for the J. Paul Getty Museum (2006-2008). Bedford is also a noted author and contributor to publications including *Art in America*, *ArtForum*, and *Frieze*, among others.

Shortly after taking the helm of the Rose, Bedford commissioned a site specific sculpture by artist Chris Burden to create an inviting gateway to the museum and a dynamic outdoor space for the community. Completed in 2014, *Light of Reason*, is composed of antique Victorian lampposts and concrete benches that form three branches fanning out from the museum's entrance, a structure inspired by the Brandeis University seal.

"Brandeis University has benefited enormously from Christopher Bedford's visionary leadership of the Rose Art Museum over the past four years," said Brandeis Interim President Lisa M. Lynch. "He has established the Rose as one of the nation's premier university museums dedicated to 20th- and 21st-century art. Importantly, he helped shape the Rose to be unique in its integration with the university that in turn has fostered exhilarating and thought-provoking experiences for the Brandeis community and beyond."

Among the significant gifts of art secured through Bedford's leadership are 41 major works donated from computer programmer and philanthropist Peter Norton that comprise video, photography, painting, prints, sculpture, and mixed media by Doug Aitken, Mark Dion, Nicole Eisenman, Omer Fast, Mike Kelley, Gabriel Kuri, Christian Marclay, Damián Ortega, Kara Walker, Christopher Wool, and Lisa Yuskavage.

Last year, the Rose also launched Rosebud, a new satellite gallery housed in an empty storefront in downtown Waltham featuring works from the museum's collection of video art. This innovative collaboration with the city was designed to bring art into the community, activating public engagement with contemporary art through curated exhibitions and programs, and revive underutilized properties in the city of Waltham, supporting the city's long-term goals for economic growth and cultural vibrancy.

Bedford has also organized a number of exhibitions at the Rose, including *Lisa Yuskavage: The Brood* (2015); *Mark Dion: The Undisciplined Collector* (2015); *Mark Bradford: Sea Monsters* (2014); *Rose Video 05, Gillian Wearing: Bully* (2014); *Mika Rottenberg: Bowls, Balls, Souls, Holes* (2014); *Chris Burden: The Master Builder*

(2014); *Minimal and More: 60s and 70s Sculpture from the Collection* (2013); *Rose Video 01, Omer Fast: 5000 Feet is the Best* (2013); and *Walead Beshty: Untitled* (2013).

Born in Scotland and raised in the United States and the UK, Bedford received a Bachelor of Arts at Oberlin College. He received a master's degree in art history through the joint program at Case Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Museum of Art, and he has studied in the doctoral programs in art history at the University of Southern California and the Courtauld Institute of Art at the University of London.

DOROTHY WAGNER WALLIS CHARITABLE TRUST

Since its founding in 1993, the Dorothy Wagner Wallis Charitable Trust has supported numerous Baltimore non-profit organizations concerned with the arts, animal welfare, the environment, historic preservation, higher education, and human services. Dorothy Wagner Wallis was a Baltimore native who was a longtime member and friend of the BMA.

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) 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 95,000 works of art—including the largest holding of works by Henri Matisse in the world. Throughout the museum, visitors will find an outstanding selection of American and European painting, sculpture, and decorative arts; prints and drawings from the 15th century to the present; works by established and emerging contemporary artists; and exceptional objects from Africa and Asia. Two beautifully landscaped gardens display an array of 20th-century sculpture that is an oasis in the city. The 210,000-square-foot museum is distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope. A \$28 million multi-year renovation that began in 2010 has transformed galleries for contemporary, American, African, and Asian art; created innovative spaces for education and community programs; and improved visitor amenities and infrastructure. Since 2006, the BMA has provided free general admission so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

###