

BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART TO REOPEN RENOVATED CONTEMPORARY ART WING ON NOVEMBER 18, 2012

***More Than a Dozen Recent Acquisitions to Be Presented for the First Time at the BMA,
Including Site-Specific Commission by Artist Sarah Oppenheimer***

BALTIMORE, MD (March 29, 2012)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) will open its newly renovated and reinstalled contemporary wing on November 18, 2012, completing the first phase of a major renovation that will improve visitor experience and enhance the museum's presentation of three major collections in anticipation of its 100th Anniversary in 2014. More than a dozen recent acquisitions will be featured when the contemporary galleries reopen, including an innovative site-specific installation by artist Sarah Oppenheimer, *A Man Screaming is Not a Dancing Bear* by the artist collaborative Allora & Calzadilla, *Untitled (bicycle shower)* by Rirkrit Tiravanija, and *Live Ball* by Nari Ward. In addition to collection galleries, the renovated wing will encompass three dedicated spaces for changing exhibitions, including a black box gallery for film, video, and digital presentations; and two spaces for interactive learning.

"The reopening of our contemporary wing this fall will mark the beginning of an incredibly exciting time at the BMA," said Museum Director Doreen Bolger. "Over the next few years, as we approach our 100th anniversary, our visitors will see the museum transform to provide a more dynamic and engaging experience than ever before. We look forward to sharing a first taste of the reinvented BMA this November, when our audiences will have the opportunity to enjoy unexpected, thought-provoking encounters with art in our re-imagined contemporary wing."

Known for its longtime commitment to collecting and supporting the work of living artists and acquiring works that speak to the events and innovations of the day, the BMA's contemporary holdings feature a significant collection of American art from the last six decades, including major late paintings by Andy Warhol, as well as works by Grace Hartigan, Jasper Johns, Donald Judd, Glenn Ligon, Bruce Nauman, Robert Rauschenberg, and Anne Truitt. The museum also holds an outstanding group of works by notable international artists such as Olafur Eliasson, Thomas Hirschhorn, and Franz West, and a significant number of works by women, artists of color, and artists whose work makes a profound social statement, including General Idea, David Hammons, Zoe Leonard, and Felix Gonzalez-Torres.

Among the highlights on view in the BMA contemporary wing when it re-opens in November will be:

- A groundbreaking **architectural intervention by artist Sarah Oppenheimer**, which will link the museum's modern and contemporary collections through meticulously crafted sculptural forms placed in the floor, ceiling, and walls;
- Recent contemporary acquisitions, including *A Man Screaming is Not a Dancing Bear* by the artist collaborative **Allora & Calzadilla**, *Untitled (bicycle shower)* by **Rirkrit Tiravanija**, and *Live Ball* by **Nari Ward**, as well as works by **Guyton Walker**, **Los Carpinteros**, **Elad Lassry**, and **Susan Philipsz**;

- An exhibition of **eight large-scale color photographs by South African artist Zwelethu Mthethwa**, inaugurating the wing's project space for changing exhibitions;
- An exhibition of outstanding **drawings by artists including Lee Bontecou, Philip Guston, and James Rosenquist** from the BMA's Thomas E. Benesch Memorial Collection, presented in the museum's new dedicated gallery for prints, drawings, and photographs;
- A new site-specific work by acclaimed Baltimore street artist **Gaia**.

“The BMA has developed an extraordinary contemporary collection over the years, and we have recently acquired a diverse group of new works by some of today's most innovative international artists,” said Contemporary Art Curator Kristen Hileman. “In our re-envisioned contemporary wing, visitors will encounter these 21st-century works within a rich thematic presentation that will draw fascinating connections between art and contemporary experience.”

Hileman, who joined the museum in 2009, had previously worked as a curator for the Smithsonian Institute's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. Since joining the BMA she has worked to expand the museum's contemporary collection to include new generations of artists and curated *Seeing Now: Photography Since 1960* and the BMA's presentation of *Andy Warhol: The Last Decade*.

In addition to the reinstallation of the contemporary wing, the BMA's \$24.5 million renovation includes the reinstallation of its American and African collections, the construction of new educational spaces, and renovations to the lobby to enhance the visitor experience. The renovation will also provide the museum with greater flexibility in the presentation of both its collection and exhibitions, facilitating more dynamic and engaging encounters with art at the BMA.

ABOUT THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

The Baltimore Museum of Art 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 90,000 works of art—including the largest holding of works by Henri Matisse in the world. The BMA has a long tradition of collecting art of the day, beginning with the Cone sisters, whose avid acquisitions from living artists signaled the museum's commitment to collecting contemporary art. Throughout the Museum, visitors will find an outstanding selection of European and American fine and decorative arts, 15th- through 19th-century prints and drawings, works by established and emerging contemporary artists, and objects from Africa, Asia, the Ancient Americas, and Pacific Islands. The Museum is located in a park-like setting in the heart of Charles Village and adjacent to the main campus of The Johns Hopkins University. The BMA's 10-building complex encompasses 210,000 square feet and is distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope. Two beautifully landscaped gardens display an array of 20th-century sculpture that is an oasis in the city. Since 2006, the BMA has eliminated general admission fees so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

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