

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Anne Mannix  
[amannix@artbma.org](mailto:amannix@artbma.org)

Kelly Linton  
[kClinton@artbma.org](mailto:kClinton@artbma.org)

Sarah Pedroni  
[spedroni@artbma.org](mailto:spedroni@artbma.org)

443-573-1870

## LANDMARK EXHIBITION OF SLIDE PROJECTION ART DEBUTS AT THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

**BALTIMORE, MD (January 18, 2005)**—The Baltimore Museum of Art presents **SlideShow**, the first major exhibition to focus on how slides evolved from a way of showing family photographs into one of the most exciting art forms of our time. Organized by the BMA, this mesmerizing exhibition on view from **February 27 through May 15, 2005**, features some of the most significant slide works from the 1960s to the present by an international group of artists, including James Coleman, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Nan Goldin, and Dan Graham.

Visitors will experience this familiar technology in a new way as the BMA's galleries are transformed into room-size installations illuminated only by the light-filled images flashing on the walls. Nineteen works range from single-carousel pieces that show slides unfolding one-by-one to more cinematic presentations created with multiple projectors, dissolving images, and evocative soundtracks.

Highlights of the exhibition include Jan Dibbets' *Land/Sea*, a spectacular six-carousel installation that projects a landscape in transition, last seen more than 30 years ago, and Nan Goldin's *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* (1979–1996), a nine-carousel, 690-slide installation accompanied by a rock-opera soundtrack that chronicles the lives of the artist's innermost circle of friends.

The dynamic exhibition experience extends outside the Museum in a large-scale projection by Louise Lawler displayed on the exterior wall of the BMA during rush hour every evening, transforming the Museum's neoclassical façade into a giant projection screen. Still projections by the artist will also be screened at The Charles Theatre on alternating Sundays throughout the run of the exhibition, organized by the BMA with the Maryland Film Festival.

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Jack Smith. *Boiled Lobster Color Slide Show*, 1970–1988.  
Courtesy the Plaster Foundation, New York.

An interactive Projection Room in the exhibition galleries features a local slide show of images submitted by Baltimoreans, as well as fascinating historic slide projectors and clips from the soon to be released film, *The Last Slide Projector*.

"The BMA is thrilled to present this major traveling exhibition," said BMA Director Doreen Bolger. "Through a series of compelling installations, audiences will gain a greater understanding of this unique art form, one that was widely practiced in the 1960s and 1970s but never the subject of scholarly examination until now."

### **THE EXHIBITION**

In the 1960s, artists explored ways to capture the fleeting moments of real life by turning to projection formats as dynamic alternatives to traditional painting. A quest to find ways to animate pictures resulted in an explosion of moving images, with slide projection taking on an ever more prominent role. Through the simple technology of the slide projector and 35 mm color transparency, these artists discovered a tool that enabled them to transform space through the magnification of projected pictures, texts, and photographs. The exhibition also features recent work made just as slides are becoming obsolete (Kodak discontinued production of its Ektographic slide projector in fall 2004), highlighting the medium's impact on a younger generation still captivated by its potential.

"Watching slides is a very distinct experience that artists have exploited in fascinating ways," said Darsie Alexander, BMA Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs. "Nearly every artist I interviewed remembers seeing shadows on the wall as a kid or lying in the dark with a flashlight. The works that they went on to produce using slides often have that mysterious effect."

Works in the exhibition include:

- Lothar Baumgarten's *I Like It Here Better than in Westphalia* (1968-76), slides that fade and dissolve to present a pristine landscape becoming polluted over time. The work is accompanied by the calming sounds of nature.
- Dennis Oppenheim's *Ground Gel* (1972), a double-carousel work that portrays the pulsating clockwise motion of the artist and his daughter spinning in a circle until their bodies symbolically merge.
- Robert Barry's *Reflections* (1975), a mysterious combination of words and images that explore the idea of contemplation. Recently acquired by the BMA, the work has rarely been seen since the 1970s.
- Peter Fischli and David Weiss' *Projection 4 (P)* (1997), in which overblown mushrooms slowly dissolve and flow into one another, creating an amorphous blend of psychedelic color.
- Jonathan Monk's *One Moment in Time (Kitchen)* (2002), a sequence of typed-out words that evoke family snapshots ("Rosie (the dog) on a sunny day") as suggestive fragments.
- Ceal Floyer's *Auto Focus* (2002), showing the lens of the projector moving in and out of focus in a futile attempt to grab an image that is not there, capturing the elusiveness of this now-outmoded medium.

## **INTERACTIVE PROJECTION ROOM**

The **SlideShow** experience culminates in an interactive Projection Room where visitors can create their own slide shows and learn about the history of slide technology. Visitors can select from hundreds of slides of landscapes, people, travel, and families to create their own slide show by arranging images on a communal light table. The Projection Room also features *Project Yourself*, a continuously running slide show of images submitted by Baltimoreans that will evolve and grow throughout the run of the exhibition. (One photo or slide per person will be scanned and included in the digitally-produced show.) Eight historic and vintage projectors—from a cherry globe slide lantern from the 1870s to the recently discontinued Kodak Ektographic slide projector—will be on display. Also on view will be clips from the soon-to-be-released documentary *The Last Slide Projector* (2004) by filmmaker Paige Sarlin, which chronicles the lives and livelihoods surrounding the recently outmoded slide projection industry.

## **CATALOGUE**

*SlideShow* is accompanied by a 192-page, fully illustrated exhibition catalogue copublished in the United States by The Baltimore Museum of Art and Pennsylvania State University Press. The catalogue examines the conditions under which a group of experimental artists discovered slide projection, producing work that has existed on the periphery of art history until now. It includes essays by **SlideShow** curator Darsie Alexander, BMA Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs, as well as Charles Harrison, Professor of History and Theory of Art at the Open University, London, and Robert Storr, Professor of Modern Art at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University and former Senior Curator at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. *SlideShow* will be available for \$29.95 at The BMA Shop, 410-396-6338, and through Penn State University Press, 1-800-326-9180. The catalogue will be distributed in the United Kingdom by Tate Modern, London.

## **ORGANIZER & TOUR**

**SlideShow** is organized by The Baltimore Museum of Art and curated by Darsie Alexander, BMA Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs. It will travel to the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati, Ohio (July 2–September 11, 2005) and the Brooklyn Museum in New York (October 7, 2005–January 8, 2006).

## **SPONSOR**

The exhibition is generously sponsored by T. Rowe Price. Additional support is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and Suzanne F. Cohen. The catalogue is generously supported by Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro.

## **MEDIA PREVIEW**

Members of the media are invited to an Exhibition Preview and Reception on Tuesday, February 22, 3–5:30 p.m. **SlideShow** curator Darsie Alexander will lead a tour of the exhibition. RSVP to BMA Public Relations at 443-573-1870.

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## **PROGRAMS**

### **Artist Talk: Louise Lawler**

Thursday, March 10, 7 p.m.

Free

Since the early 1980s, photographer Louise Lawler has focused her camera on the places where art is made and disseminated, creating thoughtful critiques of the marketplace in her large, color-saturated images. Her billboard-size *Salon Hodler*, part of a series called *External Stimulation*, will be displayed onto the façade of the Museum every evening during the run of **SlideShow**. A still projection by the artist will also be screened at The Charles Theatre in Baltimore on alternate Sundays, organized by the BMA with the Maryland Film Festival. Lawler discusses this work in a public talk. For information, call 410-396-6345.

This lecture is sponsored by the BMA's Print, Drawing & Photography Society.

### **Free First Thursday**

March 3, 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

Free

Enjoy free admission all day and extended evening hours (5–8 p.m.) filled with free family-friendly activities, including live music, performances, films, and our always popular hands-on workshop. Join us for an exploration of contemporary projected slide works in *SlideShow*. Enjoy a performance by Phoenix Dance Company as they combine projected images and modern dance, catch a slide jam where local artists display their own slide works, and see clips from the soon to be released documentary *The Last Slide Projector*. Round out the evening with a curator-led gallery talk, tours, and a family hands-on workshop.

This Free First Thursday is supported by a generous grant from Constellation Energy.

### **Preview Screening**

May 14, 1 p.m.

Be the first to see *The Last Slide Projector* by filmmaker Paige Sarlin. This fascinating documentary chronicles the lives and livelihoods surrounding the recently outmoded film industry.

## **THE BMA'S COLLECTION OF NEW MEDIA**

The BMA's emphasis on new media signals a new direction for the Museum, which now has a growing collection of this exciting work featured in a gallery space dedicated to its display in the West Wing for Contemporary Art. Recent acquisitions include works by Robert Barry, Peter Campus, Lorna Simpson, and Kara Walker. There are also strong connections between **SlideShow** and the BMA's collection of contemporary art, especially Conceptual and Minimalist works that provide a context for slide projections in this exhibition. The BMA's outstanding photography collection also contains many examples that both anticipate the look and serial nature of the work in **SlideShow** and offers many examples of early color photography that inspired slide works.

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### **THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART**

The Baltimore Museum of Art is home to an internationally renowned collection of 19<sup>th</sup>-century, modern, and contemporary art. Founded in 1914, the BMA's outstanding collection encompasses 90,000 works of art, including the largest and most significant holding of works by Henri Matisse in the world, as well as masterpieces by Picasso, Cézanne, and van Gogh. An expanding collection of contemporary art features iconic post-1960 works by Andy Warhol and Sol LeWitt, as well as exciting acquisitions by artists such as Kara Walker and Olafur Eliasson. The BMA is also recognized for an internationally acclaimed collection of prints, drawings, and photographs from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the present; grand European painting and sculpture from Old Masters to the 19<sup>th</sup> century; distinguished American painting, sculpture, and decorative arts and Maryland period rooms; one of the most important African collections in the country, and notable examples of Asian, ancient American, and Oceanic art. The BMA's sculpture gardens feature a 100-year survey of modern sculpture on nearly three landscaped acres.

### **VISITOR INFORMATION**

The Baltimore Museum of Art is open Wednesday through Friday, 11 a.m. until 5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. until 6 p.m.; and during the first Thursday of every month (except major holidays), 11 a.m. until 8 p.m. The Museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Admission is \$7 for adults; \$5 for seniors, ages 65 and over, and college students; and free for children 18 and under. Admission is free on the first Thursday of every month and for related Free First Thursday activities. The BMA is located on Art Museum Drive at North Charles and 31<sup>st</sup> Streets, three miles north of Baltimore's Inner Harbor. For general Museum information, call 410-396-7100 or visit the BMA's web site at [www.artbma.org](http://www.artbma.org).

### **MEDIA CONTACT: BMA PUBLIC RELATIONS 410-396-6310**

Anne Mannix  
amannix@artbma.org

Kelly Linton  
klinton@artbma.org

Sarah Pedroni  
spedroni@artbma.org

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