BMA Lexington Market to Reopen in August with Larger Space in New Market Building

New art experiences in the fall will include video and films from the museum collection starting with Mark Bradford’s *Niagara*

BALTIMORE, MD (April 21, 2023)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) today announced the opening of a larger branch location within the new Lexington Market building will take place on Thursday, August 10. Designed by Baltimore-based architect Jerryn J. McCray, the new BMA Lexington Market builds on the success of the previous space in the East Market by providing free art experiences and opportunities for connection through regular open hours, programs, and the presentation of time-based media from the museum’s collection—a first for this branch location. Within the 350-square-foot space, visitors are welcome to make art, participate in public programming, read from the non-circulating library, find community with others, or simply just be. Additionally, one class of students in Baltimore City Public Schools will visit each month guided by a local artist in conjunction with the Baltimore City Fine Arts Office.

“We are immensely excited to welcome everyone to the new BMA Lexington Market. Our goal is to leverage art and culture to create an atmosphere of radical hospitality to accept anyone as they are,” said Director of Public Engagement Dave Eassa. “Art has always been a powerful way for people to connect, to learn, and to grow individually and collectively. BMA Lexington Market is built on the ethos that we all need and benefit from art in our lives, and this can be effectively shared by creating experiences directly where people are moving about their daily lives.”

When the branch opens in June, BMA Lexington Market will be staffed from Thursday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is always free and the new branch will debut with art experiences designed around the theme “holding space,” to encourage dialogue and co-creation that fosters deep connections and openness. In the fall of 2023, the BMA Lexington Market will debut its first installation as a new platform for time-based media works from the BMA’s collection during hours when the branch is unstaffed. Visitors will be able to view Mark Bradford’s *Niagara* (2005), a 3-minute color video without sound that was displayed as part of the artist’s exhibition for the U.S. Pavilion at the 2017 Venice Biennale. Referencing a famous saunter by Marilyn Monroe in the 1953 film noir *Niagara*, it shows Melvin, Bradford’s former neighbor, walking confidently and purposefully down a Los Angeles street. The artist reflects on his experience as a vulnerable Black, queer youth in this video, questioning how people’s identities allow them to hold space and move freely.
Prior to the opening, Manager of Public Engagement Malaika Clements and Public Engagement Coordinator Colby Ware are leading artmaking activities every Friday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., as well as programs every 4th Saturday of the month in the adjacent Baltimore Room. Future programs will be guided by patron-generated themes, allowing for a deeper exploration into topics and issues that are reflective of the current moment and relevant to Baltimore residents. Activities will adapt organically based on the feedback and the experiences from those who utilize the space.

“BMA Lexington Market is an evolving art space, responsive to the ideas and concerns of its community,” shares Chief Education Officer Gamynne Guillotte. “Since our first day in 2014, it has been an ongoing and deeply rewarding experiment. When we reopen, we have no doubt that what we have envisioned will change and grow as the people who use the space make it their own.”

The concept for BMA Lexington Market began when the museum launched the BMA Outpost in September 2014, as a mobile space for art-making and storytelling focused on the theme of “home.” During the next four years, the BMA Outpost reached over 12,000 Baltimoreans at 34 host sites across the city, including Lexington Market, one of the most popular locations. Through this experience, the team learned from the public that they needed a fixed site to engage more fully with its audiences and fulfill the potential of the program in a location that welcomes all Baltimore residents.

The first iteration of BMA Lexington Market opened in June 2019 as a community space centered on an open exchange of ideas and communal artmaking. Thematic programs were developed by Eassa and Clements through conversations with visitors about the issues affecting their daily lives. The space was also selected by Solange Knowles as one of 15 global sites to debut her interdisciplinary performance art film When I Get Home. During the nine months that BMA Lexington Market was open before the Covid-19 closure, it hosted 45 public programs and served nearly 9,000 Baltimore residents. While the branch has been closed to the public for the last two years due to the pandemic and redevelopment, staff engaged visitors in 2020 and 2021 through the distribution of Free Family Sunday at Home kits.

The BMA has had several branch locations during its 105-year history. During World War II, the museum acted on a suggestion from Baltimore Mayor Theodore R. McKeldin and established two branch museums. Located at the YMCA International Center on South Broadway and at the Jewish Educational Alliance building on East Baltimore Street, these branches saw more than 55,000 visitors between 1943 and 1948. The BMA also had a Downtown Gallery located first at One Charles Center and then East Redwood Street from 1974 to 1978, and another location at the Mall in Columbia in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

BMA Lexington Market is generously sponsored by the Middendorf Foundation and the T. Rowe Price Foundation.

**Baltimore Public Markets & Lexington Market**

Unique among American cities, Baltimore’s communities have successfully sustained a network of six public markets that serve their surrounding neighborhoods. Lexington Market, the city’s flagship market and one of the longest continuously operating public markets in the country, is the anchor of these.
institutions. During its 200+ years of operation, Lexington Market has served nine generations of Baltimore residents and promoted a spirit of entrepreneurship, vibrancy, and culture. All of Baltimore’s public markets have a role in supplying fresh foods to the communities they serve, and ongoing improvements will continue the public market tradition of cultivating local small businesses and providing employment and nutrition education, while still maintaining affordable food access. Learn more at www.lexingtonmarket.com and www.baltimoremarkets.org

Jerry J. McCray
Jerry J. McCray is a Baltimore-based architect who works independently throughout Maryland, Washington, D.C., Virginia, Georgia, and U.S. Virgin Islands. He holds a Bachelor of Architecture from Auburn University, where he participated in Auburn's Rural Studio program and was influenced by Samuel Mockbee's commitment to community interaction and availability to often-undervalued clientele. His practice focuses on a professional yet down-to-earth approach to design with projects ranging from repurposing shipping containers to meet the growing demand for small and more affordable building to assisting with replacing critical facilities and residences damaged by hurricanes. McCray is a member of the American Institute of Architecture. He has served as an adjunct professor and visiting architectural design critic at Morgan State University's Institute of Architecture and Planning and is a former member of the Auburn University School of Architecture's Advisory Council.

Baltimore Museum of Art
Founded in 1914, the BMA inspires people of all ages and backgrounds through exhibitions, programs, and collections that tell an expansive story of art—challenging long-held narratives and embracing new voices. Our outstanding collection of more than 97,000 objects spans many eras and cultures and includes the world’s largest public holding of works by Henri Matisse; one of the nation’s finest collections of prints, drawings, and photographs; and a rapidly growing number of works by contemporary artists of diverse backgrounds. The museum is also distinguished by a neoclassical building designed by American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped gardens featuring an array of modern and contemporary sculpture. The BMA is located three miles north of the Inner Harbor, adjacent to the main campus of Johns Hopkins University, and has a community branch at Lexington Market. General admission is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

Visitor Information
General admission to the BMA is free. The BMA is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with extended hours on Thursdays until 9 p.m. Timed reservations are required for all visitors to the galleries. The Sculpture Gardens are open Wednesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to dusk. The museum and gardens are closed New Year’s Day, Juneteenth, July 4, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. 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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