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BMA Presents *Heavy with History: Devin Allen and the Baltimore Uprising*

The exhibition of 35 rarely shown photographs commemorate the 10th anniversary of the death of Freddie Gray and the Baltimore Uprising

BALTIMORE, MD (April 9, 2025)—On April 16, the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) will present a focus exhibition of 35 rarely shown photographs by Baltimore-based artist Devin Allen. *Heavy with History: Devin Allen and the Baltimore Uprising* documents a defining moment in the city's history by capturing the raw emotion of the protests that followed Freddie Gray's untimely death in 2015. Organized by Lisa Snowden, Editor-in-Chief and co-founder of *Baltimore Beat*, this exhibition of powerful black-and-white images shows impassioned protestors, joyful children, wary police officers, and a collective righteous anger, pain, and advocacy for a different future. The exhibition also includes a soundscape featuring voices of the Baltimore Uprising for visitors to listen to while they are in the gallery. The exhibition is on view through June 22, 2025.

"Devin Allen's photographs are evocative, poignant, and magnetic. They draw you into a critical moment in time, reflecting a raw and shared humanity," said Asma Naeem, the BMA's Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director. "We are honored to collaborate with Lisa Snowden to present these significant works as we remember Freddie Gray and the Baltimore Uprising and to capture the resilience and beauty of our city in the face of incredible sadness and trauma. *Heavy with History* is part of our institutional commitment to platform the voices of our community, and we look forward to inviting people into the museum to experience the exhibition."

Additional Freddie Gray/Baltimore Uprising commemorations include a special issue of [Baltimore Beat](#) on April 9; [Freddie Gray & The Baltimore Uprising: 10 Years Later Reflecting, Reckoning, and Rebuilding](#) at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African-American History and Culture on April 10-11; [In the Wake of: Resilience and Revolution](#), an exhibition of photography by Paul Abowd, Devin Allen, and Joseph (J.M.) Giordano on view at the Creative Alliance through April 19; and the world premiere of the Baltimore Legacy Project documentary [Baltimore Still Rising](#) at the Senator Theater on April 24.

Freddie Gray died on April 19, 2015, at the University of Maryland Shock Trauma. Baltimore City Police officers had arrested Gray a week before, claiming he ran after making eye contact with them while he was walking with two friends. West Baltimore resident Kevin Moore captured video of a screaming Gray being dragged to a police van, where he was soon found unconscious with his spinal cord nearly severed. Four other Black men in this country had recently suffered public deaths in police custody,

and Gray's death was a tipping point, setting off weeks of protests across Baltimore City. Journalists from around the world came to Baltimore to document these events, but no one saw this moment quite like Devin Allen, a 26-year-old born and raised in West Baltimore.

Allen had begun attending some of the protests organized in Baltimore in solidarity with Ferguson, Missouri, after police shot and killed Mike Brown. After Gray died, he decided to document this moment of human reckoning by photographing every protest held in Gray's honor. Allen was driven to offer a new narrative of Baltimore as place of passion, activism, and deep commitment to community. He has said, "I just remember Gordon Parks talking about using a camera as a weapon." He captured more than 4,000 images over the course of several weeks. Each image is a powerful testament to this historic period. Allen's black-and-white photographs convey the essence of this rust belt town and allow us to witness this defining chapter for Baltimore and the country.

Heavy with History: Devin Allen and the Baltimore Uprising is organized by Lisa Snowden and Tracey Beale, BMA Director of Public Programs.

Devin Allen

Devin Allen (born 1988, Baltimore, Maryland) is an award-winning, self-taught photographer and artist. He gained international acclaim in May 2015 when one of his photographs of the Baltimore Uprising was published on the cover of *TIME* magazine, making him the third amateur photographer to have his work featured in the publication. Since then, his work has been presented in solo and group exhibitions at the Baltimore Museum of Art, The Peale, the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African-American History & Culture in Baltimore, and the Gordon Parks Foundation in New York, among others, and is in the collections of National Museum of African American History & Culture in Washington, D.C., the Reginald F. Lewis Museum, the Studio Museum in Harlem, and The Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art in Auburn, Alabama. Allen's photographs have also been featured in *New York* magazine, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Aperture*, and on a second *TIME* cover in 2020. His accolades include the first Gordon Parks Foundation Fellowship in 2017, an NAACP Image Award nomination for his book, *A Beautiful Ghetto* (Haymarket Books, September 2017), and the Gordon Parks Foundation/Steidl Book Prize in 2023.

Allen is also the founder of Through Their Eyes, a youth photography educational program, and was recognized by the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture in 2019 for his arts and activism leadership. His latest book, *No Justice, No Peace: From the Civil Rights Movement to Black Lives Matter*, was released in 2022 under the Legacy Lit imprint of Hachette Book Group. In 2020, he was named an ambassador for Leica Camera AG—an international, premium manufacturer of cameras and sports optics. His forthcoming book, *Baltimore*, will be published by Steidl in June 2025.

Baltimore Museum of Art

Founded in 1914, the Baltimore Museum of Art (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. 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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