

Baltimore Museum of Art announces 175 acquisitions, new commission, and additional gifts



Tschabalala Self, *Two Women 3*, 2021. The Baltimore Museum of Art: Purchase with exchange funds from the Pearlstone Family Fund and partial gift of The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. BMA 2021.164. © Tschabalala Self.

BALTIMORE, MD.- The Baltimore Museum of Art announced today that it has received a significant promised gift of 90 works of art by nearly 70 artists from long-standing museum supporters Nancy Dorman and Stanley Mazaroff. The gift is particularly strong in photographs and works on paper, including those created by acclaimed artists Hans Hofmann, Helen Frankenthaler, Grace Hartigan, Alfredo Jaar, Christopher James, Louise Lawler, Andres Serrano, Gary Simmons, Wolfgang Tillmans, Sze Tsung Leong, and Fred Tomaselli. The collection also includes important works by artists based in or with strong ties to Baltimore such as Larry Cook, Roland Freeman, Connie Imboden, Soledad Salamé, Elizabeth Talford Scott, and Stephen Towns. Examples of other paintings, sculpture, textiles, mixed-media works, and decorative arts include those by Anthony Caro, Leonardo Drew, Sam Gillam, Hun-Chung Lee, and Sarah Sze. The gift coincides with the forthcoming December 2021 opening of the BMA's new Nancy Dorman and Stanley Mazaroff Center for the Study of Prints, Drawings and Photographs, which is supported by a \$5 million gift from the couple.

Over the course of winter and spring 2021, the BMA acquired 175 objects by purchase and gift that encompass an extensive range of contemporary art across media, as well as historic objects that add artistic and cultural significance to the museum's collections. Most are the first by the artist in the BMA's collection. As part of its acquisitions, the BMA and the Menil Collection will co-commission *The SNCC Manifestoes*, a new multi-channel video installation by internationally acclaimed artist and filmmaker John Akomfrah. The video will explore the work and impact of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, as chronicled by Baltimore-based historian Taylor Branch.

“These acquisitions represent an incredible range of artistic achievement as well as the commitment of the BMA’s curatorial team to bringing new and important voices into our collections. Over the past several years, we have been focused on rectifying critical omissions in our Post-War and contemporary holdings as part of an effort to tell a truer narration of art history. We are now looking further in history and across geography and culture to reveal artists, artworks, and innovations that may have gone under-recognized in centuries past to shift the conversation around collections diversification from the modern era to the history that underpins it. I look forward to working with our talented curators and team on this effort, and am grateful to donors like Nancy and Stan, who continue to support our vision and ongoing work,” said Christopher Bedford, the BMA’s Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director.

Highlights of Works by Baltimore-based or -born Artists

- Derrick Adams (b. 1970, Baltimore) *Style Variation 34*, 2020. Adams’s multidisciplinary practice embraces painting, collage, performance, sound, fashion, and mixed-media installation, and focuses in particular on the formations of Black experience and self-image. The *Style Variations* series includes 20 monumental works inspired by the wig shops of Brooklyn’s Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood, where Adams has lived and worked for over 15 years.
- Mequitta Ahuja (b. 1976, Baltimore) Six paintings and works on paper, including *From the Dispersed Folio of Mococonama*, 2013; *Mother*, 2019; and *Untitled (Self-Portrait)*, 2020, provide a snapshot of the evolution and creative breadth of Ahuja’s practice, which always begins in self-portraiture. In her early series, she disrupts largely Eurocentric artistic and historical narratives, while more recent works are intimate portrayals of grief and dissolution tied to her mother’s battle with and death from cancer.
- **FORCE: Upsetting Rape Culture** (founded 2010; Baltimore, Maryland, and 2014 Mexico City, Mexico). Ten blocks from *The Monument Quilt*, 2013–2019, and digital archive. FORCE was an art and activist collective dedicated to constructing a culture of consent. *The Monument Quilt*, their largest project, represents a massive effort from artists, activists, healers, and visionaries to create the first national memorial to survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence. FORCE was founded by Hannah Brancato and Rebecca Nagle. FORCE collective members Mora Fernández and Shanti Flagg, along with Brancato, are leading the effort to archive 750 blocks created by 3,000 survivors and allies. The BMA worked closely with this team to select 10 blocks that center Baltimore experiences and amplify the stories of Indigenous, Black, LGBTQ+, and/or immigrant survivors across the quilt’s six-year history.
- Jerrell Gibbs (b. 1988, Baltimore) *For Thomas*, 2021. Gibbs’s painting practice is focused on figurative representation that conveys the multilayered experiences of Black people, including his own family and social world in Baltimore. *For Thomas* depicts poet Kondwani Fidel (b. 1993, Baltimore) with Gibbs’s lush and emotive style.
- Shan Goshorn (Eastern Band Cherokee, 1957-2018) *The Fire Within*, 2016. Goshorn combined traditional and experimental weaving techniques for this seven-pointed, star-shaped basket. The artist was known for her intricate iconography that critiqued the cultural and historic frictions between state and Native American tribal governments.
- Taha Heydari (b. 1986, Tehran, Iran) *Monarchy*, 2020. A graduate of the Maryland Institute College of Art, Heydari draws from the covers of the Iranian women’s magazine *Zan-e Rooz (Woman of Today)*, published before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, to examine the ways in which media representations and cultural ruptures generate ideology and cascading trauma. For *Monarchy*, he has recreated a photograph of the Shah and royal Pahlavi family as a normal middle-class family through a myriad of web-like and impasto painting techniques.
- SHAN Wallace (b. 1991, Baltimore) This unique portfolio of 16 photographs includes *Sandtown*, 2015; *Hoodversary*, 2016; *FAM*, 2018; and *Tender*, 2020. Wallace’s photography archives and documents varied cultural and political narratives of Black life, while also confronting oppressive social and political regimes. This portfolio was developed by the artist in collaboration with BMA curators as a survey of themes from the first five years of her practice. Wallace’s first solo museum exhibition, *SHAN Wallace: 410*, was presented by the BMA in 2020, and her mural project, *The Avenue* is currently installed on a construction fence surrounding part of the museum.

Additional acquisitions by artists with ties to Baltimore include three paintings by Lillian Hoover, a lithograph by Margo Humphrey, two photographs by Clifford Owens, mixed-media works by Shinique Smith, Wickerham & Lomax, Jowita Wyszomirska, and Monsieur Zohore, as well as additional photographs by Connie Imboden, separate of those in the gift from Dorman and Mazaroff. The BMA also acquired *Bessemer Furnace* at Bethlehem Steel Company in Sparrows Point, 1951, a photograph by A. Aubrey Bodine.

Highlights of Contemporary Works

- Theaster Gates (b. 1973, Chicago) *Covered Vessel*, 2015, and *Stack*, 2012. Two promised gifts from Baltimore collectors Stuart and Sherry Christhilf will be the first works by the acclaimed artist to enter the BMA's collection. Both sculptures explore labor in its varied forms, combining strategies from construction and in particular from roofing—Gates's father's trade—and ceramics in connection with art, personal memory, and politics.
- Ficare Ghebreyesus (Eritrean, 1962-2012) *Red Room*, c. 2002-05. Ghebreyesus's works simultaneously embrace abstraction and figuration and lush fantasies and historical narratives about the transatlantic slave trade. In this work, he references cultural entanglements from the western Nigerian region, from the Yoruba religion to the Benin Kingdom, while also making a direct nod to Matisse and his red room paintings.
- Rashid Johnson (b. 1977, Chicago) *Fatherhood*, 2015. The ambitious multi-media installation is part of Johnson's exploration of Black cultural objects and interior space. *Fatherhood* captures a critical moment in Johnson's practice through a formal and conceptual engagement with everyday objects. This immersive gridded steel work brings together sculptural busts, books, potted plants, and grow lights in the form of a living and dynamic work of art.
- Lorraine O'Grady (b. 1934, Boston) *Untitled (Mlle Bourgeoise Noire)*, 1980-83. The 14 photographs that comprise this performance documentation were taken at O'Grady's intervention at the opening of the New Museum's 1981 *Persona* exhibition. Performing as her alter-ego Miss Bourgeoise Noire, O'Grady invaded the presentation of all white artists to claim space for herself and other Black practitioners.
- Tschabalala Self (b. 1990, New York) *Two Women 3*, 2021. This monumental painting was created as part of Self's exhibition *Tschabalala Self: By My Self*, on view through September 19, 2021. One of the artist's most significant achievements to date, *Two Women 3* culminates a suite of three paintings that Self made in response to Henri Matisse's bronze *Two Women* in the BMA's Cone Collection.
- Faye Toogood (b. 1977, London) *Roly-Poly Chair / Water*, 2016. British designer Toogood's crystal chair has become a 21st century furniture icon. Conceived during the artist's first pregnancy, the maternal design of the chair promotes a woman's body as the foundation of form and creativity. The BMA also acquired Toogood's maquette to document the work's design history.
- Jade Snow Wong (American, 1922-2006) *Bowl*, 1968. Wong was a San Francisco-based ceramicist, enameler, and author best known for her brightly colored enameled copper tableware. Additionally, her first memoir *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, published in 1950, is a canonical and widely taught and critiqued work of East Asian American literature.

BMA Board Chair Clair Zamoiski Segal gave the museum nine prints and works on paper by David Hockney, Jan Groover, Valerie Jaudon, Brice Marden, Robert Rauschenberg, and Joel Shapiro, as well as a sculpture by Dorothy Dehner. Segal also made a promised gift of two photographs by Clifford Owens that were recently presented at the BMA as part of Mickalene Thomas: *A Moment's Pleasure*.

The contemporary acquisitions also include a selection of works by Anthony Barboza, Adger Cowans, Louis Draper, Jimmie Mannas, Herb Robinson, Beuford Smith, all artists associated with the Kamoinge Workshop, one of the most influential photography collectives in the country. Additional works acquired are paintings by Emma Amos, Katharina Grosse, Virginia Jaramillo, Gisela McDaniel, Linn Meyers, and Peter Sacks; sculpture by Beverly Buchanan, Luther Hampton, and Tavares Strachan; mixed-media works by Jonathan Lyndon Chase, James Edward Jones, and Mickalene Thomas; and works on paper by Pacita Abad, Benny Andrews, Don Bachardy, William Cordova, Red Grooms, Hock E Aye Vi Edgar *Heap of Birds*, Shaun Leonardo, and Alison Saar. Another group of works purchased with support from the Souls Grown Deep Foundation include artists Hawkins Bolden, Thornton Dial, Thornton Dial, Jr., Ralph Griffin, Lonnie B. Holley, Joe Lewis Light, Henry Speller, James "Son Ford" Thomas, and Purvis Young.

Highlights of Historic Works

- Thomas W. Commeraw (American, active 1796-1820) Oyster Jar, c.1799-1807. Commeraw was a free Black ceramicist who produced an extensive array of vessels and objects during his career. This particular jar was made for Daniel Johnson, a free Black oysterman. It represents a rare surviving example of Black craftsmanship during the Federal period. Found in Guyana, South America, it also speaks to early international trade and the business success of the free Black community in New York.
- Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller (American, 1877-1968). Bookend: Mother and Child (Sorrow), c. 1920. Regarded as one of the pioneers of her generation, Warrick Fuller was a Black female sculptor who produced a body of powerfully emotive figurative work focused on themes related to the African American experience. This work is a single cast and painted-plaster bookend that captures the artist's technique and incredible ability to evoke feeling.
- Tokuyama Gyokuran (Japanese, 1727-1784) Summer Landscape, mid-18th century. Tokuyama Gyokuran, called Ike Gyokuran, was one of the best-known woman artists of the Edo period. In this characteristic example of her work, the soft, supple brushwork and light application of the blue and pale salmon colors harmonize to create the spring atmosphere while the trees are rendered by darkly inked, calligraphic strokes.
- Unidentified Bamum artists. (African, 20th century) Ndop cloth. 1940-1950. Cameroon. This large resist-stitched, indigo-dyed cloth came from a region of West Africa called the Cameroon Grasslands. Known as ndop, these cloths were prized across the region's small city states and used as backdrops or garments for royal ceremonies. This is the first ndop textile in the BMA's collection.

Other historic acquisitions include a promised gift of a painting by Stanton MacDonald-Wright (American, 1890-1973); as well as works on paper by Angeline A. Christaldi (American, 1905-1990), Georges Braque (French, 1882-1963), Lea Grundig (German, 1906-1977), Okuhara Seiko (Japanese, 1837-1913), and Charmion Von Wiegand (American, 1896-1983); and design objects by Joel Robinson (American, 1915-2012), Dina Kuhn (Austrian, 1891-1963), and Gio Ponti (Italian, 1891-1979); and an important collection of 39 Chinese ceramics and three ceramic objects from Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam.