



BMA TO OFFER DIRECT SUPPORT TO LOCAL ARTIST COMMUNITY, LAUNCHING THREE NEW INITIATIVES IN JUNE 2020

*New Programs Evolve Vision of BMA's The Necessity of Tomorrow(s) series,
Expanding the Museum's Civic Role in Baltimore*

BALTIMORE, MD (May 27, 2020)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) announced today that it is launching three new initiatives to provide direct support to Baltimore-based artists, galleries, and communities: *BMA Salon*, *BMA Screening Room*, and *BMA Studio*. The initiatives will provide some immediate financial relief to local artists and businesses, develop new platforms of visibility to ensure the longer-term success of Baltimore's arts ecology, and extend participatory opportunities to populations that do not have ready access to digital content. The development of these programs stems from the BMA's popular, ongoing speaker series, *The Necessity of Tomorrow(s)*, which was established to imagine futures that embrace issues of social justice, equity, and creative practice. The BMA's new initiatives actualize the series' core principles and respond to the needs of the current situation through creative endeavors, furthering the museum's role as a cultural collaborator and civic leader. More details on the programs, which are slated to launch during the first two weeks of June, are below.

"Baltimore is a city rich in creative innovation and artistic experiences. As part of our mission of civic engagement, we felt it was incumbent upon us to develop new opportunities to support the cultural fabric of our community, especially as artists, art organizations, and the public face different but very real challenges during the coronavirus pandemic," said Christopher Bedford, BMA Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director. "Our new initiatives build on ideas core to us as an institution from connecting audiences with exciting, thought-provoking works of art to championing artistic experimentation and positioning creative production as central to social change. At the same time, these programs shift our approach from discussion and presentation to more active and directed collaboration—a change in tactic that acknowledges our new reality and one we believe will help secure the future of the visual arts in our city."

BMA Salon: The BMA will invite a selection of 20 Baltimore-based galleries and collectives to use the museum's *The Necessity of Tomorrow(s)* digital platform (bmatomorrows.org) to cultivate new audiences. The BMA will provide each participant with a \$2,500 organizing fee to help realize their visions for their digital presentations and to support staff in their efforts. All of the transactions will be conducted by the individual galleries, who will keep all proceeds from the sales. The initiative provides partners with a small influx of funds, while also helping to expand visibility for their work in support of longer-term success. The BMA's contemporary art curators are selecting the participants, which currently include the following organizations: [as they lay](#), [C. Grimaldis Gallery](#), [Catalyst Contemporary](#), [Connect + Collect](#), [Creative Alliance](#), [Current Space](#), [ICA Baltimore](#), [Galerie Myrtis](#), [Goya Contemporary](#), [Resort](#), [St. Charles Projects](#), [sindikit](#), [Springsteen](#), and [The Parlour](#).

BMA Screening Room: A new video streaming service is being launched on the website to feature works by up to 50 Baltimore-based artists. They will be selected by curators from the museum's department of contemporary art and paid a modest licensing fee ranging from \$500 to \$750. The video works will be viewable as part of an evolving repository on the BMA's website, providing funds and increased exposure for artists during a moment in which there are few exhibition opportunities. Equally, the Screening Room will offer new content with which the museum's audiences can engage. Video artists confirmed for the launch are: Rahne Alexander, Abdu Ali and Karryl Eugene of *as they lay*, Stephanie Barber, Mollye Bendell, Erick Antonio Benitez, Nicoletta Daríta de la Brown, Emily Eaglin, Markele Cullins, Tanya Garcia, Nia Hampton, Chung-Wei Huang, Nia June, Jaimes Mayhew, Meredith Moore, Devin N. Morris, Clifford Owens, Margaret Rorison, Jules Roskam, Lendl Tellington, Stephanie J. Williams, Caroline Xia, and Monsieur Zohore.

BMA Studio: BMA staff will create at least 1,400 ready-to-go artmaking kits to be distributed by the Greenmount West Community Center staff to the Maryland Food Bank, World Central Kitchen, and families in the neighborhood. The kits will include instructions and materials, with supplies drawn from activities planned for the museum's onsite Free Family Sundays program. While the BMA has already started providing downloadable art activities, this initiative aims to address disparities in digital access and supplements other outreach efforts, such as BMA Lexington Market, Open Hours, and Free Family Sundays, that foster connections with and increase participation among a wide range of audiences. The BMA will follow all appropriate health and safety guidelines when creating and distributing the kits.

The BMA's new programs are made possible through funds earmarked for *The Necessity of Tomorrow(s)* series, and which were established through the generous support of Suzanne F. Cohen and the Cohen Opportunity Fund. Cohen, who passed away in 2018, was a longtime museum trustee and served as the Chair of the Board from 2003 to 2006. During her four decades of involvement with the BMA, Cohen supported dozens of exhibitions and advocated for accessibility initiatives that shaped the museum's vision and approach, including free general admission and transportation services for Baltimore City students to visit the museum. Her love of the arts dovetailed with her engagement with issues of social justice, and her support for *The Necessity of Tomorrow(s)* program captured her belief in the critical intersection of the two. The evolution of the talk series honors Cohen's vision and belief in the importance of the arts in creating a more equitable and connected society.

"Sue's forward-thinking approach and commitment to the arts and civic responsibility propelled the BMA's own dedication to exploring and implementing new ways of serving our community. The expansion and evolution of *The Necessity of Tomorrow(s)* in many ways continues her work in eroding the boundaries between these universes, by helping to ensure that artists have the means to play active roles in shaping our collective future," added Bedford.

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

Founded in 1914, The Baltimore Museum of Art is a major cultural destination recognized for engaging diverse audiences through dynamic exhibitions and innovative educational and community outreach programs. The BMA's internationally renowned collection of 95,000 objects encompasses more than 1,000 works by Henri Matisse anchored by the famed Cone Collection of modern art, as well as one of the nation's finest holdings of prints, drawings, and photographs. The galleries showcase an exceptional collection of art from Africa; important works by established and emerging contemporary artists; outstanding European and American paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts; significant artworks from China; ancient Antioch mosaics; and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000-square-foot museum is also distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped gardens featuring an array of 20th-century sculpture. The BMA is located in Charles Village, three miles north of the Inner Harbor, and is adjacent to the main campus of Johns Hopkins University. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The BMA is temporarily closed to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Connect with us online at artbma.org and through social media with #ARTBMA • [Stories](#) • [Facebook](#) • [Twitter](#) • [Instagram](#) • [YouTube](#)

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