



BALTIMORE
MUSEUM OF
ART

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BMA Opens Newly Renovated and Reimagined Joseph Education Center on December 3

Center features site-specific installations created by internationally acclaimed artists Derrick Adams, Mary Flanagan, and Pablo Helguera

BALTIMORE, MD (November 29, 2023)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) announces the re-opening of its Patricia and Mark Joseph Education Center with new opportunities for hands-on artmaking and interactive engagement for families, students, and art lovers of all ages. At the heart of the renovated and expanded center is a series of site-specific installations by internationally acclaimed artists Derrick Adams, Mary Flanagan, and Pablo Helguera, who each created experiences that encourage learning through play and physical connection. The 5,625-square-foot Joseph Education Center also includes new and refurbished classrooms for both dry and wet artmaking and a Wall of Wonder with tactile and digital displays that invite visitors to consider creative processes and activate their own imaginations. The center debuts on Sunday, December 3 with an [Opening Celebration](#) from 1 to 5 p.m. with opportunities to meet the artists and enjoy hands-on artmaking.

The renovation of the center was made possible by Baltimore philanthropists Patricia and Mark Joseph, who have been major donors to the BMA for over three decades. They established the center in 2015 with a \$3 million gift and have contributed \$2.5 million toward its reconceptualization. The transformation of the Joseph Education Center recognizes the evolving ways people learn, enables digital learning and enhanced global connectivity, and establishes more unified areas for intergenerational learning through interactions that prompt surprise, socialization, creativity, and further artistic inquiry. The renovation work was led by Quinn Evans, as project architect, and Whiting Turner, as the contractor.

“Patricia and I are delighted to experience the many new and exciting elements of the center that will certainly enhance learning and we hope also encourage a life-long interest in the arts,” said Mark Joseph. “It has been our pleasure to continue to support education at the BMA and we look forward to the many programs and opportunities that the center will help facilitate for students and visitors of all ages.”

“The dynamic experiences created by Derrick Adams, Mary Flanagan, and Pablo Helguera offer new ways of connecting with art and ideas. Their works, along with the wide range of other interactives in the Joseph Education Center, reflect our commitment to creating opportunities for learning and catalyzing creative engagement,” said Asma Naeem, BMA Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director. “We are grateful to Patricia and Mark Joseph for their generosity and vision in providing a welcoming space for families and helping us make the education center an even more vital space within the museum.”

Experience Gallery

The centerpiece of the Joseph Education Center renovation includes the creation of an enlarged Experience Gallery directly connected to the museum's primary entrance that features the newly commissioned art installations by Adams, Flanagan, and Helguera. The following works are on view for approximately three years:

Mary Flanagan. *Topophilia (Tunnel)* and *Topophilia (Hill)*. 2023.

Mary Flanagan has created two large-scale works that reimagine Baltimore landmarks as an embodied experience and multisensory exploration, inviting visitors to explore the social and physical history of our land and water. *Topophilia (Tunnel)* is a freestanding sculpture made from seven-foot-tall steel rods that references the astounding engineering feat of the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel. When touched, the sculpture behaves as a kind of large instrument with sounds that range from tinkling or a low drone to an assertive clang. *Topophilia (Hill)* is an expansive work that captures the landscape of Baltimore's Federal Hill through the lines of its topography, creating an optical experience that encompasses viewers in the space. Poems on large wooden cards made by the artist invite contemplation of earth and water as essential elements of life, as well as the history of the city and its relationship to land and people from before Baltimore's creation to the present moment. The artist produced these computational poems with Kay, her A.I. named after the Surrealist artist Kay Sage.

Flanagan has a research-based practice that investigates and exploits the seams between technology, play, and human experience—exploring how data, computing practices, errors/glitches, and games reflect human psychology and the limitations of knowledge. Her design practice is deeply informed by 20 years of game research conducted at her research laboratory Tiltfactor.org and she is the author of *Critical Play: Radical Game Design* (2013). Her games are innovative yet accessible to a wide audience and focus on transformative experiences for players and narrative contexts that are inclusive, diverse, and fun.

Derrick Adams. *Dew Drop Inn*. 2023.

Dew Drop Inn is a color-filled, immersive space populated by Derrick Adams' Dew Drop characters, which are presented through vibrant wall and floor graphics and bean bag chairs adorned with arms, hair, and other accessories. *Dew Drop Inn* visitors can play a non-competitive card game created by Adams that invites visitors to match pairs of 20 artworks made by Black artists such as Zoë Charlton, Jonathan Lyndon Chase, and Valerie Maynard in the BMA's collection. This work builds on Adams' practice of social sculpture, taking familiar elements from a playroom—a rainbow rug, soft seating, and domestic furniture—and transforming them into a vibrant atmosphere in which to learn, imagine, and socialize.

Derrick Adams is a Baltimore-born, Brooklyn-based artist whose work celebrates and expands the dialogue around contemporary Black life and culture through painting, collage, sculpture, performance, video, and installation. He has developed an iconography of joy, leisure, and the pursuit of happiness by synthesizing representational imagery with planar Cubist geometry to produce multifaceted figures and faces that address the richness of the Black experience. Adams is also the founder of The Last Resort Artist Retreat and Black Baltimore Digital Database.

Pablo Helguera. *Flor de Juegos Antiguos (Flower of Ancient Games)*. 2023.

Pablo Helguera's work celebrates the history and significance of game play around the world. *Flor de Juegos Antiguos (Flower of Ancient Games)* features five petal-shaped wood tables with different game boards integrated into the tabletops. The games include Mancala (Africa), Patolli (Meso-America), Backgammon (Iran), Chess (India), and Nine Men's Morris (Europe). Instructions and information about each game accompany each table, encouraging visitors to both test the games and learn more about their origins and social contexts. Helguera often activates memory and nostalgia in his work, and this interactive space creates opportunities to both make and remember memories surrounding board games. Historical and contemporary images of people at play surround the room, inviting visitors to see themselves in a historical lineage of play. Visitors are invited to both play by the rules and break them by creating their own variations of the games.

Pablo Helguera is a Mexico-born, New York-based artist and educator whose socially engaged art and performance work focuses on a variety of topics ranging from history and pedagogy to sociolinguistics, ethnography, memory, and the absurd. He is the author of *Education for Socially Engaged Art* (2011) and his work, *The School of Panamerican Unrest* (2006), a nomadic think-tank that drove 20,000 miles from Anchorage, Alaska to Tierra del Fuego, is considered one of the most extensive public art projects on record.

Wall of Wonder

A new Wall of Wonder inside the Wurtzberger School Entrance is a key architectural feature that physically and conceptually unifies the center through digital displays of artworks and artists, discovery drawers that feature hands-on materials and activities, and other interactive elements that encourage visitors to consider how artists play and the materials with which they play. The Wall of Wonder was designed by Baltimore artist Danielle Nekimken and created by local fabricator Mark Ward.

Insight Lab

This second classroom substantially expands the BMA's ability to host school and other tour groups and deepens our commitment to engaging visitors in artmaking. The room also hosts a space for evaluation, visitor response, and dialogue, allowing us to continue learning from and with our visitors, as well as an area for quiet contemplation and reading.

Studio

The most flexible space for artmaking and one of the most popular areas of the first iteration of the Joseph Education Center, the studio has been reconceptualized so that it can accommodate more visitors and be programmed for lightly facilitated drop-in art experiences during regular hours. New high-quality video and sound technology supports livestreaming and distance learning programs, including virtual tours or studio sessions.

Mark Joseph is founding chairman of The Shelter Group, which began developing multi-family housing in 1975. Prior to founding Shelter, Mr. Joseph was a member of the Community Legal Services law reform unit, serving as co-counsel in the U.S. Supreme Court case nullifying residence requirements for public assistance. He also chaired the Executive Committee of Gallagher, Evelius & Jones, LLP and taught at the

University of Maryland Law School. His leadership in Baltimore City includes serving as Deputy Housing Commissioner and its Development Coordinator, heading the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners, and chairing the board of Baltimore's Public Health Hospital. He is also a founder and lead donor of the Baltimore School for the Arts and has served on the boards of the Greater Baltimore Committee, Walters Art Museum, Associated Jewish Charities, and Board of Visitors of The University of Maryland Law School. Mr. Joseph graduated from Brown University and the Harvard Law School. He authored the law creating the Maryland Community Development Administration.

Patricia Joseph is the current chair of the Shelter Foundation. She has served on the BMA's Board of Trustees and numerous committees for many years, including several as vice chair on the Executive Committee, and she was also a BMA docent for 10 years. Prior to her retirement, Mrs. Joseph was a faculty member, a division chair, and a dean at Stevenson University. She also served as special assistant to the Provost at UMBC and later was a member of the university's Board of Visitors. She is a past chair of the Board of Trustees of the Baltimore School for the Arts, where she remains active as a board member, and was Chair of the Search Committee for the school's new director. She is the past co-chair of the Baltimore Women's Giving Circle and is a trustee of the Baltimore Community Foundation. She was a member of the Steering Committee of the Art Seminar Group. Mrs. Joseph graduated from Elmira College, Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa and spent her junior year abroad at the London School of Economics. She has her Master of Liberal Arts from Johns Hopkins University.

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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