

# Press Release



July 2008

## **21: Selections of Contemporary Art from the Brooklyn Museum to Open September 19, 2008**

### **Media Preview September 17, 2008, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

More than forty works from the Brooklyn Museum's expanding collection of contemporary art will go on long-term view on September 19, 2008, in 5,000 square feet of space newly renovated for this purpose. With contemporary works ranging from Andy Warhol's *Fragile Dress*, 1966, to Mickalene Thomas's *A Little Taste Outside of Love*, 2007, *21: Selections of Contemporary Art from the Brooklyn Museum* will focus primarily on work produced since 2000, particularly from the richly diverse artistic community of Brooklyn.

This installation marks the first time in a decade that the Museum has dedicated space to the long-term display of selections of its collection of contemporary art and reflects a renewed emphasis on the acquisition and presentation of recent works.

The Museum's director Arnold L. Lehman states, "The revitalized contemporary art program at Brooklyn is managed by an exceptional team of curatorial specialists under the leadership of Eugenie Tsai, the John and Barbara Vogelstein Curator of Contemporary Art. With the generous support of a number of the Museum's Trustees and friends, this team has already made remarkable progress in acquiring important new works with a particular emphasis on works made in the twenty-first century and created by artists of color. At the same time, our curators have taken a strong lead in the presentation of the Museum's dynamic exhibition program."

Among the recently acquired works in the contemporary installation will be a painting by the Miami-based artist Hernan Bas titled *Night Fishing*, which will also be included in the Museum's forthcoming exhibition on the artist, on view February 27–May 24, 2009; a sculpture by Kara Walker titled *Burning African Village Play Set with Big House and Lynching*, 2006, that explores racial stereotyping through imagery drawn from the antebellum South; the Brooklyn artist Valerie Hegarty's painting *Fallen Bierstadt*, inspired by the Museum's renowned work by Albert Bierstadt, *A Storm in the Rocky Mountains, Mt. Rosalie*; a mixed-media sculpture by the Jamaican artist Hew Locke titled *Koh-i-Noor*, similar to another version of the subject in the Museum's recent exhibition *Infinite Island: Contemporary Caribbean Art*; and twenty-five photogravures by Olafur Eliasson, a Danish-Icelandic artist, who is showing *New York City Waterfall*, a public art project currently on view in the East River. Other artists represented include Amy Sillman, Kiki Smith, Nari Ward, Chester Higgins Jr., Sol LeWitt, Kehinde Wiley, Terence Koh, Seher Shah, Simon Norfolk, Jules de Balincourt,

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Donald Judd, Claes Oldenburg, and Do-Ho Suh. A new installation of three wax sculptures by New York artist Petah Coyne will be on view in the fifth-floor lobby gallery August 6, 2008, through July 2009, to coincide with the opening of the new contemporary galleries. Two of the three sculptures are recent gifts that will be on view for the first time.

The Brooklyn Museum has collected contemporary art since the mid-nineteenth century when a bequest from Augustus Graham, one of the Museum's founders, endowed a "Gallery of Fine Arts" accompanied by funds allocated for the annual purchase of works of art by living American artists. In 1855 the initial commission went to Asher B. Durand, whose painting *The First Harvest in the Wilderness* inaugurated the Museum's collection. In the early twentieth century, the Museum continued to acquire contemporary art, and in 1934 it established a Department of Contemporary Art. Contemporary works were exhibited in galleries in the West Wing in the 1990s. Since 2001, contemporary art has been integrated into galleries throughout the Museum, especially in *American Identities: A New Look*.

The contemporary galleries installation is organized by Eugenie Tsai, John and Barbara Vogelstein Curator of Contemporary Art, and Patrick Amsellem, Associate Curator of Photography.

Two additional contemporary exhibitions will be presented this fall: *Jesper Just: Romantic Delusions*, on view September 19, 2008 through January 4, 2009, organized by Patrick Amsellem; and *Gilbert & George*, on view October 3, 2008 through January 11, 2009, coordinated by Judy Kim, Curator of Exhibitions.

A variety of public programs will be presented in conjunction with the opening of the new galleries and will be featured on the Museum's Web site at [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org).

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**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Admission:**

Contribution \$8; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$4. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

**Directions:**

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B71, B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

**Museum Hours:**

Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; First Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; all other Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.