

PS1

MoMA PS1 PRESENTS FIRST NEW YORK MUSEUM SURVEY OF DEANA LAWSON

NEW YORK, April 13, 2022—MoMA PS1 presents *Deana Lawson*, the first museum survey dedicated to the work of the celebrated photographer, on view from April 14 through September 5, 2022. For more than 15 years, Deana Lawson (b. 1979, Rochester, NY) has been exploring and challenging conventional representations of Black life through photography, drawing on a wide spectrum of photographic languages, including the family album, studio portraiture, staged tableaux, documentary pictures, and appropriated images. Through a selection of more than 50 works from 2004 to the present, including photographs that were featured in PS1's signature exhibition series *Greater New York* in 2010 and 2015, *Deana Lawson* features the full range of the artist's career to date and establishes a narrative arc of her expansive vision for the first time.

This nationally touring exhibition was co-organized with the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston (ICA), where it was on view from November 4, 2021 to February 27, 2022, and the exhibition will travel to the High Museum of Art, Atlanta from October 7, 2022 to February 19, 2023.

Engaging acquaintances as well as strangers she meets in cities across Africa and the diaspora, Lawson uses imagery to build extended families of strangers in living rooms, kitchens, and backyards from Brooklyn to New Orleans, Haiti to Ethiopia, and Brazil to the Democratic Republic of Congo. The artist meticulously poses her subjects in highly staged photographs that weave together narratives of family, love, and desire.

The camera has a long history as a tool of objectification and subjugation, and Lawson uses photography to unsettle assumptions about the facts the medium purports to deliver. Her work comes to life in the liminal space between the truth presumed in a photograph and the art of making one. Though she carefully composes each scene, Lawson does not always disclose details about how she has created them, or even where the photographs were taken; in some cases, she works with found images that depict people she does not know. Despite the familiarity suggested in the photographs, some of the artist's subjects may not have met before the shoot. Lawson finds photography's contradictions and fraught history to be perfectly suited to the challenges of representing what she describes as "the majesty of Black life, a nuanced Black life, one that is by far more complex, deep, beautiful, celebratory, tragic, weird, strange."

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated scholarly catalogue, featuring the voices and perspectives of a variety of scholars, historians, and writers: exhibition curators Peter Eleey and Eva Respini; writers Kimberly Juanita Brown,

Tina M. Campt, Alexander Nemerov, and Greg Tate; and a conversation between Deana Lawson and photography scholar Deborah Willis.

Deana Lawson is co-organized by MoMA PS1 and ICA/Boston. Organized by Peter Eeey, Curator-at-Large, UCCA Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing and Shanghai, and Eva Respini, Barbara Lee Chief Curator, ICA/Boston, with Anni Pullagura, Curatorial Assistant, ICA/Boston.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Deana Lawson (b. 1979, Rochester, NY) lives and works between New York and Los Angeles. Lawson received her B.F.A. from Pennsylvania State University (2001) and M.F.A. from the Rhode Island School of Design (2004). Lawson is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship (2013), Aaron Siskind Fellowship Grant (2008–09), and a New York Foundation for the Arts Grant (2006), among others. In 2020, she was selected for the Hugo Boss Prize, the first photographer to receive the award in recognition of achievement in contemporary art. She is currently the inaugural Dorothy Krauklis '78 Professor of Visual Arts with the Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University.

SUPPORT

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ABOUT MoMA PS1

MoMA PS1 champions art and artists at the intersection of the social, cultural, and political issues of our time. Providing audiences with the agency to ask questions, access to knowledge, and a forum for public debate, PS1 has offered insight into artists' diverse worldviews for more than 40 years. Founded in 1976 by Alanna Heiss, the institution was a defining force in the alternative space movement in New York City, transforming a nineteenth century public schoolhouse in Long Island City into a site for artistic experimentation and creativity. PS1 has been a member of New York City's Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) since 1982 and

affiliated with The Museum of Modern Art since 2000.

Hours: MoMA PS1 is open from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Thursday through Monday, and until 8:00 p.m. on Saturday. Closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Admission: \$10 suggested admission; \$5 for students and senior citizens; free for New York State residents and MoMA members. Free admission for New York State residents is made possible by The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation. Tickets may be reserved online at mo.ma/ps1tickets.

Visitor Guide: Discover even more from PS1 with the Bloomberg Connects app. Read wall text, hear directly from artists, and uncover the building's history with this multimedia visitor guide. This digital experience is made possible through the support of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Directions: MoMA PS1 is located at 22-25 Jackson Avenue at 46th Ave in Long Island City, Queens, across the Queensboro Bridge from midtown Manhattan. Traveling by subway, take the E, M, or 7 to Court Sq; or the G to Court Sq or 21 St Van Alst. By bus, take the Q67 to Jackson and 46th Ave or the B62 to 46th Ave.

Information: For general inquiries, call (718) 784-2084 or visit moma.org/ps1.

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