

MoMA PS1 ANNOUNCES *HARD ART*, A MAJOR EXHIBITION THAT EXAMINES THE LEGACY OF ABSTRACT PAINTING BY BLACK ARTISTS IN THE US

LONG ISLAND CITY, New York, March 19, 2026—MoMA PS1 announces *Hard Art*, a major exhibition that examines the legacy of abstract painting by Black artists in the US from 1969 to today. Opening on November 5, 2026, the exhibition features over forty artists and juxtaposes historical paintings by practitioners who came to prominence in the 1970s with recent conceptually driven practices that incorporate sculpture, video, sound, and painting. Organized thematically, the exhibition traces the legacy of three generations of artists including Frank Bowling, Mark Bradford, Peter Bradley, Barbara Chase-Riboud, Ed Clark, Melvin Edwards, Jennie C. Jones, Joe Overstreet, and Raymond Saunders, alongside new and recent works by Aria Dean, Torkwase Dyson, Nikita Gale, Suzanne Jackson, Rindon Johnson, Caroline Kent, Carolyn Lazard, Eric N. Mack, Charisse Pearlina Weston, and SoIL Thornton, among others. Together, these cross-generational conversations emphasize the enduring relevance and increasing urgency of abstraction in shaping the current political imaginary.

The exhibition addresses an unmapped history of exhibitions that have explored Black artists' entanglement with abstract art from 1969 through today. Anchored by artist-curated shows such as Frank Bowling's *5 + 1* (1969) and Peter Bradley's *The DeLuxe Show* (1971)—which foregrounded experiments with modernist aesthetics as a refusal to conform to representational practices—these concerns were central to *Afro-American Abstraction*, a 1980 exhibition at PS1 curated by April Kingsley. The show underscored a shared aesthetic among the artists, characterized by “a bold physicality, rhythmical vitality, and textural richness, as well as a tendency to use linear, geometrical imagery, and high-energy color.” Conceived in response to this exhibition, Lorraine O'Grady staged her performance *Mlle Bourgeoise Noire* (1980–83) critiquing the limits of a 'reductive' abstract art for Black artists, and demanding that “BLACK ART MUST TAKE MORE RISKS!!!” *Hard Art* takes O'Grady's galvanizing intervention as a prompt, bringing forward the tension between formal and conceptual explorations of abstraction's relationship to identity and Blackness.

Through a cross-generational lens, *Hard Art* expands this history by proposing a network of practices seldom seen or theorized together. Its title derives from Bradley's description of *The DeLuxe Show*, which leveraged abstraction's perceived opacity and complexity as a prompt for deepened engagement with art. The exhibition includes several key works from *The DeLuxe Show*, *Afro-American Abstraction*, and other landmark exhibitions of this history including works by David Hammons, James Little, Howardena Pindell, and Martin Puryear. *Hard Art* also includes new works by SoIL Thornton, as well as a new moving-image work by Carolyn Lazard that synthesizes experimental cinema, the history of monochrome abstraction, and the politics of visibility vis-à-vis Blackness. Spanning the entirety of PS1's double height-gallery, a newly commissioned freestanding architectonic environment by Torkwase Dyson expands the artist's ongoing engagement with Black spatial liberation possibilities. The artists in *Hard Art* expand material and conceptual modes of abstraction, tracing its formal and political stakes from the late 20th century through today.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated publication featuring essays by Connie Butler, Hannah Black, Jessica Bell Brown, Torkwase Dyson, Rindon Johnson, and Erich Kessel, among other contributors, as well as an illustrated chronology of significant museum exhibitions by June Kitahara and Sheldon Gooch.

Organized by Connie Butler, The Agnes Gund Director, with Sheldon Gooch, Curatorial Assistant. Exhibition research and support is provided by June Kitahara, Research Assistant.

ARTISTS

Hannah Black (b. 1981)
Frank Bowling (b. 1934)
Mark Bradford (b. 1961)
Peter Bradley (b. 1940)
Beverly Buchanan (b. 1940)
Barbara Chase-Riboud (b. 1939)
Ed Clark (b. 1926)
Aria Dean (b. 1993)
Torkwase Dyson (b. 1973)
Melvin Edwards (b. 1937)
Nikita Gale (b. 1983)
Sam Gilliam (b. 1933)
David Hammons (b. 1943)
Maren Hassinger (b. 1947)
Cynthia Hawkins (b. 1950)
Richard Hunt (b. 1935)
Suzanne Jackson (b. 1944)
Virginia Jaramillo (b. 1939)
Jennie C. Jones (b. 1968)
Rindon Johnson (b. 1990)
Daniel LaRue Johnson (b. 1938)
Caroline Kent (b. 1975)
Carolyn Lazard (b. 1987)
Glenn Ligon (b. 1960)
James Little (b. 1952)
Al Loving (b. 1935)
Mary Lovelace O'Neal (b. 1942)
Eric N. Mack (b. 1987)
Tiona Nekkia McClodden (b. 1981)
Rodney McMillian (b. 1969)
Julie Mehretu (b. 1970)

Senga Nengudi (b. 1943)
Lorraine O'Grady (b. 1934)
Joe Overstreet (b. 1933)
Adam Pendleton (b. 1984)
Howardena Pindell (b. 1943)
Walter Price (b. 1989)
Martin Puryear (b. 1941)
Andy Robert (b. 1984)
Raymond Saunders (b. 1934)
Mildred Thompson (b. 1936)
SoiL Thornton (b. 1990)
Charisse Pearlina Weston (b. 1988)
Jack Whitten (b. 1939)

SUPPORT

Generous support is provided by Pamela J. Joyner and Alfred J. Giuffrida.

Significant support is provided by Susan and Larry Marx, and Jay Ptashek and Karen Elizaga.

Additional support is provided by Bernard I. Lumpkin and Carmine D. Boccuzzi, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

ABOUT MoMA PS1

Inspired by daring artists, MoMA PS1 is committed to the exploration of contemporary art and culture, broadening perspectives on the issues of our day, and engaging New Yorkers and communities across the world. Founded in 1976, 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 to 6 p.m. Thursday, Friday, Sunday, and Monday, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays. Closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Admission: MoMA PS1 is a place for everyone. Free admission is made possible by Sonya Yu. Tickets may be reserved online at mo.ma/ps1tickets.

Visitor Guide: Discover even more from MoMA 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

MoMA PS1

22-25 Jackson Ave
Long Island City
NY 11101
momaps1.org

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 momaps1.org.

General Press Inquiries: press_momaps1@moma.org

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