



## **THE BMA APPOINTS ASMA NAEEM AS CHIEF CURATOR AND NAMES CURATORS FOR PRINTS, DRAWINGS & PHOTOGRAPHS AND AMERICAN ART**

**Asma Naeem, Andaleeb Badiie Banta, and Virginia Anderson will join the BMA's curatorial team to institute radical change throughout the museum**

BALTIMORE, MD (August 14, 2018)—The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) today announced the appointment of Asma Naeem as Chief Curator; Andaleeb Badiie Banta as Senior Curator of Prints, Drawings & Photographs; and Virginia Anderson as Curator of American Art. Naeem, Banta, and Anderson are joining the BMA at a time of rapid and systematic change throughout the museum, including the adoption of a new mission that places diversity, equity, and inclusion as central to the BMA's vision.

"We are committed to taking intentional steps towards evolving into an institution that emphasizes equity, excellence, and relevance in all phases of the work we do as a museum, not only for our Baltimore community, but to serve as a model for best museum practices nationwide," said BMA Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director Christopher Bedford. "Asma, Andaleeb, and Virginia will be instrumental in carrying out the museum's new vision and we are thrilled to add their energy, ideas, and expertise to our curatorial team."

Naeem brings both curatorial and academic experience as well as a local perspective as a former Baltimore resident and graduate of the Johns Hopkins University. As chief curator, she will lead the museum's curators, registrars, and conservators; oversee the internationally renowned collection of 95,000 objects; and advance the museum's goals of artistic excellence, historical accuracy, and social equity. Naeem will work closely with Bedford to continue the BMA's ongoing effort to reconceptualize the role of the museum within today's society. Prior to joining the BMA, Naeem served as the Curator of Prints, Drawings, and Media Arts at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery.

Banta, the new Senior Curator and Department Head of Prints, Drawings & Photographs, joins the BMA from the Allen Memorial Art Museum at Oberlin College, where she was the curator of European and American Art. She will lead the institution's efforts to enhance the role and prominence of the BMA's preeminent collection of 65,000 prints, drawings, and photographs from the 15th century to the present. She will also forge institutional partnerships across Baltimore to amplify conservation and scholarly study of the museum's collection.

Anderson previously served as an adjunct faculty member at the Johns Hopkins University and the Maryland Institute College of Art. As the BMA's new Curator and Department Head of American Art, she will oversee an outstanding collection of American painting, sculpture, and decorative arts that dates from the colonial era to the late 20th century. In collaboration with Bedford and other curators, Anderson will play a key role in the BMA's efforts to undo historical stereotypes and biases and revise how American history is told through art.

### **Asma Naeem**

Asma Naeem is a specialist in American art and contemporary Islamic art and her scholarship focuses on the effects of dispossession and displacement, the history of technology, and the sensorial imagination of both artist and beholder. She has held curatorial positions at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery in the Department of Prints, Drawings, and Media Arts since 2014, ultimately managing a collection of approximately 8,000 works on paper and media art from the 17th century to the present.

Two of her exhibitions currently on view at the National Portrait Gallery are *UnSeen: Our Past in a New Light*, Ken Gonzales-Day and Titus Kaphar, co-curated with Taina Caragol, and *Black Out: Silhouettes Then and Now*. For the latter, Naeem was the editor and main author of the exhibition catalogue, published by Princeton University Press, which includes an extended study of the intersection of silhouettes, slavery, and colonial independence. Her previous experience also includes research at the National Gallery of Art and teaching art history at the University of Maryland and Catholic University of America. Naeem holds a Ph.D. in art history from the University of Maryland, an M.A. from American University, a J.D. from Temple University, and a B.A. in art history and political science from Johns Hopkins University. Before returning to art history, she practiced law as a criminal prosecutor in Manhattan and as an ethics prosecutor in Washington, D.C. Naeem's work has been published in *Artforum*, *American Art*, *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, and *American Quarterly*. Her book, *Out of Earshot: Sound, Technology, and Class in American Art, 1847-1897*, soon to be published by University of California, Berkeley Press, urges scholars to think in nuanced and expansive ways about the relations among the visual arts, sound technologies, and sensory experience.

### **Andaleeb Badiee Banta**

Andaleeb Badiee Banta is a specialist in European Renaissance and Baroque art, with a focus on old master works on paper and their material aspects. She engages with art from an interdisciplinary perspective and explores the ways in which digital tools can enhance the study of original works and convey their relevance to contemporary audiences. As Curator of European and American Art at the Allen Memorial Art Museum at Oberlin College since 2013, Banta organized a variety of thematic exhibitions of art ranging from the 15th to the 21st centuries, including *Lines of Inquiry: Learning from Rembrandt's Etchings*, an exhibition co-organized with the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University that featured Rembrandt works drawn from academic art museums. She has held curatorial positions at the National Gallery of Art, The Morgan Library & Museum, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and has taught at Amherst College, Vassar College, and the City University of New York. Banta earned her M.A. and Ph.D. from New York University's Institute of Fine Arts and her B.A. from Vassar College. She has published in peer-reviewed journals such as *Master Drawings*, *The Burlington Magazine*, and *Apollo Magazine*, and she edited and contributed to a volume of collected essays, *The Enduring Legacy of Venetian Renaissance Art* (Taylor&Francis/ Routledge, 2016).

### **Virginia Anderson**

Virginia Anderson has an M.A. and Ph.D. in Art History from Boston University and B.A. in government from Harvard University. Her doctoral dissertation analyzed the intersection of materiality, authorial intentionality, and ambiguity in the critical reception of American artist Jasper Johns. Prior to joining the BMA, Anderson was an adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins University and at the Maryland Institute College of Art, where she taught courses on subjects ranging from museums and society to postmodernism. She previously served as the Diane and Michael Maher Assistant Curator of American Art at the Harvard Art Museums from 2005 to 2010. Anderson was a contributing author and co-editor of *American Paintings at Harvard, Volume II* (Yale University Press, 2008) and a contributing author of *American Paintings at Harvard, Volume I* (Yale University Press, 2014). Her research on the artist and ethnographer Hubert Vos was published in *East-West Interchanges in American Art: A Long and Tumultuous Relationship* (Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, 2012). Her most recent publications include an essay on Jasper Johns's *Dymaxion Map* (1967-1971) and the 1967 Montreal Exposition, published in the *American Art Journal* (Spring, 2018).

## **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**

General admission to the BMA is free. Special exhibitions may be ticketed. The BMA is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. The museum is closed Monday, Tuesday, New Year's Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. 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](http://artbma.org).

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