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BAMPFA to Honor Cauleen Smith and Catherine Wagner at 2023 Art & Film Benefit

Gala Fundraiser to be Held at BAMPFA on Saturday, May 6, 2023
Following Success of Inaugural Art & Film Benefit in 2022



(Berkeley, CA)—The Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) announced today that its 2023 gala will pay tribute to two distinguished artists with deep ties to the Bay Area. The filmmaker and multimedia artist **Cauleen Smith** and the conceptual artist and photographer **Catherine Wagner** will be honored on Saturday, May 6, 2023 at BAMPFA's second-annual Art & Film Benefit, an event supporting the museum's distinctive commitment to art, film, and student engagement.

"I am thrilled to welcome Cauleen back to the Bay Area, where her creative life germinated and where she shot *Drylongso* (1998), her first feature-length film. For thirty years, her innovative work in film, video and installation has opened portals to new narratives around Black aesthetics and experiences, and Afro-futurism," said BAMPFA's Executive Director **Julie Rodrigues Widholm**. "Catherine is a Bay Area native whose photographic work has pushed the physical and conceptual limitations of photography as a medium for decades. Both of these women inspire us to think more expansively and have paved the way for others after them as artists and professors."

The 2023 Art & Film Benefit follows the inauguration last spring of this new yearly tradition, which reimagined BAMPFA's annual fundraising gala as a tribute to two luminaries from the worlds of film and visual art. The 2022 event honored the renowned experimental filmmaker **Trinh T. Minh-ha** and the pathbreaking artist **Amalia Mesa-Bains**, who will receive her first career retrospective at BAMPFA opening in February 2023. As BAMPFA's first in-person gala since 2019, the inaugural Art & Film Benefit raised more than \$750,000 from a generous community of more than 250 friends and supporters. Notable Bay Area artists in attendance included **Kim Anno, Sadie Barnette, Tammy Rae Carland, Woody De Othello, Mildred Howard, George McCalman, Jim Melchert, Adia Millett, Michele Pred, Stephanie Syjuco, Lava Thomas, Leila Weefur, Lena Wolff, and Wanxin Zhang.**

Proceeds from the Art & Film Benefit support the full scope of BAMPFA's mission, with a particular focus on the museum's work study program, which offers opportunities for UC Berkeley students from under-resourced backgrounds to gain professional experience at one of the nation's leading university art museums. Work study employees are an indispensable part of the staff at BAMPFA and are critical to advancing the museum's mission of igniting community engagement through art and film. BAMPFA's supporters enable the museum to employ one of the largest student workforces on the UC Berkeley campus, making a transformative difference in the lives of hundreds of undergraduates each year.

More information about the 2023 Art & Film Benefit will be announced in the coming weeks, including opportunities for table and ticket reservations. Visit bampfa.org/gala for the latest updates.

About the Honorees

Cauleen Smith

Cauleen Smith was raised in Sacramento, California and lives in Los Angeles, where she sits on the faculty of the UCLA School of Arts and Architecture. Smith holds a BA in Creative Arts from San Francisco State University and an MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles School of Theater Film and Television. Her short films, feature film, an installation and performance were showcased at International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2019. Smith has had solo exhibitions at The Whitney Museum of American Art, MassMoCA and LACMA. She is the recipient of the following awards: Rockefeller Media Arts Award, Creative Capital Film /Video, Chicago 3Arts Grant, and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Chicago Expo Artadia Award, and Rauschenberg Residency, Herb Alpert Awards in the Arts in Film and Video 2016, United States Artists Award 2017, 2016 inaugural recipient of the Ellsworth Kelly Award, 2020 recipient of the Studio Museum Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize, and 2021 Guggenheim Fellowship. Most recently, in September 2022 Smith received the Heinz Award, an unrestricted prize that recognizes significant contributions to the arts.

Catherine Wagner

Catherine Wagner has been an active international artist, working photographically as well as with site-specific art, lecturing extensively at museums and universities for over thirty years. She has received many major awards, including the Rome Prize, Guggenheim Fellowship, National Endowments of the Arts Fellowships, and Artadia Award, among others. Wagner has had solo exhibitions at Museo Morandi, The Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Kemper Art Museum in St. Louis, The San Jose Museum of Art, The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco: de Young Museum, among others. In 2001, Wagner was named one of Time Magazine's Fine Arts Innovators of the Year. Her work is represented in major collections nationally and around the world, including the Tate Modern, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, SFMOMA, The Whitney Museum of American Art, Museum of Modern Art Bologna, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Yale University Art Gallery, Museum of Modern Art NY, The Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Museum Folkwang Essen. Wagner has published several

monographs, including *American Classroom*, *Home and Other Stories*, *Art & Science: Investigating Matter*, *Cross Sections*, *In Situ: Traces of Morandi*, and *Place, History and the Archive*. Wagner has taught since 1989 at Mills College in the Art and Visual Culture Department, where she is the Nancy Cook Endowed Chair in Art.

Image credits

1. Cauleen Smith; photo by Joshua Franzos.
2. Catherine Wagner; photo by Phil Bond.

About BAMPFA

One of the nation's leading university museums, the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) is a forum for cultural experiences that transform individuals and advance the local, national, and global discourse on art and film. As the premier visual arts venue at the top U.S. public research university, BAMPFA is uniquely dedicated to art and film in equal measure. Its annual program encompasses exhibitions, screenings, and public programs that connect visitors from campus, across the Bay Area, and beyond with the leading artists and filmmakers of our time.

BAMPFA takes a contemporary and critical perspective on its wide-ranging collections. The museum's holdings of more than 28,000 works of art include particular strengths in 20th- and 21st-century work, including Abstract Expressionist painting, contemporary photography, conceptual art, and African American quilts, along with focused historical collections of 19th-century American folk art and early American painting, Italian Baroque painting, Old Master works on paper, and East Asian paintings. BAMPFA's collection also includes more than 18,000 films and videos, representing the largest collection of Japanese cinema outside of Japan and impressive holdings of Soviet cinema, West Coast avant-garde film, and seminal video art, as well as hundreds of thousands of articles, reviews, posters, and other ephemera related to the history of film.

Founded as the University Art Museum in 1970 and initially housed in a Brutalist structure designed by Mario Ciampi, BAMPFA relocated in 2016 to a new facility designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro in the heart of downtown Berkeley, where it has become an anchor for the city's flourishing arts district. The museum's curatorial strategies reflect the rich diversity of the UC Berkeley campus and the greater Bay Area through programming that is interdisciplinary, intergenerational, and international in scope. A locally connected, globally relevant institution, BAMPFA is deeply dedicated to its role as an educational space for UC Berkeley scholars and the general public. It fulfills this mission with three distinguished study centers—the James Cahill Asian Art Study Center, the Film Library and Study Center, and the Florence Helzel Works on Paper Study Center—as well as a range of collaborations with the university's academic departments and student organizations.