

ART + PRACTICE

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 01/19/2018

Art + Practice and The Baltimore Museum of Art Present *Maren Hassinger: The Spirit of Things*

Art + Practice Presentation:

Maren Hassinger: The Spirit of Things

Art + Practice

3401 W. 43rd Place, Los Angeles, CA 90008

Dates of Exhibition: February 24 - May 26, 2018

Public Opening Reception at Art + Practice: Saturday, February 24, 2018, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Exhibition Walkthrough with the Artist and Curator: Saturday, February 24, 2018, 2:00 p.m.

Second Presentation:

The Baltimore Museum of Art

10 Art Museum Drive, Baltimore, MD 21218

Dates of Exhibition: July 18 - November 25, 2018



"I am concerned now, more than ever . . . with issues of equality. These become apparent in my attempt to find balances between the material and the environment and to rectify any sense of separation. My goal is to find a way to unify people in this our worldly space—in this our home."

-Maren Hassinger¹

Los Angeles, CA; January 19, 2018 - Art + Practice (A+P) and The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) will present a solo exhibition by artist Maren Hassinger at A+P in Los Angeles, CA from February 24 to May 26, 2018. This is the first retrospective exhibition of the artist's work in her hometown of Los Angeles. It features sculpture, performance documentation, and videos that explore the emotional dynamics of relationships amongst different communities of people and the environments in which they live. The exhibition will also be presented in Baltimore, MD, another city important to the artist. Hassinger, a 1973 UCLA graduate, has been the Director of the Rinehart School of Sculpture at Baltimore's Maryland Institute College of Art since 1997. The exhibition is

curated by the BMA's Senior Curator of Contemporary Art Kristen Hileman. The show will be on view at The Baltimore Museum of Art from July 18 through November 25, 2018.

"This exhibition marks the second presentation in Los Angeles that Art + Practice co-organized with The Baltimore Museum of Art," explained A+P's Executive Director Allan DiCastro. "In working with the BMA we have had to think innovatively about the ways in which the two organizations can collaborate to make museum-curated contemporary art accessible to the community. When visions align, great work and artistic talent, like that of artist Maren Hassinger, can be celebrated and supported," DiCastro further stated.

For more than four decades, Maren Hassinger (b. 1947, Los Angeles, CA) has explored relationships between the industrial and natural worlds in a practice that is both meditative and critical. From the 1970s on, her sculpture has incorporated common materials associated with manufacturing, mass media, and commerce. In abstract compositions such as those that will be on view at A+P, she transforms wire rope, newspapers, plastic bags, and more into evocations of the beauty found in conditions often dismissed as blighted or marginal.

Hassinger is also a formative practitioner of performance art and site-specific interventions, collaborating with Senga Nengudi and other Los Angeles-based artists during the 1970s. Her performances involve dance, as well as movements observed from everyday life, and investigate communal activity and commonalities amongst groups of people. This important body of work will be documented in photographs within the show. Additionally, Hassinger has produced moving videos that address race, gender, and other aspects of identity. Examples included at A+P explore these themes through Hassinger's interactions with her family members. In one work, she learns for the first time about aspects of her family's history by interviewing her uncle. In another, filmed in a beautiful East Hampton seaside setting, she engages in improvisational choreography with her daughter, artist Ava Hassinger.

With its focus on relationships between people, materials, and environments, Hassinger's art is frequently described as "ecological." The artist clarifies this observation, stating: "I don't think my work has so much to do with ecology, but focuses on elements, or even problems—social and environmental—that we all share, and in which we all have a stake. I don't think that's an ecological statement. I want it to be a humane and humanistic statement about our future together."

"Maren's profound work connects Los Angeles and Baltimore in vibrant and creative ways. We are delighted to provide communities in both cities with the opportunity to learn more about her art in this celebration of her multi-faceted career," states Hileman. She adds, "It was extraordinary to work closely with Maren on a project that has such deep personal resonance for her."

In conjunction with the installation of the exhibition and presentation at A+P, Hassinger will work with A+P's local foster youth (ages 18-24). The youth will help Hassinger develop the materials for some of the sculptural artworks included in the exhibition. This effort to provide foster youth with job opportunities within the practice of a contemporary artist's installation efforts will foster A+P's mission, helping expose the youth to a world that they might not readily experience otherwise. Hassinger's engagement with the youth is a reflection of Hassinger's continued engagement with diverse communities and the dynamic presence that she bestows on those that she engages with.

A walkthrough with Maren Hassinger and curator Kristen Hileman will take place on Saturday, February 24, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. at A+P's exhibition space located at 3401 W. 43rd Place. The public opening reception for *Maren Hassinger: The Spirit of Things* will take place at A+P, in Leimert Park, Los Angeles on February 24, 2018 from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. at A+P's Exhibition Space. No RSVPs are required and street parking will be available.



MAREN HASSINGER: THE SPIRIT OF THINGS PUBLIC PROGRAMS SERIES

On the occasion of *Maren Hassinger: The Spirit of Things*, A+P will organize a series of **five** public programs with artists and curators in the nonprofit's public program space located at 4334 Degan Boulevard. Programs at A+P include artists' talks, panels, film screenings, and live performances. Admission to all programs is free of cost.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS SPEAKER LIST:

- + **Saturday, February 24:** Exhibition Walkthrough: *The Spirit of Things*
- + **Wednesday, March 14:** Artist Talk: EJ Hill
- + **Thursday, April 5:** In Conversation: Barbara McCullough and Thomas J. Lax
- + **Wednesday, April 25:** Artist Talk: Ulysses Jenkins
- + **Thursday, May 17:** In Conversation: Taisha Paggett and Ashley Hunt

Art + Practice Public Program Space:

4334 Degan Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90008 | Open for scheduled programs only.
Ample metered and public lot parking available.

ABOUT MAREN HASSINGER

Maren Hassinger's life and career bridge Los Angeles and Baltimore. An LA native and 1973 UCLA graduate, Hassinger was active with an experimental group of artists in the city, including Senga Nengudi and David Hammons, during the 1970s. Hassinger's work of this time, as well as that of her colleagues has recently been chronicled in Kellie Jones's book *South of Pico: African American Artists in Los Angeles in the 1960s and 1970s*. Hassinger then moved to the East Coast, spending time in New York City and East Hampton before becoming the Director of the Rinehart School of Graduate Sculpture at Baltimore's prestigious Maryland Institute College of Art, a

position she has held since 1997. Alongside her solo work, Hassinger has continued collaborations with Nengudi and performed with her daughter, artist Ava Hassinger, under the name "Matriarch." She is now based in New York City.

Recognized as an influential teacher and a pioneer of such ephemeral practices as performance and site-specific interventions, Hassinger has received numerous honors including awards and grants from Anonymous Was a Woman, the International Association of Art Critics, the Gottlieb Foundation, the Joan Mitchell Foundation, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

She was the subject of a 2015 retrospective at Spelman College Museum of Art in Atlanta. Her work was also included in the recent traveling group exhibitions *Now Dig This! Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980* (originating at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles and traveling to PS1, Long Island City; and Williams College, Williamstown, MA) and *Radical Presence: Black Performance in Contemporary Art* (originating at the Contemporary Art Museum, Houston; and traveling to the Grey Art Gallery and Studio Museum, New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco), as well as the 2017 exhibition *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965-85* at the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

CREDIT

Maren Hassinger: The Spirit of Things is curated by Kristen Hileman, BMA's Senior Curator of Contemporary Art. This exhibition is presented by Art + Practice and The Baltimore Museum of Art.

Special thanks to Maren Hassinger and First Place for Youth.

ABOUT ART + PRACTICE

Founded by artist Mark Bradford, philanthropist and collector Eileen Harris Norton, and community activist Allan DiCastro, Art + Practice (A+P) is private operating 501 (c)3 foundation based in Leimert Park Village, Los Angeles. Art + Practice encourages education and culture by providing support services to foster youth predominantly living in South Los Angeles through its collaboration with First Place for Youth. A+P also provides free, museum-curated art exhibitions and moderated art lectures to the community of Leimert Park.

A+P INFORMATION

Admission to all exhibitions and public programs are free and available to the public. To learn more visit www.artandpractice.org.

Hours: Monday-Saturday: 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

A+P is located at 3401 W. 43rd Place, Los Angeles, CA 90008. Ample metered and public lot parking available.

ABOUT THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

The Baltimore Museum of Art is home to an internationally renowned collection of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art. Founded in 1914 with a single painting, the BMA today has 95,000 objects—including the largest public holding of works by Henri Matisse. Throughout the museum, visitors will find an outstanding selection of American and European painting, sculpture, and

decorative arts; works by established and emerging contemporary artists; significant artworks from China; stunning Antioch mosaics; and an exceptional collection of art from Africa. The BMA's galleries also showcase examples from one of the nation's finest collections of prints, drawings, and photographs, and exquisite textiles from around the world. The 210,000-square-foot museum is distinguished by a grand historic building designed in the 1920s by renowned American architect John Russell Pope and two beautifully landscaped sculpture gardens. As a major cultural destination for the region, the BMA hosts a dynamic program of exhibitions, events, and educational programs throughout the year. General admission to the BMA is free so that everyone can enjoy the power of art.

PRESS CONTACTS

Art + Practice:

Natalie Hon

natalie@artandpractice.org

+1.323.337.6887

The Baltimore Museum of Art:

Anne Mannix Brown

abrown@artbma.org

+1.443.573.1870

ART + PRACTICE

Exhibition Space

3401 W. 43rd Place

Los Angeles CA 90008

Monday - Saturday

12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Public Program Space

4334 Degnan Boulevard

Los Angeles, CA 90008

Open for scheduled programs
starting at 6:00 p.m.

artandpractice.org

CREDITS

¹ Maren Hassinger, "Passing Through," in *Maren Hassinger . . . Dreaming*, ed. Andrea Barnwell Brownlee and Anne Collins Smith (Atlanta: Spellman College Museum of Fine Art, 2015), pg. 20.

Maren Hassinger, *High Noon*, 1976. Four black and white photographs. Three framed vertical images: 15 ¼ x 12 ¼ x 1 ¼ inches and one framed horizontal image: 12 ¼ x 15 ¼ x 1 ¼ inches. Courtesy of the artist. Photo by Adam Avila.

Maren Hassinger, *Diaries*, 1978. Six black and white photographs. Six framed horizontal images: 12 ¼ x 15 ¼ x 1 ¼ inches. Courtesy of the artist. Photo by Adam Avila.

Portrait of Barbara McCullough, photo by Kofi Moyo.

Portrait of EJ Hill, photo by Daniel Dorsa.

Portrait of Taisha Paggett, photo by Joe Pugliese.